

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, 27 January, 2000.

PRESENT: Messrs. A. M. Beattie, D. J. Harley, 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.

- (1) APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs R. J. S. Doig, T. Halliwell, C. J. Herron, J. B. Hollywood, J. M. Marshall and A. J. B. Redpath.
- (2) MINUTES: The Minute of the Meeting of Council of 18 November 1999 was taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman.
- (3) MATTERS ARISING:
 - (a) Entertainment Matters: The Annual Dinner and Dance held on Friday 10 December 1999 was considered a success with a deficit of only £6.00 which was compensated for by interest earned on money in the entertainment account. The raffle had grossed £1427.50 and after the deduction of prizes and addition of the proceeds of the auction of two tonnes of Nadine seed kindly donated by Caithness Potatoes Ltd, left a substantial sum available to donate to charity. The President announced he intended the donations should go to the same two charities as last year, namely The Cancer Research Campaign (Scotland) and Macmillan Cancer Relief. The Secretary was asked to write to Caithness Potatoes Ltd thanking them for their generosity. Members were reminded that the second round of the Association's curling competition was booked for Perth on Friday 3 March 2000 at 3.00 p.m. and that the Annual Golf Outing was confirmed for Thursday 18 May 2000, teeing off at 9.30 a.m. and 2.30 p.m.
 - (b) British Potato Council: The Secretary had responded to the Scottish Executive on the Review of the British Potato Council as per the report under item (11) of the minute. Copies of the response were circulated to members who requested.
 - (c) Rates Assessment: Arising from item 16 the Secretary reported that he had spoken to John Hadden of McCash & Hunter regarding the assessment of potato stores for rating purposes. It appeared there had been no changes in the legislation but that the Assessor in Tayside Region had been looking at the assessment of stores in the region. Storing and handling of own production qualified for de-rating but if any of another growers or traders material was stored then each case would be treated on its merits. After a discussion, it was decided to ask John Hadden if he could attend a Council Meeting to give the membership the opportunity to ask questions on the subject.
- (4) ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS: The Secretary confirmed that the Association Accounts for the year to 31 October 1999 had been approved earlier in the day at the Annual General Meeting of Members of the Association. He also confirmed that he had visited the Inspector of Taxes and had to report that although the Association carried out mutuality activities it was registered with the Inland

Revenue as a Trade Protection Association and was therefore subject to Corporation Tax rules. Any surplus or deficit between subscriptions and running expenses of the Association were:- (1) Assessable to corporation tax if a surplus
(2) Allowable as case 1 loss if a deficit.

- (5) 1999/2000 ASSOCIATION SUBSCRIPTIONS: Council noted that its recommendation with regard to the level of subscriptions for the year to 31 October 2000 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 noted that their Special Resolution to amend Rule 3 of the Association's Constitution and Rules to read 'Membership shall be open to any person, company or partnership firm engaged in the selling or processing of potatoes originating in Scotland' was unanimously passed at the Annual General Meeting of Members. The Constitution and Rules would be amended accordingly.
- (7) ASSOCIATION SOLICITORS: It was unanimously agreed that the Association Solicitors should continue to be Messrs McCash & Hunter, 25 Methven Street, Perth, PH1 5ES. The contact for the Association would be Mr Ian Tait.
- (8) BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL: A copy of the Minute of the meeting of the British Potato Council held on 7 December 1999 had been circulated by the Secretary. Mr Stewart gave a report on the meeting. He stated that the Council had been reviewing their events strategy. There would be a major event every two years with smaller events focusing on specific aspects in the interim year. The event, which had been proposed to take place at Harper Adams University College in June 2000, clashed with the World Potato Congress and as a result changes were being proposed. Pages 3, 4 and 5 gave details of proposed funding for research projects over the year. Brown Rot had been discussed in detail. MAFF's efforts to eliminate the organism from waterways had not been completed as expected. There was also the continuing concern of cross contamination from packing stations handling imported produce. Mr Stewart outlined the changes to the method of Price Reporting. Bags would be taken out of the calculation from the start of 2000. Mr McKenzie raised the question of an average price for Scotland, which had been quoted in the past. The Scottish average always ran about £15 to £25 per tonne behind the GB average. As many contracts and regular deliveries were based on the Scottish average members were experiencing problems calculating a price. The Secretary was instructed to write to the Chairman of the British Potato Council expressing the Association's concern and request that the Scottish average to be quoted on the Weekly Price Report. Mr Stewart indicated that the British Potato Council proposed to retain levy rates for 2000 at the same level as currently. Concern was expressed at the contents of the last paragraph on page 15 where a reference to 'speculative growing' was mentioned. Council agreed with the statement 'grow for assured markets, not on spec' but requested that Mr Stewart follow up the Association's concern at the wording 'Council should neither discourage overproduction nor encourage underproduction'. He felt that the meeting had been wrongly reported in the minute.
- (9) SEED SECTORAL GROUP: A copy of the Minute of the meeting of the Seed Sectoral Group held on 25 November 1999 had been circulated by the Secretary. Mr Beattie gave a report on the meeting. A full discussion had taken place on the threat of Brown Rot and Ring Rot to the seed industry. They were backing the campaign by industry bodies to keep these diseases out of Scotland. It was

stressed that the threat was greater from Ring Rot than Brown Rot because of climatic conditions but all resources were to be used to give continued awareness of the dangers of both diseases. Dr M. Storey had updated the Group on three seed related R & D projects. The Group had been updated on the Export strategy. The BPC was subsidising 50% of the cost to put a number of varieties through national list trials for two of the target countries, Lebanon and Turkey. Quantitative trials were also planned for Portugal and penetration research was intended for Poland. The new variety handbook had been distributed to levy payers.

- (10) JPTC MEETING OF 8 DECEMBER 1999: The report on the meeting had been circulated with the agenda. D. J. Harley gave a brief summary of the meeting. Officials from SERAD and SASA had been present and updated the members on the amendments to the Seed Classification Schemes. There had been no progress as MAFF lawyers felt that generation marking may be deemed to be a barrier to free trade. They would encourage a voluntary scheme to show industry had serious intent on a system. On plant health issues C. Greenslade had reported on SERAD's action on off-farm grading. He indicated that some control may be necessary depending on the extent of the practice. He had also stressed the need for continued publicity regarding the danger from Brown Rot and Ring Rot. M. Barnes had confirmed that it was not part of the Seed Potato Regulation for department inspectors to check the weights of containers. It was a matter for Weights & Measures and Trading Standards staff. After SERAD and SASA staff left Ms Linda Scott of Willis Corroon Ltd gave a presentation on the type of group cover for insurance purposes her company could give. There were a number of benefits including substantial savings in cost. To assist in producing more accurate quotations she required more information on risk involved. She had left a risk assessment questionnaire, which was distributed by the Secretary. It was hoped that as many members as possible would complete this in confidence.
- (11) VOLUNTARY GENERATION MARKING SCHEME: The British Potato Council's seed satisfaction survey had indicated that a high proportion of customers wanted to know the age of the seed they purchased. As already mentioned C. Greenslade had indicated that there was a legal problem in the legislation to have generation marking as part of the Seed Potato Regulation although he was still hopeful of overcoming the difficulty. The introduction of a Voluntary Scheme was agreed by Council and it was proposed that members should make the generation available to the buyer at the customer's request. SASA was prepared to assist in the scheme as they virtually had the age of every stock on computer. It was agreed that the Association would publicise that the service was available to buyers on a voluntary basis. It was suggested that the BPC's EYEWITNESS would be a suitable media to give publicity to the scheme.
- (12) SEED POTATO CLASSIFICATION SCHEMES: It was agreed to leave this item until the next Council meeting as the consultation papers had not arrived.
- (13) DEROGATION FOR FARM SAVED SEED: A request from the NFU(S) for derogation for twice-saved farm seed for the current year was discussed. A fairly lengthy discussion took place including the request by SPTA for amendment to the Plant Health Regulation to allow the controlled use of home saved seed. There had been no response from the Scottish Executive on this front as yet. It was agreed by Council that the Association should pursue their request for alteration to the regulation, as it would give greater flexibility than derogation. The Secretary was instructed to write to the Scottish Executive on two separate letters (a) indicating that the Council did not support the NFU(S) request for

derogation and (b) seeking a response and restating our original request for changes to the Plant Health Regulations.

- (14) **BROWN ROT/RING ROT:** A copy of Colin Ley Consultants Press Release had been circulated with the agenda. Council was pleased with the coverage obtained from the SPTA press release as it appeared to have been quoted in most publications.
- (15) **CORRESPONDENCE:** The Secretary reported that the following correspondence had been received:

Letters from the Scottish Office headed:

- (a) "Marketing of Seed Potatoes"(Guidance notes for seed potato producers)
- (b) "Draft Commission Regulation Setting Maximum Levels for Certain Contaminants in Foodstuffs (ENTR/5799/99-EN): Proposed Limits for 3-MCPD".
- (c) "European Commission (EC) Draft Regulation Setting Maximum Levels for Certain Contaminants in Foodstuffs (ENTR/5799/99)".
- (d) "Commission Regulation 2461/1999 on the Growing of Non-Food Crops on Set-Aside Land".
- (e) "The Seeds (National Lists of Varieties) Regulations 1999".
(Response required by 31 January 2000)
- (f) "Agricultural Wages in Scotland: The Scottish Agricultural Wages Board".
(Response requested by 29 February 2000)
- (g) "Assessment of Value for Cultivation and Use of Agricultural Plant Varieties".(Draft Paper and Comments after receiving responses to consultation)
- (h) "Modulation". (Inviting views on alternative ways of using money, currently paid in direct subsidies to farmers, which could assist the long term sustainability of the farming industry – (Response required by 21 February 2000)
- (i) "European Commission (EC) Draft Regulation Setting Maximum Levels for Certain Contaminants in Foodstuffs (ENTR/5799/99 – rev 2)".(Follow on from (b) & (c) above)
- (j) "GM Food Labelling" (Response requested by 5 March 2000)
- (k) "Fees for Plant Breeders' Rights and National Listing 2000-2001".
(Response required by 7 March 2000)
- (l) "Potato Brown Rot: Import of Potatoes from Egypt".
(Notice to Scottish Processing Companies and Ware Importers)
- (m) "Main Concordat between the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Scottish Executive". (Booklet)

Letters from MAFF headed:

- (a) "MAFF Report on MAFF/CBBC Agriculture Mission to China; 21 April – 30 April 1999".
- (b) "MAFF Overseas Trade Fair Report: 37th International Fair for Agriculture & Food Industry: Gornja Radgona, Slovenia – 21 to 29 August 1999".
- (c) "MAFF Opportunities in China Seminar – Thursday 27 January 2000".
(Registration Form)

Letters from the Pesticides Safety Directorate headed:

- (a) "New Procedures for Revoking Provisional Approvals of Pesticide Products when a Data Submission Deadline passes without the Provision of Data".

- (b) "News Update No 35 – Officially Recognised Efficacy Testing Facilities or Organisations in the UK".
- (c) "Judicial Review of the UK Parallel Import Arrangements: R – V – MAFF EXPARTE BAA".
- (d) "Guideline on Statistical Analysis of Efficacy Data".
- (e) "The Revised Long Term Arrangements for Extension of Use (2000)".
- (f) "The Revised Long Term Arrangements for Extension of Use (2000)".
(New Pages for Handbook)
- (g) "Correction to Off-Label Appendices of the Registration Handbook".
- (h) "The Registration Handbook". (Record of amendments).
- (i) "Review of Anticholinesterase Compounds – Update".
- (j) "New Maximum Residue Levels for Pesticides in Food".
- (k) "Changes to the Method by which PSD Estimates the Losses of Pesticides to Surface Waters via Drainflow".
- (l) "Revision of the Policy for Acceptance of Applications for Specific Off-Label Approvals".

Letters from British Potato Council.

- (a) "Copies of EyeWitness" (November and December issues).
- (b) "Copy of the New Variety Handbook 2000".

Letter from Agra Europe.

- (a) "Subscription offer"

Letter from Department of Trade and Industry

- (a) "The Price Marking Order 1999 (S.I. 3042/1999)". (Guidelines attached)

Letter from The Patent Office

"SACIP Update".

Letter from COEX(Convention & Exhibition)

"Brochure together with application form for space at Seoul International Exhibition of Machinery, Science and Technology for Agriculture – 13-18 November 2000"

Letter from Honest Food

"The Campaign for Independent Food". (plea for support)

Letter from Greig Middleton.

"Review of Association Investments"

(16) DATE OF NEXT MEETING: It was confirmed that the next meeting of Council would be held on Thursday 9 March 2000 in Perth.

(17) ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

(a) Par Fries: D. Harley intimated that he was saddened to discover that the Ice Rink catering was using Dutch par fries when there was an abundance of good fresh home grown supplies available. He felt his comments should be recorded and that the catering management should be spoken to.

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

Handwritten signature and date:
A. B. C.
2/03/00