

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, 16 October, 2003.

PRESENT: R. J. S. Doig, T. Halliwell, R. Haynes, C. J. Herron, H. Hughes, J. Macfarlane, J. R. McArthur, A. B. Pullar and A. J. B. Redpath along with H. B. Edmond, the Secretary.

In the absence of the Association President, Mr A. J. B. Redpath, Vice-President occupied the Chair and welcomed those present at the meeting.

- (1) APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of Messrs A. M. Beattie, D. J. Harley, A. D. Lamont, V. Lumb, R. McKay, A. Melrose, J. L. Milne, P. Peebles and D. Y. Stewart.
- (2) MINUTES: The Minute of the Meeting of Council of 14 August 2003 was taken as read and approved and thereafter signed by the Chairman.
- (3) MATTERS ARISING:
 - (a) Entertainment Matters: Arising from Item (3)(a), Mr A. Pullar reported that the Annual Dinner and Dance was organised for Friday 5 December at the Huntingtower Hotel. The Secretary would circulate details shortly. The usual invitations were to be extended to the President of NASPM and to the Chairman of the Potato Working Group of the NFU. A suggestion put to the Secretary by D. Y. Stewart that the President and Chief Executive of the US Potato Marketing Board should be invited as a guest was accepted. He had visited Scotland recently at the invitation of the British Potato Council. It was agreed that David Walker, Chairman of the British Potato Council should also be invited.
 - (b) Association Subscriptions: Arising from Item (3)(c) The Secretary reported that the 4 outstanding subscriptions still had not been paid. It was reported that one had indicated that he would be paying but as yet this had not arrived. Council Members agreed to contact the other members to finally resolve the situation.
 - (c) Appointment to the British Potato Council: Arising from Item (3)(e) the Chairman of the meeting congratulated Robert Doig on his appointment to the British Potato Council.
 - (d) End of Season Exporters' Meeting: Arising from Item (5). The Secretary reported that he still had not received a report on the meeting.
 - (e) British Potato Council: Arising from Items (8) and (9). The BPC had requested that they receive a copy of our minute of what is reported on the items in our agenda on BPC Council and Seed Sectoral Group minutes. After discussion it was agreed that a copy of these items only should be given to them with all other items being restricted to SPTA members only.

All other matters were on the agenda for today.

- (4) ANNUAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS: The Secretary confirmed that there had only been seven nominations for the nine vacancies on Council. No election was therefore necessary and accordingly they had all automatically been elected to Council with effect from 1 November 2003. A. M. Beattie and J. R. McArthur had decided not to stand again. The Council was lacking in members experienced in Arbitration and as Mr McArthur was involved in some current cases it was agreed that he should be co-opted as a member of Council. He accepted this offer. The Chairman thanked A. M. Beattie in his absence for his devoted

services and wished him all the best for the future. The Secretary was instructed to write to him confirming Council's appreciation for his services. He also thanked J. R. McArthur for taking on the office as a co-opted member. The Secretary explained that Messrs Ross Haynes, Douglas Harley, John Macfarlane, Logan Milne, Peter Peebles and Archie Pullar had been re-elected to Council and that Mr Neil Pullar had been elected to Council. The Secretary was instructed to write the usual letters to the re-elected members and to the new member of Council.

(5) DRAFT ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS: The Secretary tabled interim unaudited accounts of the Association for the year to 31 October 2003. The Secretary took the meeting through the draft accounts and pointed out that although the accounts showed a surplus of £298.90, the projected expenses to the end of the year had been estimated and the total income depended on how many outstanding subscriptions were eventually paid. The £4,000 Bank of Scotland Term deposit expired in November and it was agreed this should be reinvested in a short-term bond (6 months) at the best interest possible.

(6) SEED SECTORAL GROUP: The Secretary had circulated a copy of the Minute of the meeting of the Seed Sectoral Group held on 28 August 2003 with the agenda. The Chairman highlighted some of the main subjects discussed indicating that the big issue at the meeting was the review of 'Farm Saved/Contract Grown Seed'. A paper had been prepared by DEFRA/SEERAD and a response constructed by the Seed Sectoral Group. Both these had been received by SPTA for our comment. The practice of long distance movement of farm saved seed had caused members of SPTA concern for a number of years and Council had advocated some control over the practice for some time. There were no figures available on the extent of the activity and survey data was expensive to obtain and not reliable. It was agreed that the greatest risk was to plant health and the spread of PCN. Council members had been issued with the papers and the Chairman asked if they could give their views by the end of the month. Council members not present were to be sent the papers for their response. DEFRA and SEERAD updated the group on the current Ring Rot and Brown Rot situation. An **EC-wide survey** of brown rot and ring rot was summarised as follows:-

Ring Rot

83,500 seed samples analysed (85,000 in 2001)

18,000 ware samples analysed (16,000 in 2001)

19 seed samples were positive (23 in 2001)

180 ware samples were positive (133 in 2001)

No. of member states with outbreaks:

Seed – 5 (4 in 2001)

Ware – 8 (7 in 2001)

Brown Rot

80,000 seed samples analysed (82,000 in 2001)

16,000 ware samples analysed (15,000 in 2001)

6 seed samples were positive (14 in 2001)

52 ware samples were positive (47 in 2001)

No. of member states with outbreaks:

Seed – 1 (3 in 2001)

Ware – 7 (6 in 2001)

DEFRA reported on the brown rot eradication programme indicating that the organism had been found in the Fosdyke and the river Trent itself. The eradication programme continued but the report painted a mixed picture of the control achieved. SEERAD reported more success in Scotland and hoped to gradually lift the irrigation ban beginning with the Lunan Burn and gradually working downstream. A discussion on the BPC's Ring Rot/Brown Rot Education Plan opened with D. Y. Stewart giving a background into how the Trade Voluntary Ban came into being. Mrs H Priestley advised the group that with the education campaign it was important to communicate the threat to the industry as a whole and the need to keep the disease out of the country. For the campaign to be successful the messages need to be communicated widely and for that reason it will be important that all members are comfortable and in agreement with the campaign messages. The campaign would start as soon as possible and would continue through the seed purchasing season, as it was important to raise awareness of this issue not just for now but also in the long term. Mr A Redpath asked that all risks to the industry be accurately quantified. This led to a discussion on how ring rot can contaminate machinery and stores for very long periods of time and the possible consequences of this. A report was given on a recent R & D committee meeting. The Chairman, Mr Redpath gave a bit more detail on findings in respect of Powdery Scab. Soil types had a bearing with light soil being more prone. He said that findings showed that there was no correlation between infection on the progeny crop and the mother crop. The report was well worthy of a study. On an item on export updates it was noted that exports were up by 15%. There had been an inward mission from Brazil, which had resulted in successful negotiations on new protocols for export of GB seed to Brazil. There was also an inward mission due from Indonesia in October. Mr Dykes also reported that he would be visiting Lebanon and Turkey after BP2003 to report on work already done and future developments. Mr Dykes also indicated that WPC would likely go ahead on 24 March 2004. Potatoes in Practice had been a success with 263 registered attendees although it was thought there would be around 400 people actually in attendance. It was reported that invites for the Seed Industry Event on 13 and 14 November were currently going out and members were urged to get their applications in quickly. Mr Dykes outlined quotes he had obtained for a new varieties handbook and it appeared to be costly. It may be more appropriate to update the online version. It was drawn to the group's attention that Bill Rennie was retiring and that he should be thanked for assistance to the industry.

- (7) BRITISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION: A copy of the most recent draft Constitution had been sent out with the agenda. The suggested amendments made by NASPM were looked at and it was agreed by the members who were present at the joint meeting on 10 September that these points were already included in the negotiations. The Chairman reported on the meeting held on 10 September indicated that there was an element of give and take on both sides to come to the current draft. He asked for comments or suggestions and Council members present agreed in principle to the current proposals and felt that another meeting was required to draw up more detailed Business Plan including budgets, membership estimates and membership costs before anything could be put to the whole membership. The Secretary was instructed to organise another meeting with representatives of NASPM in consultation with the President.
- (8) TRADE VOLUNTARY BAN ON IMPORT OF SEED POTATOES: The Chairman who said the subject was discussed in depth at the SSG meeting introduced this

item. Charlie Greenslade had informed them that the ban had been breached every year but in small quantities until this year when it had increased to 250 tonnes. The result of the survey of Council members was distributed to the members present. Out of the 18 members of Council 16 stated that they could not envisage circumstances under which they would import foreign seed into Scotland, 1 felt the voluntary ban was no longer appropriate and reserved the right to import foreign seed into Scotland and 1 gave another reason for importing. The Secretary brought the comments made by those who responded to the attention of Council and it was agreed these would need to be considered when further action was taken. Council were heartened at this result in that 16 out of 18 still were currently complying with the ban. A discussion took place on whether to consult the whole membership or not and it was felt this should be left until the details of the BPC education programme was known. In it the risks would be highlighted and this would reinforce the voluntary ban. Commercial pressure was the main reason for companies importing foreign seed. With the rapid methods of multiplication currently available it was commented that a safe way would have been to bring in supplies using sterile culture methods. Before closing discussion on the subject Council agreed that the message coming from SPTA Council should be that they continued to strongly back the voluntary ban.

- (9) APPLICATIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP OF THE ASSOCIATION: The under-noted applications for membership of the Association were considered:-

Borders Premium Potatoes Marketing Ltd.

Proposed by:- Pseedco Ltd

Seconded by:- Scott Country Potato Growers Ltd

Pan European Potato enterprise Ltd.

Proposed by:- Cygnet Potato Breeders Ltd

Seconded by:- Pseedco Ltd

Skea Organics.

Proposed by:- Irish Potato Marketing Ltd

Seconded by:- Cygnet Potato Breeders Ltd

Council unanimously agreed that these three companies should be granted membership. The Secretary was instructed to write the usual letter of welcome to them.

- (10) EXPORTERS' SUB-COMMITTEE: As the President, who was not present today had made the proposal for an exporters' sub-committee and as the next meeting was the one when members of committees were appointed it was agreed to leave this item until the November meeting.

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

Letters from the Scottish Executive headed:

(a) "Amendment of the Seeds (National Lists of Varieties) Regulations 2001".
(Response by 17 November 2003)

(b) "SEERAD Plants Horticulture and Potatoes Team".
(Response to questionnaire required as soon as possible)

Letters from SASA headed

(a) "Seed Potato Statistics".
(Area Classified in Scotland in 2003 – Issued to all Members).

(b) "Arrangements for the Examination, Labelling and Sealing of Scottish Pre-Basic and Basic Seed Potatoes–2002/2003".

- (c) "Register of Pre-Basic and Basic Seed Potatoes 2003".
- (d) "Scottish Seed Potato Consultative Panel Meeting; East Craigs Friday 21 November 2003". (Requiring names of representatives attending).

Letters from British Potato Council.

- (a) "Minute of the Seed Sectoral Group Meeting of 28 August 2003".
- (b) "Minute of the Meeting of the British Potato Council of 4 August 2003".
- (c) "Potato Newsletter" (September 2003 Edition).
- (d) "Potatoes everyday anyway – BPC Convenience Campaign".
- (e) "Total Plantings in Great Britain in 2003, Breakdown by Variety – Provisional Figures".
- (f) "Potato Production: Living with Pesticide Changes – Conference Tuesday 25 November 2003".
- (g) "New look BPC Retail Report". (Looking for feedback on report).
- (h) "Contract Growing of Farm Saved Seed".
(Copies laid on the table and considered at meeting).

Letters from Food Standards Agency.

- (a) "Food Standards Agency Open Board Meeting" - Invitation.
- (b) "Mycotoxins – EC Proposals".
- (c) "Agency Advice to Assurance Scheme".
- (d) "Proposal for a 5th Amendment to Directive 95/2/EC on Food Additives other than Colours and Sweeteners".
- (e) "Food Standards Agency – News". (September 2003 Edition).
- (e) "Consultation on the Agency's Conclusions on Research into Organic Food".
- (f) "Updating of Scientific Database".
- (g) "Mycotoxins – EC Permitted Levels".
- (h) "The Meat Products (Scotland) Regulations 2004".
- (i) "Food Standards Agency - News". (October 2003 Edition).

Letter from Pesticides Action Network UK

- (a) "Rachel Carson Memorial Lecture 3 December 2003".

Letter from Borders Premium Potatoes Marketing Ltd

- (a) "Application to join SPTA".

Email from Pseedco Ltd

- (a) "Proposing Borders Premium Potatoes Marketing Ltd Membership of SPTA".

Letter from the Scott Country Potato Growers Ltd

- (a) "Seconding Borders Premium Potatoes Marketing Ltd Membership of SPTA".

Letter from Pan European Potato enterprise Ltd

- (a) "Application to join SPTA".

Email from Cygnet Potato Breeders Ltd

- (a) "Proposing Pan European Potato enterprise Ltd Membership of SPTA".

Letter from the Pseedco Ltd

- (a) "Seconding Pan European Potato enterprise Ltd Membership of SPTA".

Letter from Skea Organics

- (a) "Application to join SPTA".

Email from Irish Potato Marketing Ltd

- (a) "Proposing Skea Organics Membership of SPTA".

Email from the Cygnet Potato Breeders Ltd

- (a) "Seconding Skea Organics Membership of SPTA".

Letter from UK Special Risks

- (a) "Specialist Insurance Brokers to Associations offering Services".

Letter from J. R. McArthur

- (a) "Informing the Association of his Intention not to Stand for Election to Council".

Emails from A. M. Beattie

- (a) "Informing the Association of his Intention not to Stand for Election to Council".
(b) "Follow up to survey on the Import of Foreign Seed Potatoes".

Email from the National Association of Seed Potato Merchants

- (a) "Comments on Draft Constitution negotiated at the Meeting on 10 September 2003".

Letter (a) from the Scottish Executive was to be passed to D. J. Harley to consider if a response is appropriate. Letter (b) was to be dealt with by the Secretary. The Chairman and President would be attending the meeting referred to in letter (d) from SASA.

- (12) DATE OF NEXT MEETING: It was confirmed that the next meeting of Council would be held on Thursday 20 November 2003 in Perth.

- (13) ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

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

