

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of  
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE  
ASSOCIATION held in AGRICO UK Ltd  
OFFICES, CASTLETON of EASSIE,  
FORFAR at 2.00 p.m. on Thursday, 8 May,  
2003.

PRESENT: T. Halliwell, D. J. Harley, R. Haynes, H. Hughes, A. D. Lamont, V. Lumb, J. Macfarlane, J. R. McArthur, R. McKay, P. Peebles, A. B. Pullar, A. J. B. Redpath and D. Y. Stewart along with H. B. Edmond, the Secretary.

The Association President, Mr V. Lumb occupied the Chair and welcomed those present at the meeting with a special welcome to Mr R. McKay who was attending his first meeting since being elected to Council. He also thanked Agrico UK Ltd for the use of their facilities for this meeting.

- (1) APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs A. M. Beattie, R. J. S. Doig, K. A. McKenzie, A. Melrose and J. L. Milne.
- (2) MINUTES: The Minute of the Meeting of Council of 13 March 2003 was taken as read approved and signed by the Chairman.
- (3) MATTERS ARISING:
  - (a) Entertainment Matters: Arising from Item (3)(a) – Curling, the Secretary had received an application form for ice for next season from Perth Ice Rink. It was agreed the Secretary should apply for the same ice as in past years for Friday 5 March 2004. A. B. Pullar confirmed that arrangements for the annual golf outing at Forfar Golf Course on Thursday 5 June 2003 were finalised and the Entertainments Committee hoped for a good turn out. The Secretary would be sending details to all Members shortly as in the past.
  - (b) Seed Industry Trail: Arising from Item (3)(b) a copy of a letter from Louise Chapman of the BPC was laid on the table. This gave details of the intended format of the exercise. Interested parties would register with the BPC and have their contact name available on the BPC website. The event would be restricted to the week of 'Potatoes in Practice'. Some members were still sceptical of the exercise being detrimental to the interests of SPTA members but the Association's letter had at least managed to restrict it to a limited period of one week. Members agreed that as it was going ahead they would take part. Council decided that future interest would depend on consideration of reports on feedback, which would be produced by the BPC. As the exercise was Internet driven the Secretary was to discuss with Louise Chapman how SPTA's site could be linked into the event.
  - (c) Association Subscriptions: Arising from Item (3)(d) The Secretary reported that 45 members had so far paid their subscriptions which accounted for 85% of the budget presented at the AGM. The Secretary presented a half-year budget showing a reduced subscription income due to loss of membership. In spite of this, some further anticipated reductions in meeting costs and administration expenditure were likely to keep the deficit for the year at a manageable level.
  - (d) Association Membership: Arising from Item (10) the President asked if any member of Council had thought of ways of attracting new members to join the Association. After discussion it was agreed that existing members should encourage traders including producers who marketed their own seed to join and

inform them of the value of membership of the Association. At this time the application by Miller Farms, Rosefield, Balbeggie, Perth was considered. Miller Farms was proposed by A. J. B. Redpath of Pseedco Ltd and seconded by R. Haynes of Agrico UK Ltd. Council unanimously agreed to their membership of the Association and the Secretary was instructed to write the usual letter of welcome.

All other matters were on the agenda.

- (4) BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL: A copy of the Minute of the meeting of the British Potato Council held on 8 April 2003 had been circulated with the agenda. D. J. Harley highlighted some of the main subjects discussed. He said that a good proportion of the early part of the meeting was taken up by a very interesting report by John Davison and Tim Papworth who had taken part in the Leadership Programme visit to the United States Potato Board. They thanked the BPC for giving them the opportunity to take part in the training event, which they had found extremely useful and very enjoyable. In some aspects they had found the US industry much further forward, for instance in the development of good business relationships throughout supply chains. Also the sophisticated level of political lobbying, which the US industry carried out, using technical experts and specialist agents had impressed them. Some more time in the early part of the meeting had been taken up with discussions on CAP Reform and the Mid-Term Review. David Jones and Graham Nichols were present to give information on the subject from DEFRA and the NFU respectively. Under the proposals payments would be determined by what use was made of land during the reference period, 2000 to 2002, but would be wholly independent of what crops were grown in the current or future years. Proposals affected supported and unsupported crops and unsupported crops included potatoes. The NFU were lobbying for unsupported crops to be included in the calculation of payments. At the meeting it had been announced that Mrs Margaret Carmichael had decided to resign from the BPC. Organisational changes had been announced in a confidential paper but would be detailed in the next edition of 'eyewitness'. Their Chief Executive had outlined the details of the BPC's Strategic Planning. Their role would focus on activities, which were core to the objectives of the Council and which could make a real difference and communicate them carefully and constructively to levy payers. Dr Storey had attended the launch of DEFRA's Science and Innovation strategy. Forecast spend on R & D was £155m (ring-fenced) within a total science budget of £325m. Many of the themes were related to environmental aspects. On marketing and communications issues the 'National Chip Week' had been a great success with the equivalent advertising value estimated at £847K. It had been announced that the World Potato Congress had been cancelled because of the health risk imposed by the SARS epidemic. This had been postponed with the BPC incurring expenditure of £30K, much of which would be used if the event were rescheduled. It was announced that Iain Dykes had accepted the post of Supply Chain Manager based in Edinburgh. He would be joining the BPC on 19 May. Both SEERAD and DEFRA had agreed to state their views on the long distance movement of farm saved seed at the next Seed Sectoral Group meeting.
- (5) APPOINTMENTS TO THE BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL: Mr D. Y. Stewart was standing down as a member of the BPC and although D. J. Harley would continue as a member it was felt that a replacement for Mr Stewart should be put forward. D. Stewart said that he had discussed this with R. J. S. Doig before he went abroad and Mr Doig had indicated that he was prepared to have his name

submitted. Council unanimously supported his application for nomination and the Secretary was instructed to communicate this support to SEERAD.

- (6) FUTURE OF THE ASSOCIATION: The President informed Council that he had written to the President of NASPM in the terms agreed at the last meeting of Council. As soon as a date for a meeting had been received from NASPM the President would let the rest of the JPTC committee know. It was suggested that Council should write to members of SPTA who were also members of NASPM and canvass their views on the Constitution and Rules drafted by SPTA. The President would obtain a copy of the list of NASPM members before proceeding.
- (7) END OF SEASON MEETING WITH EXPORTERS: The President reminded exporters of the meeting at East Craigs on Tuesday 3 June. Items for the agenda had to be with the Secretary by Friday 16 May. A proposal that NASPM and DEFRA should have representation at the meeting had been put to the President. Council agreed that this should be requested direct to SEERAD and not to SPTA.
- (8) ARBITERS' TRAINING MEETING: R. McArthur gave a resume of the format and content of the meeting. It was agreed that more than two hours were required due to the complexity of the subject. After discussion it was agreed that there would be a morning session giving the framework of the Conditions of Sale/Purchase and the relationship to arbitration and the afternoon session would examine various scenarios and possible decisions. Members were invited to contribute possible scenarios for analysis. Each session would be about 2 hours with a break for lunch. The Secretary would notify all Council members by email of the details when confirmed.
- (9) ASSOCIATION WEB SITE: Since the last Council meeting the Secretary had visit Graham Dixon who was developing the site on behalf of the Association. The web site was originally contracted through the Internet provider Total Web Solutions but the annual cost of this was very expensive. Mr Dixon had found out that we could now request the transfer of our domain name to his host and have the same service at a fraction of the cost. The Secretary has now applied to transfer the domain name [www.spta.org.uk](http://www.spta.org.uk) to Fasthosts Internet Ltd. Some ideas provided by Mr Dixon were discussed and the Secretary was asked to obtain up to date details from all members who wished to be involved and proceed with the development as soon as possible. Council would like the site operational by the time the 'Seed Industry Trail' was in progress.
- (10) CORRESPONDENCE: The Secretary reported that the following correspondence had been received:

Letters from the Scottish Executive headed:

- (a) "Changes to the Plant Health Directive".  
(Progress with consultation conducted in August 2001).
- (b) "The Scottish Parliament 1999-2003: Working for You".  
(Review of the Parliament and introduction of their Website)
- (c) "British Potato Council: 2003-2004 Levy".
- (d) "The Plant Health (Great Britain) Order 1993 (As Amended): Potato Brown Rot Measures – Irrigation Ban".
- (e) "Appointments to the British Potato Council". (Item (5) on the agenda)
- (f) "Potato Ring Rot: Notification of Imports of German Potatoes".
- (g) "End of Season Meeting with Seed Potato Exporters".  
(Item (7) on the agenda)
- (h) "Regulation 6 of the Seed Potatoes (Scotland) Regulation 2000".

Letter from SASA headed

- (a) "Inspection of Growing Crops 2002". (Notes to all Growers)

Letters from DEFRA

- (a) "British Potato Council Budget Proposals 2003/2004".  
(b) "Letter Seeking Nominations for Vacancies on the Advisory Committee on Pesticides".

Letter from the Pesticides Safety Directorate headed:

- (a) "The EC Pesticides Review and Essential Uses - Update".

Letters from British Potato Council.

- (a) "Brochure for Exhibitors at 'British Potato 2003' – 3 - 4 September".  
(b) "Minute of the British Potato Council Meeting of 8 April 2003". (on agenda)  
(c) "Potato Newsletter". (March edition)  
(d) "BPC World Service Leaflet"  
(e) "British Seed Potato Handbook". (Request for Association's Inclusion)  
(f) "Seed Industry Trail".

Letter from Department of Trade and Industry

- "Public Consultation on Price Marking. (Response by 27 June 2003)

Letters from Food Standards Agency.

- (a) "Promotion of Foods to Children".  
(b) "Proposal by the European Commission to Amend Commission Directive 2002/16/EC on the Use of Certain Epoxy Derivatives in Materials and Articles in Contact with Food".  
(c) "Proposal by the European Commission to Amend Commission Directive 93/10/EEC on Materials and Articles made of Regenerated Cellulose Film Intended to come into Contact with Foodstuffs".  
(d) "Proposal by the European Commission for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on Materials and Articles Intended to Come into Contact with Food".  
(e) "Food Standards Agency – News". (April 2003 Edition)  
(f) "Food Standards Agency Open Meeting - Invitation".  
(g) "The Feeding Stuffs (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2003". (Statutory Instrument)

Letters from The National Association of Seed Potato Merchants

- (a) "Invitation to SPTA's President to NASPM Annual Dinner". (Reply already sent)  
(b) "Notifying Change of Address".

Letter from Forfar Golf Club

- (a) "Confirming Booking for Thursday 5 June 2003".

Letter from potatocrop.com

- (a) "Advertising the Services of their Website".

Letter from Ken McKenzie

- (a) "Resignation from SPTA Council".

Letter from Perth Ice Rink

- (a) "Ice Booking Form". (To be Returned by 30 May)

Letter from Miller Farms

- (a) "Application for Membership of SPTA".

Email from A Redpath

- (a) "Proposing Miller Farms for Membership of SPTA".

Email from R. Haynes

- (a) "Seconding Proposal of Miller Farms for Membership of SPTA".

Arising from the correspondence Council were sorry to learn of Ken McKenzie's decision to resign from Council but fully understood his reasons. Appreciation of his devoted service to the Association over more than 25 was expressed. The Secretary was instructed to write a letter conveying Council's thanks and best wishes to Mr McKenzie.

- (11) DATE OF NEXT MEETING: It was confirmed that the next meeting of Council scheduled for Thursday 26 June 2003 would be cancelled unless there was any urgent matter to be dealt with.

- (12) ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- (a) Import of Dutch Seed Potatoes: A member of Council brought to the notice of members that Dutch seed potatoes had been imported and planted in East Lothian contrary to the trade's voluntary ban. It was suggested that the Association should express their concern to SEERAD with a request that they pass onto the grower the details of the trade's voluntary ban and the risk their actions pose to the whole Scottish Potato Industry. Data protection legislation would not allow SEERAD to pass the name of the parties involved to SPTA.

- (b) Buyers of Controlled Varieties: A member wished to remind the Council of an agreement made by SPTA and NASPM for their members to pass on the name of buyers of controlled varieties to BSPB. It was felt this could be written into the Condition of Sale the next time they were reviewed.

Before closing the meeting the Chairman once again thanked Agrico UK Ltd for the use of their meeting room.

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

