

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE
ASSOCIATION held in the ICE RINK,
GLOVER STREET, PERTH at 2.00 p.m.
on THURSDAY, 22nd OCTOBER,
1998.

PRESENT: Messrs. R.J.S. Doig, D. Harley, J.B. Hollywood, V. Lumb, J. MacFarlane, J.R. McArthur, A.B. Pullar, J.O. Robertson and J.M. Swinton, along with Mr. R.D. Hunter, the Secretary.

CHAIRMAN: The Association President, Mr. A.B. Pullar, occupied the Chair.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs. A.M. Beattie, J.M. Marshall, K.A. McKenzie, I. Melrose, J.L. Milne and D.Y. Stewart.

(1) The Minute of Meeting of Council of 27th August, 1998 was taken as read, approved and signed. The Minute of Meeting of 2nd July, 1998 duly amended, was also signed.

(2) MATTERS ARISING:

(a) Seed Potato Forum: The Secretary confirmed that, as instructed, he had written to Doctor Storey of the British Potato Council regarding the Seed Potato Forum and a reply was awaited.

(b) Fothergills Mail Order Catalogue: The Secretary reported that no further word had been received from The Scottish Office regarding the action being taken by it in connection with plantlets and plants of non-common Catalogue Varieties of potatoes being offered for sale via booklets and catalogues. Mr. Swinton informed the meeting that such material was continuing to be included in Fothergills most recent Mail Order Catalogue. It was agreed to raise this matter again with The Scottish Office at the meeting of the Scottish Seed Potato Consultative Panel to be held on 20th November, 1998.

(c) Frost Warning Service: The Secretary confirmed that the Association was again offering to co-ordinate a Frost Warning Service for the coming winter but that to date only one company had intimated interest in subscribing for the Service. The Secretary reported that he had advised Members of the existence of the Service in a recent Members Letter and that The Scottish Office and the Farmers' Union were also publicising the Service. Council hoped that there would be a sufficient take-up of the Service to allow it to continue.

(d) Seed Inspection Statistics: The Secretary confirmed that notwithstanding the seed potato information now provided on the Internet by The Scottish Office it was the intention of The Scottish Office to continue to issue the hard copy of statistics of potatoes classified under the Inspection Scheme and that this Association would continue to receive prior notification of these statistics. Members of Council voiced concern at the poor quality of the data base in The Scottish Office's I.T. systems.

(3) FUTURE ACTIVITIES OF THE ASSOCIATION: The Chairman gave a verbal report on the meeting with representatives of the N.A.S.P.M. held on 11th September to discuss informally the possible merits of creating a U.K. Seed Potato Association. Mr. Pullar added that a letter had been received from the N.A.S.P.M.

following their Council Meeting on 16th September stating that "N.A.S.P.M. should continue negotiations with S.P.T.A. to form a new Potato Association". The Secretary reported that it was provisionally arranged for a further informal meeting with representatives of the N.A.S.P.M. to be held in Edinburgh on 11th November, 1998 to discuss the matter further. After detailed discussion it was agreed that so far as this Association was concerned it was premature to actively pursue the formation of a new Association at this time but to hope that the closer ties formed in recent years with the N.A.S.P.M. would continue to develop in the future to the benefit of both Associations. It was agreed, however, that representatives of this Association would attend the meeting with the N.A.S.P.M. to give that Association the opportunity making further proposals for consideration.

- (4) ANNUAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS: The Secretary confirmed that Messrs. Iain Melrose and David Veitch had not put their names forward for re-election to Council. The Secretary added that only six candidates had been nominated for the seven vacancies in Council and accordingly they had all automatically been elected to Council with effect from 1st November, 1998. He explained that Messrs. J.M. Hollywood, J.M. Marshall, K.A. McKenzie and D.Y. Stewart had been re-elected to Council and that Messrs. C.J. Heron and A.J.B. Redpath had been elected to Council.

The Secretary read to the meeting a letter of resignation from Council received from Mr. Hendry Lindsay. The Secretary pointed out that accordingly as from 1st November, 1998 there were seventeen Council Members as compared with the nineteen Members provided for in the Association's Constitution and Rules.

The Secretary was instructed to write to the retiring Council Members expressing Council's appreciation of the work undertaken by them during their period as Council Members.

- (5) ASSOCIATION SECRETARY/TREASURER: The Chairman on behalf of the Sub-Committee appointed to make a recommendation with regard to the appointment of a new Association Secretary and Treasurer reported that following advertisement thirty responses had been received of which fifteen had confirmed their application for consideration for the post of Association Secretary and Treasurer following receipt by them of the Job Specification. Mr. Pullar added that the Sub-Committee had drawn up a shortlist of three candidates who had been interviewed. Mr. Pullar informed Council that it was the unanimous recommendation of the Sub-Committee that following these interviews the post be offered to Mr. Hugh B. Edmond of Dunkessen, Fintry, by Glasgow at a salary of £8,000.00 per annum, plus expenses, commencing in mid-January 1999. Council accepted the Sub-Committee's recommendation and the Sub-Committee were instructed to offer the post to Mr. Hugh Edmond.

- (6) DRAFT ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS: The Secretary tabled Interim Unaudited Accounts of the Association for the year to 31st October, 1998. The Secretary took the meeting through the draft Accounts and pointed out that although the Accounts disclosed a surplus of £1,046.87 further expenditure would be incurred before the year end.

During discussion regarding the Accounts the Secretary reported that the Association's Accountants were now trading under the name of MacMillan & Co. but that Mr. David Carslaw will

- continue to deal with the Association's Accounts.
- (7) BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL: It was reported that the meeting of the Seed Sectoral Group scheduled to be held on 30th September, 1998 had been postponed until 24th November, 1998. The Secretary added that he was awaiting a copy of the Minute of the British Potato Council meeting held on 6th October, 1998.
- (8) POTATO BROWN ROT: The Chairman confirmed that a Press Release was being issued by Mr. Colin Ley on behalf of the Association on the subject of Potato Brown Rot.
- The Chairman reported that The Scottish Office had recently indicated to him that the new European Union Potato Brown Rot Directive was expected to be issued around July, 1999.
- (9) SEED POTATO EXPORTS: The Chairman reported that there had been a meeting between representatives of the Trade and The Scottish Office held on 15th October, 1998 to discuss Seed Potato Exports. He added that the Trade had been represented at the meeting by delegates from Messrs. Gordon & Innes, J. & E. Smillie (Potatoes) Ltd., Greenvale Produce Ltd., Grampian Growers (Services) Ltd., H. & J.M. Bennett (Scotland) Ltd. and Agrolon Ltd. Mr. Pullar stated that the meetings between The Scottish Office and Exporters were proving to be very useful. There next meeting was due scheduled to be held on 3rd June, 1999. He added that if any other Exporting Companies wished to be represented at these meetings they should make contact with him.
- Mr. Pullar stated that at the meeting held on 15th October the following items had been discussed:-
- (a) PCN Testing. The Scottish Office had confirmed that the testing procedure for PCN which was in place last winter was now official policy;
- (b) Import Permits. Problems had been experienced with Import Permits for particular countries. This was more to do with quotas for tonnage than a plant health matter but The Scottish Office would not issue a Phytosanitary Certificate until it had seen the Permit.
- (c) Spraing. A talk on spraing was to be arranged in conjunction with the BPC Roadshow in February, 1999.
- (d) Export Regulations. The Scottish Office had confirmed that Export Regulations were now on the Internet.
- (e) Inward Missions. During the summer visits had been received from Plant Health Officials from Egypt, Canary Islands and the Czech Republic. Changes in the Regulations for these countries were intimated.
- (f) Brown Rot. The Scottish Office had reported further outbreaks of Potato Brown Rot in Holland but apparently these were mostly on starch farms.
- (g) Ware Export Labels. The Scottish Office were reluctant to offer a service which would provide labels for export ware.
- (10) REVIEW OF SCOTTISH OFFICE AGRICULTURE RELATED RESEARCH PROGRAMME: Council considered a Paper prepared by Mr. Beattie containing his proposals for the Association's response to a Consultation Document issued by The Scottish Office in connection with the review of it's Agriculture-Related Scientific Research Programme. Mr. Beattie's Paper was approved by Council and the Secretary was instructed to respond to The Scottish Office in terms of the Paper.

- (11) SCOTTISH SEED POTATO CONSULTATIVE PANEL: The Secretary reported that the next meeting of the Scottish Seed Potato Consultative Panel was scheduled to be held on 20th November, 1998 and that The Scottish Office were requesting that they be given items to be included in the Agenda for that meeting. The Secretary was instructed to inform The Scottish Office that this Association wished the following items to be included in the Agenda, namely:- (a) Research Priorities and the Dissemination of the Results of such Research; (b) Progress Report on revision of the Seed Potato Classification Scheme; (c) Fothergills Mail Order Catalogue; (d) Future of 50 kilo bags of Potatoes; (e) Bulk Loads; (f) Trading Standards.

In connection with the Item entitled "Trading Standards", Mr. Hollywood highlighted a problem which was occurring regarding the attitude of Trading Standard Officers with regard to the weighing of one tonne bags of seed potatoes. The problem centred around the practice of some Trading Standard Officers, particularly in England, weighing only one bag from a consignment and endeavouring to check the weight of the remaining bags by taking the tare weight of the lorry. Mr. Hollywood pointed out that the carrying out of such checks did not ensure that all the bags in the consignment contained at least one tonne of potatoes. It was agreed that this matter should be taken up with The Scottish Office.

- (12) CORRESPONDENCE: The Secretary reported that since the last meeting of Council correspondence had been received from The Scottish Office under the following headings:-
Code of Practice for the Management of Agricultural and Horticultural Waste;
Quantative Ingredient Declarations;
Mycotoxins - EC Permitted Levels.

The Secretary reported that correspondence had been received from the Ministry of Agriculture under the following headings:-

Labelling Sub-Group Meeting, 7th July, 1998: Quantative Ingredient Declarations, etc.;
Joint Industrial and Commercial Attachments Programme : Ukraine;
Agricultural Opportunities in Cuba : February, 1999.

The Secretary reported that correspondence had been received from the Pesticides Safety Directorate under the following headings:-

Outcome of Consultation on Future Funding Arrangements for Pesticides Regulated under FEPA and COPR;
Review of Anticholinesterase Compounds.

The Secretary reported that a letter had been received from Foresight Directorate Office of Science & Technology under the heading "The Next Round of Foresight" and that a letter had been received from Action 2000 under the heading of "Millennium Bug in Supply Chain Programme".

- (13) DATE OF NEXT MEETING: It was confirmed that the next meeting of Council was scheduled to be held in Perth Ice Rink at 2.00 p.m. on Thursday, 19th November, 1998.

- (14) ANY OTHER COMPETENT BUSINESS: The Secretary reported that details of the Association's Annual Dinner and Dance to be held at Huntingtower Hotel, Crieff Road, Perth, on Friday, 11th December, 1998, had now been circulated to Association Members. It was agreed that the Association would invite Mr. Edmond the

incoming Association Secretary and his Partner to be guests at the function.

The Secretary informed Council that the Association's Entertainments Sub-Committee were inviting instructions as to whether or not Council wished them to investigate the making of arrangements for a special function to commemorate the Millennium. It was agreed to defer discussion on this matter until the first meeting of the new Council.

A vote of thanks to the Chairman terminated the meeting.

Walter B. Puller