

PRIME MINISTER

Home Grown Cereals Authority

You wanted to reconsider Mr. Jopling's response to your enquiries about research undertaken by the Home Grown Cereals Authority in the light of your meeting with Lord Rothschild.

You were particularly concerned about:

- (a) budget
- (b) relevance to the Authority's marketing role,

and you asked to see some examples of the research undertaken.

Mr. Jopling's answers are set out in the attached letter. The Authority's research budget is approximately £100,000 a year, though actual expense is usually less (average £65,000 a year).

A "high proportion" of this expenditure is devoted to improving the match between the properties of cereals grown in this country and the needs of customers (eg wheat for bread making, and barley for maltsers). The Authority's research programme is subject to approval by the Ministry's Chief Scientist and the Agricultural Development and Advisory Service.

Content?

DMB

Yes int

10 November 1983



File No

10 DOWNING STREET

From the Private Secretary

11 November 1983

HOME-GROWN CEREALS AUTHORITY

Thank you for your letter of 26 October in response to the Prime Minister's enquiries about the research undertaken by the Home-Grown Cereals Authority.

The Prime Minister has seen this, and is content.

DAVID BARCLAY

David Dawson, Esq.,
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries
and Food.



10 DOWNING STREET

Mr Butler

Noted

FBBS

31-10

Please see this correspondence with MAFF about research undertaken by the home grown cereals authority.

The PM wishes to return to this in the light of tomorrow's meeting with Lord Rothschild.

JMB
31/10



Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Whitehall Place London SW1A 2HH

From the Minister's Private Office

David Barclay Esq
10 Downing Street
LONDON SW1

26 October 1983

Dear David

HOME-GROWN CEREALS AUTHORITY

Thank you for your letter of 3 October about the research commissioned by the Home-Grown Cereals Authority.

The Authority limit expenditure on physical research and development to £100,000 per year but actual spending often falls short of that limit. Over the last five years, actual expenditure has averaged some £65,000 per year.

The Authority's aim in supporting research is to encourage work which seems likely to lead to significant improvements in the marketing of home-grown cereals. Thus a high proportion of the projects to which grants are given are concerned with improving the match between cereals grown in this country and the particular requirements of such major customers as millers or maltsters. The Authority receives funds both from producers and first stage processors of cereals, through the levy referred to in my Minister's letter of 26 September. The Authority's support of research, though a minor part of its total expenditure, does provide producers and users with a means of channelling funds to research projects which are of benefit to both sides, and which neither side might be inclined to support if left to itself.

Projects recently grant-aided which provide examples of this type of research are:-

- (i) Exploration of the links between wheat variety and premature sprouting of the grain before harvest. Such sprouting renders the wheat unsuitable for breadmaking.

/Methods of screening ...

Methods of screening used in the past had not proved wholly reliable. The research was directed at finding a better method of identifying varieties resistant to early sprouting, and hence more suitable for the high-value milling market. Research started in 1979 and completed in 1982-83 has led to the identification of two new methods of screening new varieties which are now in regular use at the National Institute of Agricultural Botany. As a result, the Institute's recommendations to farmers is now more soundly based. Value of grant: £27,242.

- (ii) "Dormancy" in barley is important to maltsters, who need to know when each variety can be made to start germinating; and who require at least some varieties which can do so quite soon after harvest. Recently introduced varieties with high yields have proved to have longer dormancy before being ready to germinate than their predecessors. A recently completed project investigated causes of poor germination in barley, and threw up some suggestions as to the causes and cures of barley dormancy. Value of grant: £23,439 net of £3,000 contributed by malting industry. A project started in 1982-83 is directed towards finding methods whereby dormancy can be broken. Value of grant: £39,384.

I hope that these examples illustrate the kind of work which is grant-aided. To provide a check on the Authority's selection of projects for support and to guard against any overlap with work supported by grants from other bodies, the Authority is not allowed to take a final decision until projects have been reviewed by the Ministry's Chief Scientist's Group and ADAS.

Yours sincerely
Robert Lewis

for DAVID DAWSON
Assistant Private Secretary

(1)

→ Bf for Rothschild mtg

PRIME MINISTER

HOME GROWN CEREALS AUTHORITY

You asked for further details of the Authority's research, especially:

- (a) budget
- (b) relevance to the Authority's marketing role.

You also asked to see some examples of research commissioned by the Authority.

Mr. Jopling's answers are set out in the attached letter.

Content?

Or would you like to consider further after your meeting with Lord Rothschild about agricultural research (1 November)?

Yes please not

DMS

26 October 1983