**Minutes of the Executive Committee held by Teleconference
on Wednesday 7 August 2007 at 7.45pm**

**Present:**Mike Armour, Helen Meehan, Mark Heard, Ian Manson, Alastair Bridge,
Margaret Edwards, Tony Casey, Graham Keen, Ed Scott

**Apologies:**
David Pearson

**Minutes of Previous Meeting:**
Tony moved that they were a true and accurate record
Seconded: Margaret CARRIED

**Matter arising:**
Tony suggested that we make it a priority that Olives N Z supports Hort N Z ‘s stance on carbon neutrality.
Alastair said that this subject would be a main policy plank for Hort N Z and that olives should be seen as being “part of the family” in supporting it.

**Executive Officer Report:**Alastair tabled his report which dealt with:

* Subscription notices for 2007-8 have sent out with a steady flow of payments are being made.
* Membership now at 375.
* Conference arrangement well in hand with c$15,000 in sponsorship.
* Hort N Z conference provided an opportunity to network with other product groups – two interesting sessions dealt with website marketing and co-operation in international marketing by groups of similar sized producers.
* A discussion paper on the proposed commodity levy has been circulated to regions.
* 2009 International Awards : Alastair, Graeme Harris and Helen Meehan to meet with two high profile people who have shown an interest in being involved at an organisational level
* the suggestion was made that, like a number of other small product groups of Hort NZ, we should meet face-to-face three times a year a leave it up to individual Executive members to concentrate on their portfolios and report regularly to the Executive Officer who would file monthly reports to the rest of the Executive.
This would cut down on both the time spent on teleconferences and the cost which is approximately $11,000pa.
Ian Manson suggested that this idea should be considered by the incoming 2007-8 Executive.

**Financial report.**

Balances : in David’s absence Alastair reported account balances of:
Main account c$21,528; IOP account c$2,500; Conference account
c$13,799; Term Deposit c$52,610

**Certification:**

* Margaret reported that 50 oils have been tested to date but oils were slow in arriving
* 18 more are waiting for testing this week and the panel will be running two testings per week from now until the cut-off date for the Awards which is 22 August
* discussion took place about some regions not being “ready” for certification testing but many producers don’t realise that oils don’t have to “settle” before being tested for certification. Helen thought that more education about this fact should be made available.

**2007 Conference & Awards**

Alastair reported that everything was in hand with just the fine detail needing to be finalised.

**Commodity Levy**

* discussion took place as to the best way to communicate with nonmembers
of ONZ about the proposed levy
* it was decided that we should rely on regions to communicate information to non-members but that ONZ and Ian Turk should coordinate that communication
* Ian said that advertising a number of times in commercial newspapers was deemed to be sufficient effort at trying to reach all growers

**Food Safety Programme**

* Ian reported that he has finally had his own programme approved by the local health authorities and is now before the Ministry of Health
* He will now ask David to distribute a CD-ROM of the industry draft plan for our input

**N Z Gap**

* Graham did not have much to report but has re-contacted regions to get more courses underway
* Ian reported on his discussions with Mantissa about a software programme to assists growers with grove management which would fit in well with a N Z Gap programme
* Helen asked if there was any SFF funding to assist with this. Mike said there was c$12,500 in the IOP account and this could be used if we fed the maturity index project information in to the programme. It would be a great idea if it makes grove management better and easier.
* It was decided that Mantissa should be advised that they should present their idea to Conference and we will give them our endorsement or not after Conference
* Ed wouldn’t endorse the programme if it meant only dealing with a single soil lab but Margaret said that it appeared that they dealt with a number of labs

**Research**

* Mike reported that our Sustainable Farming Fund application had been approved and moved a motion that we commit to the required industry cash funding of $75,000 over 3 years. Seconded: Tony, Casey CARRIED
* Mike and Margaret are confident that the work done with this grant will lead on to the FoRST/Auckland UniServices/Massey initiative
* Tony questioned the link between the SFF and Laurence’s quest for funding to take our industry to one of $100m within 10 years. Mike and Margaret clarified how the “politics” work in this sort of situation with regards to FoRST bids.
* Ed remarked that it was good to see that we are treating the SFF grant as part of a bigger strategy
* Margaret said that we would be controlling the project – not the scientists
* Ian questioned whether 2 years scientific data is sufficient for this type of study and Margaret replied that we can compare our data with that from overseas and that tree genetics is the major influence in a project of this nature rather than climate and soil
* Alastair will provide Mike with an official letter confirming the Executive’s decision on the $75,000 funding

**Marketing:**

* Tony reported that Village Press and Telegraph Hill supported Laurence’s initiative outlined above and that NZTE was also being kept in the loop
* Sugar coated olives may be the next big export initiative for Hawkes Bay!

**General Business:**

* It was decided that Margaret would correct the factual errors in the re-formatted draft brochure and that it would be re-submitted to John Saker to reduce the amount of words without reducing the readability of it
* Ian asked for the website to be up-dated on a regular basis and Mike said that he would get a costing for this from Chris Gaellic
* Ian suggest we promote an “olive cap” featuring the OliveMark but his suggestion was unanimously defeated.

**Date of next meeting: Tuesday 11 September at 7.45pm**