

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE
ASSOCIATION held in the QUEENS
HOTEL, LEONARD STREET, PERTH at
2.00 p.m. on Thursday, 6 May, 2004.

PRESENT: T. Halliwell, R. Haynes, C. J. Herron, J. R. McArthur, R. McKay, P. Peebles, A. B. Pullar, N. Pullar, A. J. B. Redpath, and D. Y. Stewart along with H. B. Edmond, the Secretary.

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

- (1) **APOLOGIES:** Apologies for absence were intimated on behalf of R. J. S. Doig, D. J. Harley, H. Hughes, A. D. Lamont, V. Lumb, J. Macfarlane, A. Melrose and J. L. Milne.
- (2) **MINUTES:** The Minute of the Meeting of Council of 11 March 2004 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 4 March 2005. A. B. Pullar confirmed that arrangements for the annual golf outing at Forfar Golf Course on Tuesday 1 June 2004 were finalised and the Entertainments Committee hoped for a good turn out. A suggestion that an inter company competition with an entry fee per team for the benefit of charity was made. This was well received but as it was too late to organise for this year it was agreed it should be considered for next season.
 - (b) **British Potato Trade Association:** Arising from Item (3)(b) the Chairman said that there had been no developments on this matter, but that with recent changes to NASPM Council it was hoped that a Business Plan could be progressed in the near future.
 - (c) **Association Subscriptions:** Arising from item (3)(c), the Secretary informed Council that 42 Members had paid which was over 75% of the likely income. Council Members were given the names of members whose subscriptions were still outstanding to contact.
 - (d) **Seed Sectoral Group:** Arising from Item (7) The report on the Seed Sectoral Group meeting of 26 February 2004 which was not to hand at the last Council meeting had been circulated to the membership. There were no additional comments although the Chairman indicated that the CD on Seed Benchmarking would be available at the end of the month.

All other matters were on the agenda.
- (4) **BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL:** As the Minute of the meeting of the British Potato Council held on 27 April 2004 was not as yet to hand and as both D. J. Harley and R. J. S. Doig were not present it was agreed to leave this item until the next Council meeting.
- (5) **BROWN ROT/RING ROT AND SPTA/NFUS CAMPAIGN:** The Chairman said that he had attended a cross industry meeting together with our President. The meeting took place on Friday 12 March and there would be a follow up meeting on 10 June. He said the main aim was to take forward an industry led campaign for 'safe havens'. The provision of a safe source of seed would be to the benefit

of the whole industry. The Council agreed that a safe haven policy should be pursued, as it would be to the advantage of both growers within the area designated and to those outside. It was pointed out that the President's article in eyewitness adequately spelled out the case for 'safe havens'. A copy of the report on the meeting of 12 March was to be given to Council members and to any member requesting the same.

(6) POTATO RING ROT AND DEFRA'S 'LESSONS LEARNED' EXERCISE:

Defra's paper on 'lessons learned' had been sent out to Council members with the report on the last Council meeting. Council applauded the handling of the situation by Defra once the infection had been detected but were concerned that the outbreak was detected by chance and that the chances of detecting a low level of infection was not good and as a consequence the majority of our Council felt that prevention would have been more desirable. Their view was that risk of further outbreaks remained unless seed from countries where infection had been found to occur was subject to import restriction into the UK. As regards the case in Wales, Council was troubled and apprehensive of the consequences of the fact that the source of infection was never discovered. Compensation was discussed. The Industry Forum was looking at the question of insurance/compensation as well as 'safe havens'. Council believes that the 'safe haven' concept should be pursued with all vigour and did not support a compulsory or voluntary insurance scheme. They did, however, feel that the Government was discriminating between plant health and animal health in that compensation had been paid in the case of Foot and Mouth disease. They believe that the lack of a compensation policy could encourage growers who may find themselves with a stock showing symptoms of the disease not to notify the authorities of a possible infection. The Secretary was instructed to respond to Defra in the terms discussed.

(7) END OF SEASON MEETING WITH EXPORTERS: The Chairman reminded exporters of the meeting at East Craigs on Monday 24 May. Following problems in the past it was agreed that the Association should be going to this meeting with one voice. The Chairman indicated that the President had suggested that there should be an Exporters Committee formed to consider agenda items before the actual meeting. In his absence, Vincent Lumb was nominated as convenor of the committee and all member exporters should have an input into the committee. It was agreed a meeting should be convened in advance of the meeting at East Craigs. At this meeting members of the committee could be nominated and confirmed at the next Council meeting. In the meantime the Secretary was instructed to email exporters requesting items for the agenda. The Secretary was also asked to contact SEERAD to request that the agenda for the meeting on 24 May be with us in time to hold our meeting the week before.

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

Letters from the Scottish Office headed:

- (a) "Changes to the Plant Health Legislation".
(Proposed changes to Plant Health (Great Britain) Order 1993).
- (b) "Consultation on Environmental Information Regulations (EIRs)".
- (c) "News Release – Executive to Repay Plant Health Charges".
- (d) "The Seed Potatoes (Fees) (Scotland) Regulations: Fees for Services under the Seed Potato Classification Scheme".
- (e) "The Seed Potatoes (Scotland) Regulations 2000: Regulation 6".

- (f) "Implementation of New EC Regulations on GMOs Consultation".
- (g) "End of Season Meeting with Seed Potato Exporters". (on agenda)

Letter from SASA headed

- (a) "Inspection of Growing Crops 2004". (Notes to all Growers)

Letters from DEFRA

- (a) "Consultation on Sustainable Farming and Food Research Priorities".
- (b) "Potato Ring Rot". (Item (6) on the Agenda)

Letters from the British Potato Council

- (a) "Potato Newsletter". (March Edition)
- (b) "Minute of the Seed Sectoral Group Meeting of 26 February 2004".
- (c) "eyewitness". (March edition)
- (d) "BPC World Service Leaflet"
- (e) "BPC Retail Report". (April edition sent by email)

Letter from the Home Office

- (a) "Forthcoming Changes to the Law on Preventing Illegal Working".

Letters from Food Standards Agency.

- (a) "Public Consultation: European Commission Proposal for Regulating Recycled Plastic for use in contact with Food".
- (b) "European Commission Proposals to Consolidate and Simplify EU Food Hygiene Legislation": Consultation on Policy Options for Applying the Legislation in the UK".
- (c) "Draft Kava-kava in Food (Scotland) (Amendment) Regulations 2004".
- (d) "The Food Safety (Act of Accession Concerning the Czech Republic and Other States) (Consequential Amendments) (Scotland) Regulations 2004".
- (e) "Food Standards Agency – News". (March 2004 Edition)
- (f) "Food Standards Agency Open Board Meeting - Invitation".
- (g) "Consultation on 'Putting the Consumers First': The Food Standards Agency Draft Strategic Plan 2005-2010".
- (h) "Food Standards Agency – News". (April 2004 Edition)
- (i) "Public Consultation: Proposed Regulations Implementing Two EC Directives on Materials and articles Intended to Come into Contact with Foodstuffs".
- (j) "Update on Contaminants Issues: Dioxins, PAHs and Heavy Metals".
- (k) "Update on Developments Regarding Nitrates".

Email from The National Association of Seed Potato Merchants

- (a) "Confirming Booking of Room for SPTA's President at NASPM Annual Dinner".

Letter from James Forsyth Coatbridge Ltd

- (a) "Resignation from the Association".

Letter from Perth Ice Rink

- (a) "Ice Booking Form". (To be Returned by 28 May)

(9) DATE OF NEXT MEETING: It was confirmed that the next meeting of Council would be held on Thursday 24 June 2004 subject to sufficient items for the agenda (see item (10)(a) below). **[Please note that the meeting of Thursday 24 June has now been cancelled and the next meeting will be Thursday 12 August 2004].**

(10) ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

(a) Review of the British Potato Council: The Secretary had received an email this morning from Helen Priestley of the BPC concerning the review of the British Potato Council. In the email she indicated that she and possibly David Walker would like to have the opportunity to make a presentation to Council at one of our meetings in the near future. Council decided that the meeting on 24 June should be offered to them. Since this meeting discussion with Council members has revealed that there would be a poor turn out for the June meeting and it has been cancelled. The British Potato Council has accepted an invitation to give their presentation at the meeting on 12 August 2004.

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

Albain T. Redpath
12th August 2004