

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE
ASSOCIATION held in the ICE RINK,
GLOVER STREET, PERTH at 2.30 p.m. on
Thursday, 28th January, 1999.

PRESENT: Messrs. A.P. Bayne, A.M. Beattie, R. Doig, D. Harley, V. Lumb, J.R. McArthur, J.M. Marshall, J. M. Milne, A.B. Pullar, A.J.B. Redpath, J.O. Robertson, D.Y. Stewart, along with Mr R.D. Hunter, the Secretary and Hugh B. Edmond, the Secretary elect.

The Association President, Mr A.M. Beattie, occupied the Chair and welcomed those present at the meeting especially Mr A.J.B. Redpath who was present for the first time.

Before commencing the business of the meeting the Chairman referred to the recent deaths of three respected Members of the Trade. Bill Gray, Pat Morris and Donald Ross had all died since the last Council meeting. The Secretary was instructed to write to the families conveying council's condolences.

- (1) **APOLOGIES:** Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs C.J. Herron, J. Macfarlane, K.A. McKenzie and J.M. Swinton.
- (2) **MINUTES:** The Minute of the Meeting of Council of 18 November 1998 was taken as read, approved and signed.
- (3) **MATTERS ARISING:**
 - (a) **Frost Warning Service:** The Secretary reported that no further interest had been expressed in the service. It appeared the membership had made other arrangements.
 - (b) **Arbitration Training Seminar:** It was agreed this would take place during the summer of 1999. The Secretary was to approach both the Institute of Arbitrators(Scottish Branch) and Mr Donald Rennie and obtain quotes for a one day seminar. The NFU was then to be advised of the details.
 - (c) **Annual Dinner and Dance:** It was reported that the event was a great success. There was a deficit of £96.00 which had been allowed for in the budget. The prize draw had realised £2049.87 for charity. The Chairman proposed this be halved between the McMillan Trust and Cancer Research in Scotland.
 - (d) **Millennium:** The Secretary reported that the Huntingtower Hotel were proposing an increased charge as compared with last year and that, in the meantime, a provisional booking had been made for 11 December 1999 pending the decision of the Entertainments Sub-Committee.
 - (E) **Conditions of Purchase:** The Secretary reported he had just received the Conditions of Purchase from the Printers but they were still wrong.
- (4) **ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS:** The Secretary confirmed that the Association Accounts for the year to 31 October 1998 had been approved earlier in the day at the Annual General Meeting of Members of the Association.
- (5) **1998/99 ASSOCIATION SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Council noted that its recommendation with regard to the level of subscriptions for the year to 31 October 1999 had been approved at said Annual General Meeting of Members. The Secretary was instructed to proceed with arrangements to ingather the subscriptions from Members for the current year.

- (6) CONSTITUTION AND RULES: Council's Special Resolution to amend Rule 31 of the Association's Constitution and Rules was unanimously passed at the Annual General Meeting of Members. The final sentence would now read ' Any such investment shall be taken in name of Stockbroker Nominees selected from time to time by Council'. This would now allow the Secretary to close the small Savings Account with the Royal Bank of Scotland which existed purely to receive the dividends on the Association's investments. The Secretary was also given the go ahead to transfer the investments from the Bank Nominees to the Stockbroker Nominees as bank fees for this service were regarded as too expensive. Council agreed that Greig Middleton & Co. Ltd. should be the Nominees. A lengthy discussion on the size of the Council Membership including the number required for a quorum then took place. In spite of a number of suggestions no consensus was reached. Mr J.R.McArthur was asked to draw up for the next Council meeting a schedule of how he felt the Association could achieve the most appropriate balance for the organisation.
- (7) ASSOCIATION SECRETARY/TREASURER: Mr Hugh B. Edmond was introduced as the new Association Secretary and Treasurer who would be officially taking up the appointment on the 1 February 1999. A Contract of Employment had been signed by both parties and copies were to be sent to the Office Bearers. Mr H.B. Edmond would be an employee of the Association at a salary of £8,000 per annum plus expenses. As the Secretary was an employee the Association would require the necessary insurance cover. A premium quotation of £343.00 had been obtained which covered public liability as well as employers liability. It was agreed the Secretary should proceed with this. Banking arrangements were also discussed. Mr. Edmond felt there would be no difficulty if the present banking facilities remained. It was agreed that two signatures should be required on cheques for sums of £300.00 and over and the Secretary could deal with sums of lesser amounts. The necessary mandates were to be obtained from the bank and completed by the appropriate Office Bearers.
- (8) ASSOCIATION SOLICITORS: It was unanimously agreed that the Association Solicitors should be Messrs McCash & Hunter, 25 Methven Street, Perth, PH1 5ES. The contact for the Association would be Mr Ian Tait.
- (9) STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS FOR POTATO PRODUCTION: It was reported that two proposals to relax the statutory requirements for potato production in Scotland were being considered by the Scottish Office.
- (a) To allow the use of potatoes two years away from classification for planting for ware production.
- (b) To relax the powdery scab tolerance from 3% to 5%.
- The Association was one of the two parties requesting the derogation at (a) above. The Association have only received copies of submissions presented by The National Farmers' Union of Scotland and The British Potato Council. It was understood that all responses were against the proposal to relax the powdery scab tolerance. Some members of the Council felt the derogation would be required for two years as the situation would be more serious the next year. It was agreed to await the Scottish Office decision before considering what to do next.
- (10) BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL: A copy of the Minute of the meeting of the British Potato Council held on 1 December 1998 had been circulated by the Secretary. Mr Stewart gave a report on the meeting. He stated that the Council had terminated the agreement with Rotagrow on the running of Sutton Bridge Experimental Unit. He also indicated that the Council were still in discussion on the widening of the tonnage levy to cover all handlers of potatoes not just the

first point of sale. He then gave a resume of the state of debt collection by the Council. The next meeting would be on Tuesday 2 February 1999.

The President gave a report on the meeting of the Seed Sectoral Group on Tuesday and Wednesday 24 and 25 November 1998. This had taken place in York and included a visit to the Central Science Laboratory. SOAEFD, MAFF and DANI had indicated major support from responses for integration of pre-basic stocks within the classification arrangements and to include field generation markers on stocks. It was the intention to bring in any changes for the start of the 2000 growing season. The Council was updated on the staffing of the Seed Sector. The seed team was now in place with the appointment of an Export Executive. Mr Beattie reported that there had been three possible applicants for the Nuffield Scholarship. He indicated that a draft of the questionnaire for the seed customer survey was with members of the Seed Sectoral Group for comment before being issued. It had been agreed at the meeting in November that the size of the Seed Sectoral Group should be increased by one to accommodate the involvement of a supermarket technical manager. In future the Seed Sectoral Group would be given the opportunity to comment on proposed R & D projects where seed was involved in order that their input can be considered by the R & D Committee.

- (11) SCOTTISH SEED POTATO CONSULTATIVE PANEL: The minute of the meeting of 24 November 1998 was not yet to hand. It was requested that the Secretary send it to Council members as soon as it became available. Items discussed included: Small ware, Policing of packers, Bulk loads (the system was regarded as satisfactory as operated at present), 1 tonne bags (seed packers would have to provide a kit for turning out 1 tonne bags for inspection), Aphid warning system and the move of the Seed Classification administration from Pentland House to East Craigs.
- (12) OLD POTATO VARIETIES: The production and marketing of old varieties had been raised with the Scottish Office more than a year ago. The Scottish Office have written to the people concerned informing that the production of varieties not in the Common Catalogue was illegal. A compromise had been reached which was detailed in the letter which the Secretary was asked to send to Joe Swinton with the Council Minute.
- (13) SEED POTATO FORUM: The minute of the meeting of the Seed Potato Forum of 9 December had been circulated to the members of Council. The Secretary had written to Dr Mike Storey sometime ago and as yet had not had a reply. The members of Council were disappointed they were not involved in consultation on seed R & D.
- (14) NASPM/SPTA MEETING: The Secretary had provisionally arranged a room at the Huntingtower Hotel as the Ice Rink was already booked. It was agreed that dialogue should be kept going and the Secretary was asked to contact NASPM and firm up the arrangements.
- (15) UKSAB MEETING: Alistair Redpath reported that the meeting scheduled for the 20 January 1999 had not gone ahead as planned.
- (16) CORRESPONDENCE: The Secretary reported that the following correspondence had been received:
Letters from the Scottish Office headed:
(a) "Potato Brown Rot Measures for 1998/99". The letter gave details of the measures to be applied to the import of Dutch and Egyptian potato crop this season.

- (b) "Potato Brown Rot: Import of Potatoes From the Netherlands And Egypt"
This letter was further notice of the legislation which came into force on the 18 December 1998 governing the imports of potatoes from Holland and Egypt.
- (c) "Potato Ring Rot outbreak in the Netherlands". This letter gave notice of a finding of Ring Rot on a seed potato farm in the Netherlands.
Concern was expressed at the danger to the Scottish Seed Industry from the threat of introduction of these two quarantine diseases. There was a need to remind the industry of the voluntary ban which had been in operation last year. It was suggested that the Association should discuss this with the NFU and BPC at the earliest opportunity.
- (d) "Derogation from Directive 77/93/EEC for Ware Potatoes from South Africa". This letter gave details of a derogation to allow the import of ware potatoes into the EC from South Africa.
- (e) "Maximum Levels for Aflatoxins in Foodstuffs - Commission Regulation and Directive".
- (f) "Quantitative Ingredient Declarations ("QUID")
- (g) "Report of the Consultative Steering Group on the Scottish Parliament".
- (h) "European Commission Regulation No. 194/97 Setting Minimum Levels for Nitrate in Lettuce and Spinach".
- (i) "The Food Standards Agency: Consultation on Draft Legislation". It was suggested that this consultation document should be sent to Joe Swinton for his comment.
- (j) "Policy Responsibility for all Work Concerning GM Crops and Foods".
A letter from The British Society of Plant Breeders Ltd headed:
"Small Ware Campaign". The letter requested the Association's support for their advert in the January issue of Potato Review. This had been given.
A letter from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food headed:
"Cuba: Agricultural Mission and Food Fair - February 1999".
A letter from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food headed:
"IREP Database Update".
A letter from the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food headed:
"UN/ECE Standards for Early and Ware Potatoes". It was also suggested that this paper should be sent to Joe Swinton for his comment.
A letter from Scottish Enterprise headed:
"Future Success for Scotland's Food Industry (A Cluster Based Approach)".
A letter from The Office of Science and Technology headed:
"Review of the Framework for Overseeing Developments in Biotechnology".
A letter from the Department of Trade and Industry headed:
"Price Indications: Consultation".
A letter from The Pesticides Safety Directorate headed:
"Effects of Seed Treatments on Birds".
A letter from The Pesticides Safety Directorate headed:
"ECCO Peer Review Meetings".

The Secretary confirmed that he would be happy to make available copies of any of these letters to Association Members on request.

- (17) DATE OF NEXT MEETING: It was confirmed that the next meeting of Council would be held on Thursday 11 March 1999 at Perth Ice Rink.
- (18) SOCIAL EVENTS: It was confirmed that the Association's Golf Outing was booked for Thursday 20 May 1999 and that the second round of the Curling would take place on Friday 26 March 1999 at 3.00p.m. at Perth Ice Rink.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS: It was brought to the notice of Council that Caroline Lang had been made redundant by the NFU as part of their restructuring. Peter Logie was taking over responsibility for potatoes. A letter had been received from Greig Middleton & Co. Ltd detailing the current value of the Association's investments and also stating that they were happy with the existing stocks held by the Association.

The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

A.M. Saito
11/3/99.