

Time at the Top

MAGB Chairman Euan Macpherson was granted a meeting in March with Agriculture Minister Jim Paice at which he was able to put across the needs and aspirations of our sector. The reception was cordial and may soon lead to a visit to a maltings by the minister – himself a South Cambridgeshire farmer. The minister was keen to understand how he could help British maltsters, and said *“British beer and whisky is already known the world over for its exceptional quality, but many people don’t know that we’re also one of the world’s largest exporters of their most important ingredient – malt.*

“With rising global demand for food and drink, Britain’s producers have got huge opportunities for growth and I applaud the malting industry’s positive impact on our economy, both on a local and national level.”

Euromalt

SO2 Analysis – update

Work is continuing with other food and drink sectors to identify process aids that may be present in co-products entering the feed chain. These need to be identified for the entries in the feedstuffs Common Catalogue. It is hoped that SO2 from the kilning process in some maltings will be covered by a general maximum level and that no specific declaration or analysis becomes necessary.

Cadmium and other metals

News has emerged that the European Commission intends to reduce the maximum level of cadmium in cereals. For malting barley, this would mean a reduction from 0.1mg/kg to 0.075mg/kg. A lower limit means, in general, increased testing and increased cost. Discussions are under way with the Food Standards Agency to encourage a defence of the existing maximum figure.

It will come as no surprise to learn that the Commission wants to understand more about lead and arsenic in the food chain with a view to further controls, and is gathering information to that end.

Technical Committee

Euromalt has reached agreement with Brewers of Europe to instigate a research project into the causative agents of gushing in beer. Initially, funding will be provided to VLB in Germany to identify gushing potential factors in a two-year programme.

HGCA / AHDB

HGCA’s monitoring project 3572, which ends this summer, will be succeeded by a similar on-going survey of pesticides, metals, mycotoxins and other chemicals. Discussions have been taking place with all stakeholders to determine the priorities for the new project before inviting tenders to deliver the service. Data from the last project has proved valuable in evaluating risks and costs, and to support British arguments by FSA and industry bodies to persuade the Commission to legislate on an evidence base.

Malting Barley Breakfasts took place in February at venues in Oxford, Fakenham and Aberdeenshire. In addition to a local maltster’s view of the market, each session featured a global market cereal review by a speaker from AHDB and a paper on the re-use of organic materials such as compost and anaerobic digestate to land.

Meet the Processor – a new initiative!

Maltings visits took place in November & December 2011 at Boortmalt, Bury St Edmunds site and Muntons’ Stowmarket and Bridlington sites. Many growers came to visit a maltings for the first time, all were impressed with the attention to quality, and left with a greater understanding of their role in the supply chain.

Assurance Issues

The Technical committee has convened a working group to review the sector HACCP scheme. This will be the third revision since the scheme was first developed in 2001.

Due Diligence Corner

The current Due Diligence contract is nearing completion with the final batch of samples for the barley-malt pairs being tested.

Energy Focus

Climate Change Agreements

DECC continues its plans of the next phase of CCAs with a consultation about the rules for the scheme. The shape of the phase from 2013 to 2023 is now well-defined, with the principal change being the appointment of the Environment Agency as administrator for the scheme. There will be greater rigour in ensuring both target compliance and rule compliance by each target unit, enforced by potentially high penalty charges.

Energy Forum

The third meeting of the Energy Forum was hosted at Diageo's Roseisle distillery and followed by lunch and a tour of the distillery, focussed on its impressive and innovative energy management, including the recovery of heat to Burghead maltings two miles away.

Health & Safety Forum

Best Practice Guides

Progress on these is continuing and as approved they are uploaded to the MAGB website. Those already available can be found on our website here: <http://www.ukmalt.com/best-practice>

Qualifications

Malting Diploma and Master Maltster exam registration is now closed. Exams will take place w/c 25th June.

Malting Diploma Revision Days are to take place on 25th & 26th April at University of Nottingham, Sutton Bonington Campus. This will involve a full programme of lectures.

CMC

Following a full review of the CMC it has now been split into 2 stages. These are the General Certificate of Malting (GCM) and Fundamentals in Malting. The GCM will be offered online through the IBD exam delivery system.

Malting Symposium

Held at Diageo, Glen Ord in March 2012

Running for the second year, aimed at middle/junior management and senior shop floor employees. This year emphasis was on malting for the distilling trade and 13 delegates from 5 malting companies received 5 presentations plus tours of Glen Ord's maltings and distillery. Evaluation of the event suggests it was again a great success.

Many thanks to the presenters, Bob McWilliam, Alan Brown, Brian Topham and John Thomson, Diageo Scotland Ltd for the use of their facilities and to Daniel Cant and Alistair Orr for conducting the tours.



Alan Brown, Quality Services Manager for Bairds Malt Ltd, giving a presentation on the Scottish barley breeding programme.

Plans are already underway for next year's symposium which may focus on engineering in maltings. Keep an eye on the MAGB website in December for more information.

Malting Barley Grower Competition 2012

The 2012 Competition has now been launched. There has been good publicity, with articles in various Scottish publications on organisations websites and in their newsletters. Further details and an application form can be downloaded from our website here <http://www.ukmalt.com/node/251>

Please promote this competition at every opportunity.

Malting Diploma Association

The Association's 2012 AGM is to be held in Ware on 19th April 2012 and will include a tour of French & Jupps maltings.

More information on the MDA can be found through the MAGB website on the following link <http://www.ukmalt.com/malting-diploma-association>

MAGB's New Website

Our new website is now live and fully operational. The content is a blend of material from the old site and new words on various topics. Feedback is welcome to Sue Capewell.