

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE
ASSOCIATION held in the STATION
HOTEL, LEONARD STREET, PERTH at
2.00 p.m. on Thursday, 18 November, 1999.

PRESENT: Messrs A. M. Beattie, R. J. S. Doig, T. Halliwell, D. J. Harley, C. J. Herron, V. Lumb, J. Macfarlane, J. R. McArthur, K. A. McKenzie, A. Melrose, 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. He gave a particular warm welcome to the new members of Council, Tim Halliwell and Alistair Melrose. He also welcomed David Walker, the Chairman of the British Potato Council who was present to give a presentation on the work and achievements of the BPC as part of item 11 on the agenda. It was agreed that item 11 should be taken first. David Walker gave a run down on the activities of the BPC since it started in June 1997 and this was followed by a question and answer session. At the conclusion the Chairman thanked David Walker for taking time to come to Scotland and for his very explicit presentation. Council discussion on the subject was left until David Walker had departed.

- (1) APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs J. B. Hollywood, J. M. Marshall and A. J. B. Redpath.
- (2) MINUTES: The Minute of the Meeting of Council of 21 October 1999 was taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.
- (3) MATTERS ARISING:
 - (a) Entertainment Matters: There had been 165 applications for tickets for the Annual Dinner and Dance. It was agreed that we would try and accommodate this number, as it was difficult to reduce them with so many applications arriving in the last batch. A. Pullar was asked to organise the raffle and finalise the arrangements with the hotel.
 - (b) Curling: The Secretary reported that he had written to all the skips for the first round of the SPTA curling bonspiel on 30 November 1999 at Murrayfield Icerink.
All other matters were on the agenda.
- (4) APPOINTMENT OF OFFICE-BEARERS: Council unanimously agreed that the President should continue in office and that the Secretary, Hugh B. Edmond should be re-appointed for a further year. Council also resolved to re-appoint Messrs. MacMillan & Co., Chartered Accountants, Glasgow as the Association's Accountants.
It was agreed that item (8) would be taken next.
- (8) APPOINTMENT OF COMMITTEES, ETC.: Council re-appointed the members of the Association's Sub-Committees, other appointments and Industry Committees with the same personnel as the previous year with the addition of Messrs T. Halliwell, C. J. Herron and A. Melrose to the Entertainments Sub-Committee and replacing R. D. Hunter with H. B. Edmond on the Arbitration Rules Joint (NASPM/SPTA) Working Party.

- (5) 1998/99 ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS: The Secretary took Council through the Association's unaudited Accounts for the year 1998/99, copies of which had been laid on the table. The Accounts were approved for submission to the Association's Accountants, Messrs MacMillan & Co., Glasgow for certification in the usual way.
- (6) BUDGET for 1999/2000: The Chairman reported that he had approved with the Secretary a budget of £13,691.00 to be submitted to Council. This left only a marginal surplus of £239.00 on the assumption that the membership subscriptions and number of members did not change. In addition the budget did not provide for an increase in the Secretary's salary to £8,400 per annum which was agreed by Council in the Secretary's absence. In the circumstances, Council agreed to recommend to the members at the forthcoming Annual General Meeting that subscriptions for the current year be increased by £5.00 across all tonnage rates.

That is:-

	<u>Subscriptions</u> <u>(Net of VAT)</u>
0 - 6,000 tonnes	£165.00
6,001 - 10,000 tonnes	£195.00
10,001 - 14,000 tonnes	£235.00
14,001 - 18,000 tonnes	£265.00
over 18,000 tonnes	£295.00

- (7) BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL: The minute of the meeting of the British Potato Council of 5 October 1999 had been circulated to Council members at the previous meeting. D. Stewart gave a brief resumé to the members. A review of British Potato 99 event had revealed very favourable comments and a good turnout. The only criticism was of the catering facilities and on the location of the seminar room. They had also discussed progress with the review of the BPC. The launch of the Prospectus had taken place on 20 October in London. There would be a series of roadshow meetings (Forum 2000 meetings) in the spring to communicate the achievements of the BPC to levy payers and also give levy payers the opportunity to put questions to them. D. Stewart indicated that the improvement in moral at Sutton Bridge Experimental Unit since it had been taken back into the hands of the BPC were very positive. On staff issues he said that staff numbers had gone down from 78 to 70 since the transfer from the PMB with 40% joining since 1997. Levy collection, he reported, was reasonably satisfactory with 98.5% of the 1998 producer's levy collected and over 95% of the first three quarters of year 1998 of the purchasers bills paid. Incorrect information on production statistics published by Agra Europe had been retracted after intervention by the BPC. On R&D issues the Seed Sectoral Group had been asked to look again at the project on 'aphid monitoring and time of haulm destruction' which had originally been rejected by the SSG. D. Harley indicated that with almost 90% of the seed production in Scotland, they should have some influence on the decision.
- (9) NFU/SPTA MEETING: The Chairman gave a verbal report of the meeting between the NFU and SPTA on Monday 15 November 1999.

* Seed Potato Classification Schemes – There was little progress to report and changes would not be in place for the 2000 crop. There were some legal difficulties in the opinion of Ministry lawyers, although there was a suggestion that Scotland may go it alone.

* Off-farm grading – Concern was expressed at the danger of grading potatoes for planting at packing or washing stations where imported potatoes may have been packed.

* Brown Rot/Ring Rot – A wide discussion on the subject took place. Because of SERAD's position they had to stand back from any action which might be deemed contrary to free trade. All industry had to be made aware of the dangers and it was agreed that the NFU would prepare a News Release backed by the other industry bodies.

Other matters discussed included ware growers' concerns, weights and measures issues, chemical treatment of seed potatoes, the review of the BPC and royalties on home saved seed.

(10) SEED POTATO CLASSIFICATION SCHEMES: The subject had been widely discussed and disappointment was expressed at the lack of progress. The letter from C. Greenslade, which had been issued with the agenda, indicated that, as already said, the changes would not now come into force for the year 2000.

(11) REVIEW OF THE BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL: The Chairman gave all members present the opportunity to comment. It was unanimously agreed that the Council of the Association should support the continuation of the BPC for a further period of five years. Other points raised which were to be included in the response included:-

* Council felt that the review was too early in the life of the BPC. The type of development work carried out could not be expected to show significant results in just over two years.

* Council felt that a poll at this time was a waste of resources, resources which could be better used for development work, particularly promotion.

* Council felt that a greater proportion of the budget should be targeted towards marketing activities.

* Council asked that R&D be closely examined and should be focused on projects of most benefit to the industry.

* Council asked that a close watch be kept over costs.

* Council was unanimous in their approval of David Walker as Chairman. They considered his leadership as independent chairman very fair and recommended he be appointed for a further term of five years.

(12) SPECIAL RESOLUTION: Council agreed that the following resolution be submitted to the members at the Annual General Meeting:- That Rule 3 of the Constitution and Rules of the Association be amended to read 'Membership shall be open to any person, company or partnership firm engaged in the selling or processing of potatoes originating in Scotland'.

(13) TRADE INSURANCE OR BONDING SYSTEM: R. McArthur confirmed he had organised with a company to have a representative at the next meeting of the JPTC to give a presentation on Trade Insurance. The Secretary was instructed to finalise the arrangements.

(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 from SERAD on JPTC letter, copy issued to Council Members)

(b) "Revision of the Food Labelling Regulations Guidance Notes: Place of Origin". (Response required by 14 December)

- (c) "Increasing the Openness of the Advisory Committee on Novel Foods and Processes" (Response requested by 12 November)
- (d) "Statistics on Growing Crops of Seed Potatoes and Information for All Seed Potato Producers". (Statistics already issued to all Members)
- (e) "World Trade Organisation Negotiations on Agriculture".
(Response was required by 12 November)
- (f) "Review of the British Potato Council".
(On Agenda for Meeting on 18 November)
- (g) "GM Labelling". (Notification of outcome of discussions in Brussels).
- (h) "Revision of the UK Seed Potato Classification Schemes".
(Copies circulated to Council)
- (i) "Main Concordat between the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Scottish Executive". (Booklet)

Letters from MAFF headed:

- (a) "Opportunities in Morocco and Comet/CGEM Roundtable in Morocco: 30 November – 1 December 1999".
(Invitation to take part in a roundtable visit to Morocco in late November)
- (b) "Major Opportunities in Egypt" (Details of Agri-Food visiting Delegation)
- (c) "Visit of Mr Chen Yanming, Vice Governor of Shangdong Province 14 – 20 November 1999".

Letters from the Pesticides Safety Directorate headed:

- (a) "Aspiration Hazard (R65 Harmful: May Cause Lung Damage if Swallowed) Corrigenda and Additional Information".
- (b) "News Update No 34, Adverse Data Procedures".
- (c) "Quinquennial Review of Pesticide Safety Directorate (PSD)"
- (d) "Updated Guidance for Assessing Consumer Exposure".

Letter from British Potato Council.

- (a) "Copy of EyeWitness"

Letter from Scottish Agricultural Science Agency.

"Copy of Seed Register"

Letter from The Foodnews Company Ltd.

"Offering Subscription to their Publication".

Letter from The Patent Office

"ECJ Case No. C – 258/99 – BASF AG Bureau voor de Industriële Eigendom".

Letter from CBD Research Ltd

"Directory of British Associations"
(Invitation to be included in their Directory 'free', and to fill in Questionnaire)

Letters from David Lindsay (Potato Merchants) Ltd

"Acknowledging receipt of the Association's letter".

(15) TIMETABLE OF MEETING for 2000:

The following timetable for meetings

in 2000 was approved:-

AGM	Thursday 27 January 2000	at	2.00 p.m.
Council	Thursday 27 January 2000	at	2.30 p.m.
Council	Thursday 9 March 2000	at	2.00 p.m.
Council	Thursday 4 May 2000	at	2.00 p.m.
Council	Thursday 29 June 2000	at	2.00 p.m.
Council	Thursday 17 August 2000	at	2.00 p.m.
Council	Thursday 19 October 2000	at	2.00 p.m.
Council	Thursday 30 November 2000	at	2.00 p.m.

(16) ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

(a) Rates Assessment: It appeared there had been changes in the rules for the assessment of potato merchant's stores for rating purposes. The Secretary was instructed to contact McCash & Hunter and request that their rating expert research into where these changes will affect members. The subject would be the agenda for the earliest meeting of Council

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

AMB
OK 27/10/00