

MINUTE of MEETING of COUNCIL of
THE SCOTTISH POTATO TRADE
ASSOCIATION held in the STATION
HOTEL, LEONARD STREET, PERTH at
10.00 a.m. on Thursday, 6 October, 2005.

PRESENT: T. Halliwell, D. J. Harley, C. J. Herron, H. Hughes, J. Macfarlane, P. Peebles, A. J. B. Redpath and A Skea along with H. B. Edmond, the Secretary.

The Association 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 Messrs R. J. S. Doig, R. Haynes, A. D. Lamont, V. Lumb, J. R. McArthur, R. McKay, A. Melrose, J. L. Milne, A. B. Pullar, N. Pullar, and D. Y. Stewart.

(2) MINUTES: The Minute of the Meeting of Council of 18 August 2005 was taken as read and approved and thereafter signed by the Chairman.

(3) MATTERS ARISING:

(a) Entertainment Matters: Arising from Item (3)(a), The Chairman reported that the Annual Dinner and Dance was organised for Friday 11 November at the new venue of the Carnoustie Golf Hotel. The Secretary said that Members were slow in getting their application for tickets submitted but he had heard that there was a lot of interest. Members were urged to firm up on ticket applications in the near future. David Walker, Chairman of the BPC and his wife were coming but he had not heard from the NFU(S) or NASPM as yet. On the subject of the North – v – South curling competition the possibility of Greenvale and McCain entering teams was raised. John Macfarlane, a member of the Entertainments Committee agreed to take it up with the Committee.

(b) Association Subscriptions: Arising from Item (3)(c) The Secretary reported that one outstanding subscription was still not paid. Heather Hughes said she had made contact and it was being paid.

(c) 'Safe Havens': Arising from Item (3)(e) It was announced that the 'Safe Havens' scheme was being launched this week or early next. The Secretary had received copies of the scheme from Iain Dykes and issued them to those present. Council agreed to encourage Members and growers to apply for membership. Most of the industry was supportive of the trade voluntary ban on the import of seed potatoes and it was felt that any push on the publicity of it should be left until the spring when the extent of uptake of the 'Safe havens' scheme will be known.

All other matters were on the agenda for today.

(4) ANNUAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS: The Secretary confirmed that there had only been six nominations for the seven vacancies on Council. No election was therefore necessary and accordingly they had all automatically been elected to Council with effect from 1 November 2005. The President explained that Robert J. S. Doig, Tim Halliwell, Heather Hughes, Vincent Lumb and Alistair Melrose had been re-elected to Council and that Mr David S. M. Scott 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. Mr R. McKay had decided to stand down in favour of Mr D. Scott. The Secretary was instructed to write to Mr McKay thanking him for his work on Council and on Committee. A letter from

Ron McArthur notifying Council of his resignation from Council was considered at this time. It was with regret that Council accepted the resignation but fully understood the reasons. The Secretary was instructed to write a letter of thanks to him from Council.

- (5) DRAFT ASSOCIATION ACCOUNTS: The Secretary tabled interim unaudited accounts of the Association for the year to 31 October 2005. The Secretary took the meeting through the draft accounts and pointed out that although the accounts showed a surplus of £285.00, the projected expenses to the end of the year had been estimated and the total income depended on whether or not the one outstanding subscription was eventually paid or not. It had not been included in the draft account.
- (6) BRITISH POTATO TRADE ASSOCIATION: A joint member of both Associations who was present indicated that NASPM had just sent out their poll forms that day. As a consequence any further progress within Council would have to be held over to the November meeting. The President said he had received an email from the President of NASPM with the suggestion that the Secretarial work of the new body be given to Unicorn Services in the interests of continuity. Council debated this and it was unanimously agreed that any such decision should be left to the Council of BPTA once formed. The President agreed to communicate this to NASPM.
- (7) SEED SECTORAL GROUP: The Secretary had just received the Minute of the meeting of the Seed Sectoral Group held on 25 August 2005. Copies were laid on the table. Douglas Harley gave a resume of the main items discussed at the meeting. Iain Dykes presented a paper on the 'Safe Haven' Certification Scheme, which described the final standards agreed with Assured Produce. The scheme was due to be released later this week or early next. Copies had been issued to Council Members present. Mr Dykes also gave an update on BPC export activities. Standards for allowable soil content of consignments, virus levels and testing procedures and powdery scab infection had now been agreed for export to Thailand but unfortunately the Thai authorities had insisted on again reviewing the standards for powdery scab infection following the 2005 season. Potato 2005 at Emmeloord in Holland was regarded as a success and the British pavilion led by the BPC was well received by all involved. Mr Dykes had also presented a paper on target markets. The markets had been selected on the basis of growth in potato production by area and difference between UK and EU seed exports. Following debate a list of countries for initial information collection was agreed. Mr Dykes presented a paper detailing proposals from Cambridge University Farms to further develop the seed management trial work in Portugal and Spain, which had been running for two years. After discussion it was decided by the SSG not to commission the work detailed in the paper. The roll of the publication Potato Newsletter had been discussed. All BPC communications were being reviewed, in particular hard copy publications. Members of SSG were asked for their opinion of Potato Newsletter and to respond to David Walker by email. SPTA Council agreed that the publication contained real practical information for the industry and was a useful tool in knowledge transfer. It was suggested that Council should write to the SSG expressing the view that SPTA Council felt that it was a valuable tool and should be continued. A discussion on the amendments to the Seed Potato Regulations in England took place. SPTA Council were also disappointed to learn that there were still differences in the schemes in England & Wales from Scotland.

Council felt that greater effort required to be made by both Departments, as they needed to be together. The SSG noted the changes in management structure at SEERAD. It was reported to the SSG that the Radcliffe review of all levy boards would report to ministers by the end of October.

- (8) END OF SEASONS EXPORTERS' MEETING & OTHER EXPORT MATTERS:
There was no members of the Exporters' Sub-Committee present so it was decided to leave the discussion on the report of the meeting on 7 June to the Exporters Sub-Committee.
- (9) SCOTTISH SEED POTATO CONSULTATIVE PANEL – PANEL SUB-GROUP:
A copy of a letter from SASA had been issued with the agenda. The letter from Dr Kevin O'Donnell suggested the possibility of setting up a smaller, more informal group, which would meet in between Consultative Panel meetings. It also gave details of the appointment to fill the key post of Export Liaison Officer. Dr Pieter van de Graaf, will take up the post on 3rd October. Council welcomed the new appointment and hoped this would improve communication with industry. Neil Pullar had telephoned just before the meeting started and had suggested that in our reply we should seek an early meeting between Dr Pieter van de Graaf and the Exporters' Sub-Committee. Council agreed this should be included. In respect of the Panel sub-group, Council agreed that a small working group as described in the letter was a good idea. The group would meet more regularly than the Panel but only when necessary. It was suggested that SPTA's participation in the group should comprise of the President who would also select the right qualified person to attend with him to discuss the subject on the agenda of that particular meeting.
- (10) SEED POTATO CROPS CLASSIFIED IN SCOTLAND IN 2005 GROWING SEASON: Members had been notified that these statistics were available on SASA's website at <http://www.sasa.gov.uk> under seedpotatoes/classification/spcsdocuments. Any Member unable to access the documents had been sent a copy by the Secretary. Members of Council expressed concern that the difference in area classified and entered for certain varieties was significantly different. It was suggested that perhaps it would be better for SASA to hold the figures for areas entered until they were more confident of their accuracy.
- (11) CORRESPONDENCE: The Secretary reported that the following correspondence had been received:
- Letter from the Scottish Executive headed:
- (a) "Report on End of Season Exporters' Meeting on 9 June 2005".
- Letters from SASA headed
- (a) "Area Classification in Scotland in 2005". (Notified to all Members).
(b) "Increased Surveillance of Desiree Crops for Virus".
(c) "Survey of Virus Levels in Estima".
(d) "Scottish Seed Potato Consultative Panel".
- Letters from British Potato Council.
- (a) "BPC World Service".
(b) "Euro-Potato" (By email)
(c) "BPC Retail Report". (August edition)
(d) "Press Information – Potato Plantings in Great Britain". (By email)

- (e) "BPC World Service".
- (f) "Potato Newsletter" (September Edition)
- (g) "Notice of Soil Management Workshop". (By email)
- (h) "BPC Retail Report". (September edition)
- (i) "Minute of the Seed Sectoral Group Meeting of 25 August 2005".
- (j) "Issues Alert – Important background information on issues affecting the British potato industry". (By email)
- (k) "Announcement of Launch of 'Safe Haven' Certification Scheme". (By email)
- (l) "BPC Update" (September/October Edition)

Letters from Food Standards Agency.

- (a) "Food Standards Agency – News". (September 2005 Edition)
- (b) "The Draft Food Hygiene (Scotland) (No. 2) Regulations 2005".
(Questionnaire to be returned by 13 December 2005)
- (c) "Draft Guidelines on Allergen Control and Consumer Information – Public Written Consultation".
- (d) "Food Standards Agency Scotland – Business Plan 2005-2006".
- (e) "Food Safety Act 1990 – Practice Guidance – Scottish Version".

Email from MBM Scotland

- (a) "Notifying the Association of retiral of Jim Hollywood and promotion of Andrew Lamont"

Letter from Ron McArthur

- (a) "Resignation from Council and expression of thanks".

Letter from Strathmore Potatoes Ltd

- (a) "Notifying Change in Business Name and Ownership"

In relation to the email from MBM Scotland it was suggested that as the new body was scheduled to be launched in July next year the retired members on the Arbiters list should remain and it should be left to the new Council to decide on Arbiters for the BPTA.

With regard to the letter from Strathmore Potatoes Ltd, Council agreed that Membership of the Association should continue in the name of the new company. The Secretary was instructed to write to Strathmore Potatoes Ltd to this effect.

- (12) DATE OF NEXT MEETING: It was confirmed that the next meeting of Council would be held on Thursday 17 November 2005 in Perth.

(13) ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

- (a) Farm Saved Seed: Douglas Harley stated that there were some changes announced in respect of Plant Breeders' Rights. The 'prior use exemption' was being discontinued from 7 December 2005. This exemption had allowed individual farmers who had saved seed of varieties protected under the 1964 Act before 8 May 1998 to do so free of charge. This now put UK legislation in line with EU law.

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

Arthur B Redpath
17 Nov 2005.