**Minutes of the Executive Committee held by Teleconference on Tuesday 31 October 2006 at 7.45pm**

**1. Present**: Mike Amour, Margaret Edwards, Ian Manson, Alastair Bridge, David Pearson, Ed Scott, Anne Opie, Paul Williams, Tony Casey

**2. Apologies.** None

**3. Minutes of previous meeting.** There were accepted

**4. Matters arising.** None

**5. Executive Officer’s report.** Main issues covered in the report were:
·         *the lineolenic acid survey*. It appears that NZ may not have the problem that was thought to exist. However, data will continue to be collected so that ONZ has at least 5 years of data to support any necessary future case. ONZ is flagging to Codex that it reserves the right to return to some minor issues in the future
·         *the awards and conference*. Over 130 oils have been certified and there were 93 Awards entries. Feedback from the conference was very positive and the feeling is that ONZ should continue to run a one day event, with executive representation at the HortNZ conference and with members also able to attend if they wish
·         *a biosecurity alert* that came to nothing
·         *comments on the HortNZ Product Group meeting* on 13 Sept. that the EO attended. The suggestion is that the president also attend these meetings – held twice a year
·         *factors relating to getting a commodity levy passed*. In order to pass the levy, 50% of voters have to approve and then 50% of the numbers of trees/fruit of those voters have to pass. ONZ is considering contracting out some of the work associated with developing a case for the levy to someone who has done much work in this area.
·         *the meeting with MAF as part of Hort NZ* re regulatory frameworks. The EO considered that most members are not exposed to most of these requirements.

In relation to the last point, there was some discussion about the importance of country of origin labelling for the industry (with reference to imported products rather than NZ products alone), and the importance of continuing to make representations about this issue. It is an issue about which Hort NZ is also concerned.

**6. Financial report.**

Current balances as of 30 Sept. were:

Main Account $51933.72

IOP Account $19190.63

Conference Acct:$ 23389.28

Cash on Deposit $75000

The Treasurer noted that to date ONZ has received approximately $57,000 in subscriptions against the projected amount of $80,000. (approx. 265 members) Next month, reminders will be sent out to members and each region will be asked to follow up those who have not paid.

There was a question about what the highest number of members ONZ has had was. It was in the high 400s but the great majority of those who have not continued as members have been the very small growers. However there is an issue about a declining membership and there is an issue about larger commercial growers who have not joined.

*Other financial issues*:
·         Exec members were to review the proposed budget and send comments to the president
·         There was a discussion about the issue of the unpresented cheques that were noted in the annual accounts and whether such cheques should be itemized next year. The Treasurer said this was not usual practice in annual accounts and, in a relatively small organisation, it is hard to have such a level of control over income. Getting an unqualified audit would involve extensive financial management. He noted that audits are becoming an increasingly costly item and some organisations are no longer getting audits of their accounts but are moving to a review system.

The tabled financial reports were accepted.

**7. 2006 Awards and Summit Conference.** Feedback had been extremely positive – excellent speakers, organisation and time keeping. The conference committee members were thanked for their work.

A question was raised about why ONZ did not give conference organising committees an indicative budget. The treasurer said that it was up to each committee to set a budget and that getting sponsorship to cover costs was a key issue in order to avoid a loss. It was noted that in this case, it was only very late in the piece that sponsorships had come through from smaller, not the planned larger, sponsor organisations. It was agreed that work needed to start much earlier on sponsorship in order to ensure ONZ bids came within potential sponsors’ timelines.

**8. Technical.** *Certification.* About 123 oils had been certified this year. Standards have been very high. However, it is important that members do not leave sending in their oils until the last minute. Next year ONZ will have to revisit the dates for the panel’s work and re-structure how oils come in.

*Awards.* The awards judging went very smoothly. There were 2 judging panels.

In response to a question about the criteria were governing the order in which groves were listed on the Awards sheet and why lists could not be produced setting out winning oils by region and alphabetically within each region, the EO said that he listed the oils in order of receipt of entry forms.

*Processing course.* Work on this is progressing with a possible date before Easter when Northland groves would have fruit. The Oils and Fat Committee will help organise the course.

**9. Labelling.** There is no legal requirement on NZ or international producers as to whether they specific a region or country of production although those applying for certification must sign an affidavit that the oil presented is 100% NZ oil.

**10. Commodity Levy.** Work on this proposal is continuing. A suggestion has been made that ONZ apply for funding through the Enterprise Development Fund: Category: Capability Building to pay for a person who has worked on a number of horticultural levy proposals to develop the ONZ proposal.

A question was asked about the substantial legal and other costs associated with what could be lengthy consultation processes and what good information ONZ has now about these. The current lack of information was given as one of the reasons for involving a contractor with experience in the field.

**11. Complaints Procedure.**  Following an email from a member sent to exec members post conference (9-9-06), the motion was moved and carried that *work be done on instituting a complaints process for ONZ, with the document to be emailed to all members and placed on the website*.

An exec. member commented on the need for the complaints procedures to cover potential conflicts of interest, such as the judges entering their own oils into the awards competition. She said that while there may well be good reason for this to be possible (NZ does not have many people on whom to call, and judges’ abilities to market their own oils could be disadvantaged if they were unable to enter their oils in the national awards) the process must be transparent. The Technical Officer considered that this is not an issue as the oils are judged blind; further, there is a complaints section in both awards and certification documents to which members could refer. The need for a robust system was emphasised.

**12. 2007** **Conference.** The Canterbury regional chair volunteered to head the steering committee for this. He proposed that ONZ go with the format for the last conference: a day in Wellington, followed by the Awards Dinner.

**13. Marketing.** In advance of the meeting a paper from Lawrence Eyres was circulated supporting a generic approach to marketing and emphasising the need for positive research findings to support the value of NZ OO oil in particular. The person responsible for the marketing portfolio talked about his meeting with members of the Auckland University Business School and proposed that he and 3 other exec. members meet with the Business School representatives to work out ways of getting increased government support for the industry. (The Business School people did note that at this stage the industry has not yet reached a critical mass).

There was some intensive discussion about this proposal, with comments about:
·         the health issue approach tended to be driven by fads and fashions
·         one needed cast iron evidence to support assertions of health benefits
·         seeking to differentiate NZ oils from those from the rest of the world would require intensive research over many years
·         research on polyphenals had been done 2 years ago and there was no difference in NZ and Italian-produced oils

·         there has been extensive research done on health benefits
·         a possible focus was on taste

·         it might be possible to focus on levels of residue from spraying in terms of health but this was not necessarily the way to go.

The Marketing person emphasised the possibility of focusing on the superiority of NZ oils and how ONZ really needed to meet with the Auckland people to get the benefit of their knowledge of the field and this was agreed to.

**13. Website and Communications.** Work on the re-vamp of the website has been nearly completed. It was agreed that:
·         the full exec minutes would not continue to be posted on the website
·         regional newsletters should not be posted because of the nature of some of the commentary that is not appropriate on an official site. However, regions would be welcome regions to forward to Anne Opie any industry-worthy news contained in those newsletters for inclusion on a page to be called “Industry News” ONZ passed the motion that *this page would be reviewed after 6 months.*

**14. New Zealand GAP.** A ONZ member, who is an approved supplier, volunteered to champion this work. However, he asked that his secondment to the exec. include being given voting rights. There was some discussion of this proposition. The exec. approved the motion that he *be seconded as a full voting member to the ONZ exec.*

**15. General Business.**·     Exec. members send in a recent photo of themselves accompanied by a short pen portrait to go on the “Contact Us” page.

·     Details of olive groups who are not ONZ members will not be on the website.
·         The EO was asked to do some work on how to develop a closer liaison with the Australian olive industry.
·         The EO said he would send the list of award winners to the “Olive Grower.”

·         There was discussion of the range of publicity generated at the time of the awards. Significant publicity will be placed on the web.

**16. Date of next meeting** 28 November at 7.45 pm. Members were asked to circulate any reports 2-3 days before the meeting to allow people to read them. The meeting closed at 10.30 pm.