

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, 2005.

PRESENT: R. J. S. Doig, T. Halliwell, D. J. Harley, C. J. Herron, H. Hughes, A. D. Lamont, V. Lumb, R. McKay, P. Peebles, A. B. Pullar, N. Pullar, A. J. B. Redpath and D. Y. Stewart along with H. B. Edmond, the Secretary.

Mr A. J. B. Redpath, President 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 R. Haynes, J. Macfarlane, J. R. McArthur, A. Melrose, J. L. Milne and A. Skea.
- (2) MINUTES: The Minute of the Meeting of Council of 18 November 2004 was taken as read approved and signed by the Chairman.
- (3) MATTERS ARISING:
 - (a) Entertainment Matters: Arising from Item (3)(b) The Annual Dinner and Dance held on Friday 3 December 2004 was considered a success with 85 people attending. A. B. Pullar, the Entertainments Convener, requested an early commitment from members that they will attend. A discussion on ways to improve the event to encourage greater participation took place. Council felt that the function should continue and it was agreed that the convener would organise an Entertainments Committee meeting to prepare a members' questionnaire seeking suggestions for improvements to the event. It was also agreed that a general invite to all NASPM members should be given in addition to the normal invitation to the President as a guest. The Secretary intimated that once all monies had been paid for the 2004 Dinner and Dance that there would be a deficit of £556.20. The charity fund raising raffle had cleared £300 and the President had nominated that this should go to Sargent Cancer Care for Children (Scotland). Curling – The first round of the Association's curling competition had taken place on 23 November and Members were reminded that the second round was booked for Perth on Friday 4 March at 3.00 pm. Details of this year's Golf outing would be given at the March meeting of Council.
 - (b) Association Subscriptions: Arising from Item (3)(c), the President was pleased to report that all 2003/2004 subscription had now been paid.
 - (c) Office-bearers 2004/2005: Arising from Item (4) As no Deputy Vice-President was appointed at the November meeting the President proposed Tim Halliwell for this office. This was seconded by Douglas Harley and unanimously agreed by all present. Mr Halliwell was reluctant to accept the appointment but was asked to consider it. In the meantime the office remains vacant.
 - (d) Consultation Responses: Arising from Items (11), (12) and (3)(e), the Secretary confirmed that he had submitted responses on behalf of the Association to all three consultations.
- (4) ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS: The Secretary confirmed that the Association Accounts for the year to 31 October 2004 had been approved earlier in the day at the Annual General Meeting of Members of the Association.

- (5) 2004/2005 ASSOCIATION SUBSCRIPTIONS: Council noted that its recommendation with regard to the level of subscriptions for the year to 31 October 2005 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) PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS FOR 2005: As suggested at the last Council meeting the President proposed that meetings this season should be tried out in different venues and at different times as an experiment. The following was proposed and agreed:
- The March meeting be in the Edzell/Fettercairn or Finavon area at 2.00pm.
 - The May meeting in Perth at 10.00am finishing with lunch.
 - The August meeting in the Forfar area.
 - The October meeting in Perth again at 10.00am.
 - The November meeting in Perth as usual.
- (7) SAFE HAVEN CAMPAIGN: The President reported that the protocols for the initiative had been widely published and that the campaign would be rolled out for the 2005 crop season. The BPC have costings from two accreditation organisations and an agreement is close to being finalised. The entry criteria have also been agreed. There was a discussion on the use of boxes for transport. Currently boxes have to be clean or new and it was felt these conditions were sufficient. Boxes were considered a low risk compared to bulkers, which, could travel not only here, but also to the continent. The President indicated that it was likely members could sign up for the 2005 crop and at the same time we would be re-publicising the voluntary ban with the aim of getting full compliance.
- (8) BRITISH POTATO 2005: This event had been set in place and will be held at the Great Yorkshire Showground in Harrogate on Wednesday 30 November and 1 December 2005. There will be three events all on one site with separate halls for each event. There will be an industry dinner on the Wednesday evening. An exploratory meeting took place on Monday 17 January on the Seed Convention part of BP2005. The plan was that the VTSC Growers' Association AGM would be at 11.30 on the first day (Wednesday 30th Nov). Lunch would be at 12.30 and all attendees to the conference will be encouraged to come to this. The Conference (Convention) would run from 1.30pm to 4.30pm with a coffee/tea break in the middle. On the second day (Thursday 1st December) the topics covered in the first day will be covered again but in a much smaller and more intimate environment (maximum 60), as Workshops, in the area of the Exhibitions, with plenty of opportunity for questions and discussions. Any suggestions for speakers were to be communicated to Iain Dykes, Alistair Redpath or Jamie Grant.
- (9) BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL: The Secretary had circulated a copy of the Minute of the meeting of the British Potato Council held on 7 December 2004. Mr Harley gave a brief review of the main items discussed at the meeting. A debate had taken place on 'Crop Loss Levy Relief'. There had been some strong feelings expressed for the reintroduction of the scheme but although members had sympathy for those who had lost their crop it was agreed by a considerable majority not to reinstate the facility. The subject of income and expenditure had been discussed. Reserves had been reducing over the years in accordance with the agreed strategy but now the reserves were at a level where they were just sufficient to meet costs in a wind-up situation. A review of expenditure would have to take place in view of the BPC's proposals of an unchanged levy for

2005/06. Iain Dykes had given a report on the activities in the seed and export sector. He said that there had been two major potato events in Scotland this autumn, Potatoes in Practice in August and the BPC's Seed Industry Event in November; both had been extremely well attended. In a report on the Safe Haven Accreditation Scheme he said that there was support for the use of bulkers to transport seed and that a prescribed process of mechanical cleaning had been approved. On R& D matters Mr Harley said that the work at SCRI on potato genomics was very interesting. An initiative to sequence the potato genome was proposed, which would have enormous implications for the Industry. This was an international project, which required UK and European financial support. The BPC endorsed the proposed initiative and agreed to support the sourcing of Government funds to enable the consortium to participate in this international project. The BPC had received three tenders for the continuation of the Independent Variety Trials (IVT) and National Listing (NL) Programme. The contract would commence in April 2005 and run for three years. The organisations, which had submitted formal bids were CUF; NIAB with SBEU; and SASA & SAC with SCRI & BioSS. The contract had been awarded to SASA. Supply chain presentations were given for the fresh and processing sector. On acrylamide exposure the BPC had previously been advised of a discussion, which was developing within the EU concerning reducing consumer exposure to Acrylamide. There were already a number of initiatives to reduce Acrylamide in processed products, but an approach was now being taken, aimed at reducing exposure for fresh market consumers. The aim would be to limit reducing sugars and there was a suggestion to store crops destined for the fresh market above 8°C, with labelling regarding intended end use, e.g. frying, baking etc. Mr Harley completed his report by seeking questions but there were none.

- (10) SEED SECTORAL GROUP: The Secretary had circulated a copy of the minute of the meeting of the Seed Sectoral Group held on 10 November 2004. A brief resume of the main points raised was given. An update on progress with the safe haven accreditation scheme was given. Details have already been given in item (9) above. The group had considered the consultation papers on the amendments to the seed potatoes regulations and had agreed with what SEERAD was proposing. The group had considered a letter from the British Embassy in Morocco on export promotion for Morocco. Hosting an outward or an inward mission had been suggested or inviting the Moroccans to join exporters at Emmeloord to view a variety demonstration at the BPC stand. As far as the BPC review was concerned they now awaited the results of the poll of levy payers. An update on the Brown rot and Ring rot situation was given by SEERAD and Defra. Dr Janse had given an overview of the current Ring rot and Brown rot situation in the Netherlands. It was clear the Dutch authorities were good at controlling those disease but Council believe the best control is not to allow the disease into the country in the first place. It was reported that in follow-ups to the finding of Ring rot in the packing station in Cambridge four new cases had been found in Holland all traced to either clonal connection or contact with the original stock. The President also announced that SEERAD had contacted the Association regarding action they proposed taking due to the increased threat of spread of Ring rot to this country due to those recent findings. SEERAD, DEFRA and DANI had all agreed that a requirement to notify the authorities of all potatoes (seed and ware) coming into UK from Holland should be instigated. The Association supported their action.

(11) BRITISH POTATO COUNCIL PROPOSALS FOR LEVY RATES IN 2005/2006:

The Secretary had issued SEERAD's consultation paper on the subject with the agenda. The BPC proposed the same two-tier system of levies as in the current year for both area and tonnage. For payment by the due date they proposed a basic levy of £39 per hectare on planted area and for payment received after the due date a higher levy of £44 per hectare. The basic levy proposed for purchasers is 17p per tonne received by the due date and 19p per tonne for payment after the due date. This involved no increase on the current year. Council supported these proposals but felt that projected expenditure was unsustainable at the level of income now being obtained and that urgent review of an alternative levy collection system was essential. They continued to stress the need for careful monitoring of costs and for prudent budgeting.

(12) SCOTTISH SEED POTATO CONSULTATIVE PANEL: The minute of the meeting of 7 December 2004 was not as yet to hand but in the meantime a brief report was given on the main points raised by the Association.

- (a) The marketing of seed potatoes by numbers rather than weight. It was pointed out this had to be by weight although the seller could state the number of tubers. For small lots marketed by number the pack could be marked 'not less than (a certain weight)'
- (b) The problems being experienced from faulty seals. The fault was acknowledged and was being dealt with.
- (c) Amendments proposed to seed potatoes regulations. This has been dealt with.
- (d) Review and harmonisation of procedures for inspecting for soil in bags. SASA and SEERAD had agreed that if there was no soil the procedure could not take place. The inspectorate was to be made aware of this and instructed not continue opening bags until they find soil.
- (e) Update on changes proposed for the issue of Phyto. certificates. SASA/SEERAD say that problems have been resolved by the new system but our members involved feel there has been no change. It was agreed to pursue the matter further.

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

Letters from the Scottish Executive headed:

- (a) "Statutory Review of The British Potato Council".
(Acknowledgement of response)
- (b) "Consultation on the Revised Code of Practice for the Safe use of Plant Protection Products in Scotland and on Public Access to Information on Pesticide use".
(Acknowledgement of response)
- (c) "British Potato Council Proposals for Levy Rates in 2005/2006".
- (d) "Strategic Research for SEERAD 2005-2010".
(Copy of published report on review and consultation)
- (e) "Export of Seed Potatoes to Morocco: Consignment Testing for PCN".
(Response by end February)
- (f) "Potato Brown Rot: Import of Potatoes from Egypt".
- (g) "Consolidation of Plant Health Legislation: Industry Consultation on Key Issues".
(Response by 23 March 2005)

Letters from British Potato Council.

- (a) "Minute of Seed Sectoral Group Meeting of 10 November 2004".
- (b) "BPC Retail Report". (November Issue)
- (c) "Potatoes everyday anyway". (Promotion Campaign)
- (d) "BPC Retail Report". (January Issue)
- (e) "Potato 2005- Emmeloord, 5 September 2005".
- (f) "Minute of British Potato Council Meeting of 7 December 2004".
- (g) "Potato Newsletter". (December issue)
- (h) "Love Chips". (Promotion Campaign)
- (i) "Euro-Potato". (By email, December edition)
- (j) "The Foodservice Market – an Opportunity". (Foodservice Factsheet 1)

Letters from Food Standards Agency.

- (a) "Update on Acrylamide".
- (b) "Mycotoxins – EC Permitted Levels".
- (c) "New Legislation: Plastic Food Contact Materials and Articles"
- (d) "The Food Labelling Amendment (Scotland) (No. 2) Regulations 2004".
- (e) "Food Standards Agency News". (December/January Issue).
- (h) "Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment".
- (i) "The Draft Food Labelling Amendment (Scotland) Regulations 2005".
- (j) "New European Regulation: Regulation (EC) No. 1935/2004, on Materials and Articles to come into Contact with Foodstuffs".
- (k) "EU Proposal for a Regulation on Nutrition and Health Claims".
- (l) "Guidelines for the Development of National Voluntary Guides to Good Hygiene Practice and the Application of HACCP Principles".
- (m) "EU General Food Law Regulation 178/2002".
- (n) "Food Standards Agency Open Board Meeting". (Invitation)

Letter from NASPM

- (a) "Apology on behalf of President who was unable to attend SPTA Annual Dinner Dance".

Letter from Pan European Potato enterprise Ltd

- (a) "Notifying new Address".

Arising from the Scottish Executive letter (e) on the Consignment testing for PCN in seed potatoes for export to Morocco. Council supported the Exporters' Sub-Committee's decision that, as long as the testing is not a requirement of the importing country, it should not be carried out. The committee considered that should a company require a test to be done it should be left to them to make an application to SEERAD for a voluntary test.

Scottish Executive letter (f) was noted by the membership.

Scottish Executive letter (g) which had just arrived this morning was circulated to some of the members and all were informed that the consultation was on SEERAD's website. The matter was to be included on the agenda for the next meeting.

- (14) DATE OF NEXT MEETING. It was confirmed that the next meeting of Council would be held on Thursday 10 March 2005 in the Finavon or Edzell/Fettercairn area.

(15) ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

(a) Exporters' Sub-Committee: Vincent Lumb gave a report on the meeting of the committee held earlier in the day. A report on PCN testing of consignments for Morocco had already been given. There was also agreement that there was a problem with communications with SEERAD. Their system was out of date and lacked trade understanding. Their staff lacked consistency and were not up to date with current requirements of importing countries. It was suggested that the matter would best be taken up through the Seed Sectoral Group.

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

AKP
AKP Keppath
10-March 05