

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, 24 January, 2002.

PRESENT: Messrs. A. M. Beattie, R. J. S. Doig, T. Halliwell, R. Haynes, C. J. Herron, V. Lumb, J. Macfarlane, J. R. McArthur, K. A. McKenzie, A. Melrose, J. L. Milne, A. B. Pullar, A. J. B. Redpath, D. Y. Stewart and J. M. Swinton along with H. B. Edmond, the Secretary.

In the absence of the Association President, Mr V. Lumb, occupied the Chair and welcomed those present at the meeting. Mr J. Grant who had been present at the Annual General Meeting accepted an invitation from the Chairman to remain for the meeting of Council.

- (1) APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs A. P. Bayne, D. J. Harley, A. D. Lamont and P. Peebles.
- (2) MINUTES: The Minute of the Meeting of Council of 22 November 2001 was taken as read approved and signed by the Chairman.
- (3) MATTERS ARISING:
 - (a) Arising from the opening paragraph it was reported that the Secretary had written to Mrs Whitehead as instructed.
 - (b) Entertainment Matters: Arising from Item (3)(a) The Annual Dinner and Dance held on Friday 7 December 2001 was considered a success with 137 attending. There had been a deficit of £193.00 but this had been budgeted for. The raffle had realised £645.00 after the prizes had been paid. The President has since decided that he would like the money to be equally divided between The British Heart Foundation and CHAS at Kinross Hospice as last year. Mr A. B. Pullar, the Entertainments Convenor opened a discussion on the next Dinner and Dance. He had checked with other venues but it appeared that we could not be accommodated in December at any of them. After a wide discussion it was agreed that the Association should retain the event at the Huntingtower Hotel on the same Friday in December. The provisional reservation was to be confirmed with the Hotel.
Members were reminded that the second round of the Association's curling competition was booked for Perth on Friday 8 March 2002 at 3.00 p.m.
 - (c) Association Appointments: Arising from Item (5) The Secretary reported that he had contacted Mr J. B. Hollywood and that he was willing to be a member of the Panel of Arbiters.
 - (d) Voluntary Downgrading of Seed Stocks: Arising from item (8) the Secretary reported that a letter had been sent to DEFRA as per the minute. A reply had been received without any reference to the main query in our original letter. Another letter has been sent and the Secretary awaits a reply.
 - (e) Future of the Association: Arising from Item (9) it was reported that a letter had been sent to the President of NASPM as per the terms recorded in item (9). No reply had been received, as yet, as it was understood NASPM had not had a meeting since receiving the letter.
 - (f) Timetable of Meetings for 2002: Members were asked to note the change of date for the November 2002 meeting from 28 to 21 November.

- (g) Any Other Business: Arising from items (14) (a) & (b) The Secretary had responded to both consultative papers as per the terms recorded in the minute. A decision on the consultation on Rhizomania Protected Zone had just been received from DEFRA. Ministers have decided not to seek continuation of the PZ for Great Britain beyond 31 March 2002. Council were disappointed at the outcome but understood the reasons in respect of Great Britain as a whole with over 200 case being found in south east England. Currently seed exports were unlikely to be greatly affected but it was felt that SEERAD should be asked if in the future there was a problem could Scotland seek PZ status on its own. The Secretary was instructed to write to Mr C. W. Greenslade.
- (4) ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS: The Secretary confirmed that the Association Accounts for the year to 31 October 2001 had been approved earlier in the day at the Annual General Meeting of Members of the Association.
- (5) 2001/2002 ASSOCIATION SUBSCRIPTIONS: Council noted that its recommendation with regard to the level of subscriptions for the year to 31 October 2002 had been approved at the Annual General Meeting of Members. The Secretary was instructed to proceed with arrangements to ingather the subscriptions from Members for the current year.
- (6) BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL: The Secretary had circulated a copy of the Minute of the meeting of the British Potato Council held on 4 December 2001. Mr Stewart gave a report on the meeting. He stated that the Council had been updated on the review of the Levy Collection methods. Instead of a prompt payment discount it was proposed that there would be a dual system of levy rates, a lower rate for payments received by the due date and a higher one for payments received after that date. To reduce costs, Registration Thresholds were being increased to more economical levels. The proposal was to increase these from 1 to 3 hectares for producers and from 100 to 1,000 tonnes for purchasers. A discussion on predictive tools had taken place. Forecast of crop size based on planting data was prepared by the BPC and there was not total agreement on its use. After a lengthy debate the meeting agreed the BPC should publish full factual and accurate data, which was required in order for the recipients to carry out their own analysis and interpretation. They also agreed that a planting intentions survey should be undertaken in February. This was a long-standing process of proven reliability and accurate results. The BPC was required to produce a corporate plan for the next five years and a group was proposed to develop this plan. The Seed Sectoral Group Strategy would be part of this plan. The location for British Potato 2003 was agreed for Newark and that Staffordshire Showground should be provisionally booked for 2005. Consideration had been given to the tenders for the commissioning of new BPC Independent Variety Trials. The majority supported the tender from NIAB with SAC and SBEU. Arrangements were in hand for Futures Markets to use BPC average prices as a basis for cash settlements. As there were no further questions on the minute Mr Stewart concluded his report. Mr J. Macfarlane thanked D. Y. Stewart for all his efforts on behalf of SPTA and this was agreed by all present.
- (7) SEED SECTORAL GROUP: The Secretary had circulated a copy of the Minute of the meeting of the Seed Sectoral Group held on 29 November 2001. The minute was fairly full but Mr Redpath with Mr Doig's support gave a brief report on some of the main points from the meeting. The BPC had made a submission to the PSD to save 2-AB under the 'essential uses' derogation. There would not be an outcome before the spring. The group was updated on the Brown Rot and Ring Rot situation by SEERAD and DEFRA. There had been discussion

on the consultation on Rhizomania Protected Zone status but this had now been superseded by the letter from SEERAD intimating the loss of this status to Great Britain. Soil testing would be required for seed potatoes moving into a PZ from Scotland. This would be at the producers' cost which was higher than in Holland. It was felt this was an unsatisfactory situation and DEFRA/SEERAD would look at it. D. Y. Stewart felt that the additional requirement of less than 1% soil was virtually impossible to meet. A report on exports was given by A. MacLennan who said that they were broadly in line with the previous year although at higher prices. He also updated the group on the Seed Strategy Action Plan, which was a follow on from the original strategy of three years ago. A Seed Supply Chain Manager was being added to the team. A. MacLennan gave them a brief resume on the World Potato Congress in 2003, which would be held in China. Costs would be high because of the distance involved but the BPC had agreed to organise a British presence with accompanying outward mission, using DTI grants where possible. D. Y. Stewart felt that for this country to keep its place in the seed industry the expenditure would be justified. Government support for breeding R & D was discussed. Much of the work supported by government was on core projects and results needed to be effectively exploited to ensure that commercial benefits were derived from the work. A discussion on downgrading and re-instating of grades of potato stocks took place but at that time no final decisions had been announced by DEFRA. J. M. Swinton raised the suggestion that an event similar to the Dutch open seed house event in November should be considered for this country. This would give a window for our seed industry to English and overseas buyers. It was suggested that he should speak to A. MacLennan on the subject.

- (8) SCOTTISH SEED POTATO CONSULTATIVE PANEL: The minute of the meeting of 16 November 2001 had been issued with the agenda for this meeting. A verbal report on the meeting had already been given at the last meeting of Council but following receipt of the minute members were asked for their comments. A. B. Pullar commented on the paragraph on aphid monitoring and insecticide resistance. He felt that resistance to insecticide sprays was becoming a serious problem and the requirements of the aphid monitoring scheme required urgent review. The report indicated that SASA would be conducting such a review. There had been no comment as yet from them and it was agreed that the Secretary should write enquiring on progress on this point and on the subject covered in item (9) of this minute.
- (9) 100% TUBER INSPECTION: The discussion on this subject at the Scottish Seed Potato Consultative Panel meeting on 16 November 2001 was recorded in the minute of that meeting. SASA had indicated they were reviewing this requirement and it was agreed to await their comments but as mentioned above a polite enquiry regarding progress would be appropriate.
- (10) PRODUCTION OF UNCLASSIFIED VARIETIES FOR SEED: R. Haynes made a presentation on the contents of his letter to the Association. Most members agreed that this activity was taking place but there was varying views as to the extent. In some instances it was suggested that it took place quite blatantly on the pretext they were being grow by the English buyer. There was the suggestion that if the practice increased much more it could end the necessity for a seed classification scheme. The extent of the problem was sufficient for Council to seek a meeting with C. W. Greenslade. It was agreed that the Secretary should organise a meeting between SEERAD/SASA and SPTA Office-bearers, R. Haynes

and D. Y. Stewart. Mr R. Haynes was asked to make a copy of his letter available to NASPM and the Seed Sectoral Group/British Potato Council.

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

Letters from the Scottish Office headed:

- (a) "Detection of *Ralstonia Solanacearum* in Scottish Rivers".
(Press Release issued on 21 December 2001)
- (b) "Protection of Scotland's Water Environment: Consultation on Further Scottish Nitrate Vulnerable Zones".
(Response by 15 April 2002)
- (c) "Potato Brown Rot: Import of Potatoes from Egypt".
(Notice to Scottish Processors & Scottish Importers)
- (d) "Rhizomania Protected Zone"
(Decision following consultation)

Letter from SASA headed

- (a) "Minute of Meeting of Scottish Seed Potato Consultative Panel of 16 November 2001".

Letter from DEFRA

- (a) "Voluntary Downgrading of Seed Stocks" (Reply to SPTA letter)

Letters from British Potato Council.

- (a) "eyewitness – December issue".
- (b) "Minute of the Seed Sectoral Group Meeting of 29 November 2001".
- (c) "Minute of the British Potato Council Meeting of 4 December 2001".
- (d) "World Service".
(BPC publication issue)

Letters from Food Standards Agency.

- (a) "Adverse Neurological Reaction to Star Anise".
- (b) "Food Standards Agency Open Meeting - Invitation".
- (c) "Draft Council Regulation Setting Maximum Levels for Dioxins in Food (COM (2001) 495 final)".
- (d) "Food Labelling: Advice on Country of Origin Labelling".
- (e) "Food Labelling Initiatives – Agency Commissioned Projects".
- (f) "Council Regulation Setting Maximum Levels for Dioxins in Food".
- (g) "FSA Website goes live".
- (h) "Food Standards Agency – News".
(Dec/Jan edition)
- (i) "Maximum Levels for Ochratoxin A in Foodstuffs and Aflatoxins in Maize – Commission Regulations and Directive".
- (j) "European Commission Regulation Amending Commission Regulation (EC) No 466/2001 setting Maximum Levels for Certain Contaminants in Foodstuffs".

Letter from The Patent Office

- (a) "Judgment in Proceedings Between Adidas AG & Adidas Benelux BV".

Letter from Agrico UK Ltd

- (a) "Item 10 on the Agenda".

Letter from CBD Research Ltd

- (a) "Directory of British Associations". (Survey and request for SPTA entry)

Letter from Trade Partners UK

- (a) "Time for Trade – Issue 2 of their Brochure".

Letter from Strathearn Seed Growers Ltd

- (a) "Notice of Resignation from Association".

Letter from PRN Publications Ltd

- (a) "Copy of Association Journal".

(12) DATE OF NEXT MEETING: It was confirmed that the next meeting of Council would be held on Thursday 7 March 2002 in Perth.

(13) ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

(a) Conditions of Purchase: A member had passed a copy of Higgins Agriculture's Conditions of Purchase to the Association with concern that the membership should be aware of the conflict in the terms. There were a number of differences but the main ones were that there was no reference to dispute resolution by Arbitration and the terms of payment was 42 days as opposed to 28. Council stressed that the Association's conditions were proven and accepted by the trade and were the ones adopted by the vast majority of the industry. It was agreed that our membership should be made aware of the differences and acceptance of them could lead to difficulties if a dispute arose. It was suggested that a polite letter should be sent to Higgins Agriculture pointing out the problem and inviting them to join SPTA so that they can use our Conditions.

Please note:- Since the Council meeting on 24 January, the Secretary has contacted Higgins Gi and it appears they conduct all seed potato transactions using NASPM Conditions. The Conditions of purchase referred to by the Member was probably in respect of some service such as haulage.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Graham V L L L', is written over the bottom of the page.