

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE
ASSOCIATION held in the PREMIER
SUITE, ST. JOHNSTONE FOOTBALL
CLUB, McDIARMID PARK, PERTH at
2.00 p.m. on Thursday, 1 July, 1999.

PRESENT: Messrs. A. M. Beattie, C. J. Herron, V. Lumb, J. M. Marshall, J. R. McArthur, J. L. Milne, A. B. Pullar, J. O. Robertson, D. Y. Stewart, J. M. Swinton along with H. B. Edmond, the Secretary.

The Association President, Mr A. M. Beattie, occupied the Chair and welcomed those present at the meeting. Approval was sought and obtained for the change of venue.

- (1) **APOLOGIES:** Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs R. J. S. Doig, D. J. Harley, J. Macfarlane, K. A. McKenzie and A. J. B. Redpath.
- (2) **MINUTES:** The Minute of the Meeting of Council of 6 May 1999 was taken as read, approved subject to V. Lumb's name being deleted from those recorded as being present. The chairman there after signed the minute.
- (3) **MATTERS ARISING:**
 - (a) **Death of Past Trade Members:** The Secretary reported that he had written to Mr J. Forsyth of Coatbridge expressing the condolences of the Council to his family for the loss of his father.
 - (b) **Subscriptions:** The Secretary reported that all the subscriptions with the exception of two had been collected. These two were being pursued and it was anticipated they would be resolved shortly
 - (c) **Prize Draw Proceeds:** The Secretary reported that letters of thanks had been received from The Cancer Research Campaign (Scotland) and Macmillan Cancer Relief for the donations from the Prize Draw.
 - (d) **Curling:** The Secretary reported that the first round of this years Curling would take place at Murrayfield on Tuesday 30 November 1999 at 3.00pm. There were no further developments in respect of this year's Dinner and Dance and after discussion it was agreed that Mr A Pullar should bring his recommendations to the next Council meeting.
 - (e) **JPTC:** It was noted that the next meeting of the JPTC was scheduled for 11 August. The members of the JPTC and the main council were asked to put forward items for the agenda.All other matters were covered in the agenda for today.
- (4) **BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL:** A copy of the Minute of the meeting of the British Potato Council held on 2 June 1999 had been circulated by the Secretary. Mr Stewart gave a report on the meeting.
 - (a) **Finance and Budget Report:** He gave a report on the BPC budgeted income and expenditure including the intended run down of reserves until the year 2006. In reply to a question on why the BPC were reducing reserves he indicated that MAFF's philosophy was that the organisation's function was to develop the industry and that it should not have excessive reserves. Expenditure on R & D, marketing and MITT activities could be maintained at a level where they could make a serious impact whilst helping to keep levy rates down. He also indicated that management was implementing cost savings of £200,000 over the next three years.

(b) BPC Prospectus: A prospectus was being prepared in advance of the consultation leading up to the three year revue of the Council in 2000. He gave a report on its contents including registration thresholds and early settlement discounts for levy payers, which would be linked to early submission of returns. The proposal was that thresholds be increased to two hectares for producers and to 500 tonnes for purchasers. The intention was to launch the prospectus in the autumn of 1999. It was the general feeling of the members that the revue was too early in the Council's life and that as most activities were longer term it would be unfair to condemn the BPC after only three years.

(c) Benchmarking Survey: A survey of levy payers had been conducted on behalf of the BPC by Town & County to ascertain the level of awareness of BPC activities and to seek their views on its performance. The results were very much in line with what Mr Stewart expected. The results were in general positive but there was a need to improve communications with levy payers.

(d) Levy Collection: Levy collection from both growers and purchasers showed an excellent position with over 97% of the 1998 producers' levy collected. 96.7% of purchasers levy for the full season of 1997/8 and 94.3% of the first quarter of 1998 was collected.

(e) British Potato 99: Mr Stewart reported that preparations for the British Potato event taking place on 8 and 9 September 1999 was well underway.

(f) R & D Issues: Mr Stewart gave a report on R & D issues discussed at the meeting, in particular the fact that another finding of Brown Rot contamination had been reported in a river in eastern England (River Nene).

(g) Staff Recruitment: A report on recent appointments to the staff of the British Potato Council was given. Jim Muir was taking up the post of Field Manager in the North of Scotland and Caroline Lang was already in post in Southern Scotland.

(5) SEED SECTORAL GROUP: The Secretary had circulated the Minute of the meeting of 27 May 1999 with the agenda. The Chairman reported on some of the items discussed.

(a) Seed Satisfaction Survey: The results were detailed and complex and as a result Town and County were making a resume. This would highlight the main points and in particular the major dissatisfactions with seed potatoes.

(b) R & D Matters: The council had received 126 research concept notes and those with a seed element would be referred to the SSG before being approved.

(c) Seed Export Matters: The next Plant Health Inward Mission would take place on 11 August. 10 countries were being invited and would visit SASA as well as the 'Potatoes in Practice' event at Dundee and Gordon & Innes. Members of Council queried the method of selection of commercial companies to be visited on this type of BPC activity. Mr D. Stewart undertook to obtain clarification on the subject.

(d) Variety Handbook: The updated new handbook was in the process of being constructed. There would be an English, French and Spanish version with the export versions being smaller as they would contain only export varieties.

(e) BPC/SAC/SCRI Field Day: Members were reminded that this event 'Potatoes in Practice' was scheduled for 12 August.

Most other Items in the minute were discussed during the review of the minute of the British Potato Council Meeting.

(6) CONSTITUTIONAL MATTER: The Chairman report that very shortly PBI Fenton would be sold and that he would not be transferring to the new buyer. He

would be remaining with PBI Cambridge who would not be involved in the potato trade. As a result of this situation his position as President under paragraph 11 of the Constitution and Rules would be untenable. He had on the other hand taken on the position as consultant with Caithness Potatoes Ltd who were members. This allowed him to comply with all the conditions laid down in paragraph 3 of the Constitution. He requested Council's comment on the situation. The Council gave unanimous support to the President to continue in office until the next election of Office Bearers, although the Council Members present would prefer if he continued and finished the full term as laid down in the Constitution and Rules.

- (7) ARBITRATION SEMINAR: A report on the Arbitration Seminar held on 17/18 June in York was given. All the delegates who attended felt it was a very useful course and should be repeated on a regular basis, possibly every two years. Some Council members who had not been involved in arbitration requested to be allowed to observe during a hearing
- (8) WARE GROWERS CONCERNS: A report on the meeting of the 25 June 1999 between Scottish Executive Plant Health Personnel and the Committee set up to look into the concerns of ware growers was given by the Chairman. (Copy attached) The BPC report on the survey of ware growers' seed requirements for the year 2000 was also considered. Council agreed that it appeared from this report that a derogation for 2000 was not now required. A number of members of Council felt that derogation and the request for an alteration to the Plant Health Regulations to allow ware growers to plant twice saved seed were so closely connected that they should be dealt with at the same time. There was not total agreement on this point. A proposal that a request for an alteration to the Plant Health Regulation while the derogation request for the year 2000 stands was made by Mr Ron McArthur and seconded by Mr L. Milne, Mr Ron McArthur was asked on behalf of Council to draft a letter to Mr C. Greenslade covering both points. A letter from a variety controller was considered and the contents noted.
- (9) POTATO BROWN ROT: The Scottish Office letter in response to the Associations request for clarification on two points was considered.
1. The size of the 'buffer zone' round an infection site.
 2. The speed of notification of an outbreak.

On point 1. SERAD indicated that the size of the zone depended on the particular circumstances in which the disease was found and the potential for spread. They intended taking this point up with MAFF with a view to perhaps having the implementing legislation clearer. On point 2. the legislation required Member States to notify other Member States and the Commission of confirmed occurrences of the disease. Council felt that in this instance speed was of the essence.

- (10) CORRESPONDENCE: The Secretary reported that the following correspondence had been received:

Letters from the Scottish Office headed:

- (a) "Guidance Notes on Quantitative Ingredient Declarations ("QUID"): Final Versions of the UK and EU Texts".
- (b) "Consolidation of the Food Labelling Directive (79/112/EEC)".
- (c) "Mycotoxins – EC Permitted Levels".
- (d) "Draft Guidance Notes for Labelling of Food Containing Genetically Modified Soya or Maize and Novel Foods and Novel Food Ingredients Legislation".

- (e) "CAP Reform in the Arable Sector: Consultation and Implementation".
(Views sought).
- (f) "Draft Guidance Notes for Labelling of Food Containing Genetically Modified Soya or Maize and Novel Foods and Novel Food Ingredients Legislation".
(Correction to (d) above).
- (g) "Arable Area Payment Scheme: Revision of EC Commission Regulations on Set-Aside".

Letters from MAFF headed:

- (a) "Expointer '99 Exhibition, Porto Alegre, Brazil - 28 August to 5 September 1999".
- (b) "37th International Fair for Agriculture and Food Industry - Gornja Radgona, Slovenia - 21 - 29 August 1999".
- (c) "26th Agrokomplex '99 Exhibition, Nitra, The Slovak Republic - 19 to 25 August 1999".

Letters from the Pesticides Safety Directorate headed:

- (a) "Revocation of Approvals for Use of Pesticides in the UK Following Implementation of Directive 98/82/EC into UK Legislation".
- (b) "Second Review Regulation - Draft Regulation from EC Commission on the European programme for review of old active substances (document 6304/v1/99 rev 2 of 28.04.99)".

Letters from British Potato Council.

- (a) "Potato Industry Development Council (Amendment) Order" (Copy of Order for information - comes into effect on 1 July 1999)
- (c) "Potato Industry Development Council (Amendment) Order" (Request for list of members)
- (d) "Copy of EYEwitness" (For information)

Letter from Scottish Enterprise.

"Strategy for Scottish food and Drink Industry"

Letters from Agra Europe

- (a) "European Packaging & Waste Law" (promotion of monthly publication)
- (b) "Eurofood" (promotion of monthly publication)

Letter from the Campaign for Independent Foods

"Save our Foods". (Two Letters)

Letter from Financial Times

"Hypermarkets and Supermarkets in Europe"

Letter from Action 2000

"Action 2000 Working with Trade Associations & Professional Institutions"

Letter from Greig Middleton & Co

Enclosing the six monthly valuation of the Associations investments

Fax from Qui & Quoi Guide Des Filières Pomme De Terre, Paris

Subscription request for copy of their Guide

(11) DATE OF NEXT MEETING: It was confirmed that the next meeting of Council would be held on Thursday 26 August 1999 at McDiarmid Park, Perth.

(12) ANY OTHER BUSINESS: The Secretary issued the under noted for information:-

Copy of the Scottish Office figures of the area entered for classification at SE and Elite grades in Scotland.

There being no further business the meeting closed with a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

*AM Salt
26/8/99.*