

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, 26 August, 1999.

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PRESENT: Messrs. A. M. Beattie, R. J. S. Doig, D. J. Harley, C. J. Herron, V. Lumb, J. M. Marshall, J. R. McArthur, K. A. McKenzie, J. L. Milne, A. J. B. Redpath, J. O. Robertson, D. Y. Stewart, along with H. B. Edmond, the Secretary. M/s Joanne Kemp, Seed Manager for the British Potato Council was also present for Item 4 on the agenda.

The Association President, Mr A. M. Beattie, occupied the Chair and welcomed those present at the meeting. He gave a particular welcome to Joanne Kemp. It was agreed that the presentation on the Seed Satisfaction Survey would be taken first.

- (4) SEED SATISFACTION SURVEY: Joanne Kemp gave a presentation on the results of the Survey and this was followed by questions. Copies of the presentation are available from the Secretary on request and a summary of the findings were also published in the recent edition of EYEwitness, The British Potato Council's publication. M/s Kemp left after receiving an appreciative vote of thanks from the President and Council Members.
- (1) APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs J. B. Hollywood, J. Macfarlane, A. B. Pullar and J. M. Swinton.
- (2) MINUTES: The Minute of the Meeting of Council of 1 July 1999 was taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.
- (3) MATTERS ARISING:
- (a) Subscriptions: The Secretary reported that all the subscriptions with the exception of one had been collected. The Secretary was asked to contact Tim Fletcher who now worked for Higgins Agriculture who it was understood looked after the interests of the one outstanding subscription.
- (b) Entertainment Matters: The first round of Curling had already been notified to members as Tuesday 30 November 1999 at 3.00pm at Murrayfield. The Secretary had now been allocated ice at Perth Ice Rink for 3 March 2000 at 3.00pm for the second round. The Annual Dinner and Dance was now confirmed for the Huntingtower Hotel for Friday 10 December 1999. The Albany Band has again been booked. A fax from A Pullar suggesting events to celebrate the millennium was considered. The 20 October 2000 at the Invercarse Hotel was considered to be too early and further discussion was postponed until Archie Pullar was present.
- (c) Next Meeting of the JPTC: The Secretary reported that the next meeting was scheduled for 22 September 1999. Members were requested to have items for the agenda with the Secretary as soon as possible. R. McArthur proposed that a bonded arrangement for traders similar to the ABTA system for travel agents would be a very appropriate item for the agenda. This was agreed.
- (d) Inward Missions: Arising from item 5(c) D. Stewart reported that he had spoken with Diana Rees on the method of selecting companies to visit when organising Inward Missions of overseas visitors. He said he was convinced it was conducted in a fair and equal manner. Since the BPC had come into being all

exporting companies had been visited once and they had just starting on a second round.

- (5) BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL: A copy of the Minute of the meeting of the British Potato Council held on 10 August 1999 had been circulated by the Secretary. Although Mr Stewart had not been at the meeting he offered to take questions. Members were asked to peruse the minute and if any point required clarification they could contact him.
- (6) SEED SECTORAL GROUP: The meeting of the Seed Sectoral Group had just taken place on Tuesday 24 August at Oxford. The Chairman gave a brief verbal report. The main item had been a presentation on the Seed Satisfaction Survey similar to that given to Council today. Other matters discussed included off farm grading and derogation, both of which were on today's agenda. It was agreed that the whole subject of off farm grading required in-depth discussion with the Scottish Executive. It was felt that remaining items should be left to the next meeting when the minute should be to hand.
- (7) END OF SEASON'S EXPORTERS MEETING: The Secretary had circulated A very full minute of the meeting, which took place on 2 June 1999. John Speirs had prepared a very comprehensive minute and there were no questions.
- (8) WARE GROWERS CONCERNS: The Chairman gave a resume of the background to this agenda item. The Scottish Executive's response to the letter, which had been sent following the last Council meeting, met with some strong comment. Some members were surprised at C. W. Greenslade's request for greater detail when he appeared to appreciate all the salient points of the request for alteration to the regulation when the Committee met with him on the 25 June 1999. The Chairman proposed that there were two issues and that they be dealt with separately. This was agreed.
1. Derogation: After discussion it was put to a vote as to whether the request for derogation for the year 2000 should stand or be withdrawn. There were 8 votes for withdrawal, 1 vote for the request to stand and 3 abstentions.
  2. Request for alteration to the Regulation: There were a number of points in the letter from the Scottish Executive, which would be dealt with separately. D Stewart restated his view that the proposals to alter the legislation would improve seed health in Scotland by giving the official inspectorate a better knowledge of the whole crop. The matter of off farm grading was a separate concern, which required in-depth discussion but had nothing to do with this request. It was proposed by Ken McKenzie and seconded by Ron McArthur that the Council proceeds with the sub committee's request.
- It was agreed the President and Secretary would have letters constructed for both issues and circulate them to the Committee and Office-bearers for approval before being sent.
- (9) CONDITION OF SALE FOR SEED POTATOES: A proposal that Council should look at clause 15 of the Association's Condition of Sale for Seed Potatoes was considered. Clause 15 concerns interest on overdue accounts, which is, bank base rate plus one half thereof. Currently this would be 5% + 2.5% (7.5%) which was considered very attractive to leaving debts outstanding. After discussion Council decided that they preferred to leave the condition as it stood as there were other methods of obtaining payment for outstanding accounts and as a last resort the seller could resort to the facility of Arbitration. There was also the recent legislation 'The Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998' which may be of assistance. The Secretary was asked to write to the member concerned.

(10) CONVICTION OF A MEMBER FOR A CONTRAVENTION OF THE SEED POTATOES REGULATION 1991(AS AMENDED): The conviction of David Lindsay(Potato Merchants) Ltd and Francis Beard for selling unclassified Estima potatoes for planting was discussed. The sale of unclassified seed was regarded as a serious matter by all members of Council and a proposal made by J. M. Marshall to have the member expelled was seconded by D. J. Harley. There was no counter proposal. As Council had not the power to expel a member, the proposal would have to be put to a General Meeting of the Association as per Paragraph 7 of the Association's Constitution and Rules. An Extraordinary General Meeting was agreed for Thursday 21 October 1999 at 2.00pm for the sole purpose of considering this proposal. It was also unanimously agreed that the discretionary power of Council to suspend a member be exercised in this case pending the outcome of the Extraordinary General Meeting. The Secretary was instructed to write to the member to this effect.

(11) POTATO BROWN ROT/POTATO RING ROT: A report on the meeting between industry bodies and the Scottish Executive held on 20 August 1999 was given by the Chairman. The target of the meeting was 'Keeping brown Rot/ Ring Rot out of Scotland'. As from the 21 August when the new Brown Rot Directive came into force it was no longer possible for the Scottish Executive to insist on inspection and sampling of seed potatoes entering Scotland from Holland. They were very limited in what they could do and wanted to get the message over as to the seriousness of these diseases and also encourage industry to take its own action.

The undernoted had been discussed:

1. A continuation of the industries voluntary ban.
2. A voluntary notification of importing if a voluntary ban was not total.
3. As much publicity as possible of the cost to the industry if these quarantine diseases ever enter Scotland.

Statistics on both diseases were given and it was stressed the danger from Ring Rot was greater than Brown Rot.

**Brown Rot:** In 1998 the Dutch tested 50,000 stocks and the disease was still not eradicated, having been found in both seed and ware. 4,000 watercourses had been tested with 800 found contaminated. In 1999 they have agreed to test all stocks of seed. In 1998 the disease has also been found in Germany and Portugal. In England, the testing of watercourses has revealed findings in the Thames Basin and east Anglian rivers.

**Ring Rot:** There has been 28 contaminated stocks found in Germany, both in basic and commercial seed. It was more widely found than Brown Rot and industry had to be on guard. It was regarded as a northern Europe problem in Denmark, Finland Sweden and Germany. In 1998 it was found in Germany and Denmark in seed and in other countries in ware and starch crops.

The main issues to consider were:

1. Import of small lots of trial material.
2. Garden Centers and mail order.
3. Off farm grading and loss of identity and possible contamination with imported material.

The next meeting was being organised by the NFU(S) and it was hoped it would be an all industry meeting including representatives from processors, packers, mail order, garden centres and trial material importers.

- (12) **APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP:** An application from Smith & Holbourne Ltd for membership of the Association was considered. They were proposed by Pseedco Ltd and seconded by Agrico UK Ltd. Further enquiries were to be made to find out if they met the requirements of the Association's Constitution and Rules before further consideration of the application would be made.
- (13) **WEB SITE:** The Secretary gave details of progress with the development of the Association's web site. A web site and domain had been obtained through Total Web Solutions. 20 Mb of web space has been obtained and host domain name of <http://www.spta.org.uk> registered. Suggestions for the contents of the pages were requested. The intention was that members could have their name on the web under trade categories. It was suggested that a nominal fees should be charged for entry to cover some of the cost. £10 was agreed to cover a members entry in one or more categories. The Secretary was asked to canvas interest from members with the next member's letter.
- (14) **CORRESPONDENCE:** The Secretary reported that the following correspondence had been received:

Letters from the Scottish Office headed:

- (a) "Planting Restrictions in the Protected Region". (Response to letter sent after Council meeting of 1 July, Item 8)
- (b) "Arable Area Payment Scheme: Revision of the EC Commission's Implementing Regulation – Maintenance of Protein Crops to Harvest".
- (c) "Quantitative Ingredient Declarations ("QUID") - Final Version of the Food Labelling (Amendment) (NO 2) Regulations 1999".
- (d) "Arable Area Payments Scheme: Revision of Commission Implementing Regulations".
- (e) "Rural Affairs Department". + News Release (Notification of change of name).
- (f) "GM Food Labelling". (Consultation paper requiring response by 10/9/99)
- (g) "Labelling of Ingredients of Alcoholic Drinks". (Response by 15/10/99)
- (h) "Area Entered for Inspection at all Grades" (Already issued to all members)
- (i) "Summary Report on the Consultative Steering Group" (Report on the Consultation on the Operation of the Scottish Parliament – Copies of the report are available)

Letters from MAFF headed:

- (a) "MAFF Overseas Trade Fair Report – AGROBALT'99".
- (b) "Agricultural Opportunities in the Baltic States: Proposed MAFF Mission – October 1999". (Reply slip enclosed with correspondence)
- (c) "Exhibitions in Poland and Peru". (Enclosing flyers for: Agrotec'99 & Feria De Ganaderia, Lima, Peru – 16 – 19 September 1999 and Britain in Poland, Warsaw, Poland - 22 – 24 September 1999.
- (d) "Vacancies on the Advisory Committee on Pesticides from the Advisory Committee on Pesticides at MAFF" (Requesting suggestions for candidates for these public appointments)

Letters from the Pesticides Safety Directorate headed:

- (a) "PSD Fees for Approval of Agricultural Pesticides – 1999/2000".
- (b) "Removal of the Active Ingredients Ethiofencarb, Mephosfolan, Pyrazophos, Phosalone and Quinalphos from the 'Streamlined List'".
- (c) "Pesticides Monitor – Free Monthly Copy" (Plus subscription form for Full Monitor)
- (d) "Labelling of Amateur Products Containing Organophosphorus(Or Carbanates) Anticholinesterase Compounds".
- (e) "Further Guidance on the Submission of Applications for the Off-Label Use/Extension of Use of Pesticide Products". (Replacement pages for Manual)

Letters from British Potato Council.

- (a) "Annual Report 1997/98" (Copy)
- (b) "Seed Satisfaction Survey" (copies of presentation – are be available)

Letter from Scottish Enterprise.

"Scottish food and Drink – The Big Opportunity"

Letter from Department of Trade and Industry.

"Fair Measure" – A consultation document on modernising the law on the sale of goods sold by quantity.

Letter from Agrow Reports, Surrey

"UK Crop Protection Directory" (Offer of publication)

Letter from Dyson Bell Martin

"Monitoring, Advisory and other services in relation to Parliaments, Assemblies and other Government of the UK" (Offering their services)

Letters from Sittingbourne Research Centre

"Re; Sittingbourne Research Centre (SRC), Sittingbourne, Kent" (Looking for occupants)

Letter from Peter Brown Associates

"Change of Address"

Letter from efdex Ltd

"Electronic trading and information system"

Letter from Management Forum

"Conferences and Seminars for September 1999" and later.

Letter from The Chartered Institute of Arbitrators (Scottish Branch)

Malcolm Strang Steel now Secretary replacing Donald Rennie

John Campbell, Chairman, 11 Blasket Place, Edinburgh, EH9 1RN

(15) DATE OF NEXT MEETING: It was confirmed that the next meeting of Council would be held on Thursday 21 October 1999 at McDiarmid Park, Perth.

(16) ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

(a) Annual Council Elections: The Chairman intimated that the following Council members will retire by rotation in accordance with the Association's Constitution and Rules on 31 October 1999:- A. P. Bayne, R. J. S. Doig and J. M. Swinton. In addition the Council was two in number short of the number set out in the Constitution. The Secretary was instructed to make the usual arrangements for Council Elections to fill these five vacancies.

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

