

OLIVES NEW ZEALAND
MINUTES SYNOPSIS OF EXECUTIVE MEETING
SUNDAY 14TH OCTOBER 2012 10AM – 3.20PM
HELD AT HAVELOCK NORTH

1. Present

Andrew Taylor (President), John Arthur (Vice President), Craig Leaf-Wright (Treasurer), John Dunlop, Allan Frazer, Bob Marshall, Gayle Sheridan (Executive Officer)

2. Apologies - Tony Millar

3. Financial Report

Craig explained how the financial reports operate and spoke to the report that had been circulated. With the financial year ending on 31 July a number of items straddled two financial years and this had to be accounted for on an accruals basis to get a true representation of the accounts. For example; Certification, Awards, Membership Fees. The accruals had to be shown in the Annual Accounts so that income/expenditure matched the actual situation. This situation would not occur in the future with the financial year ending on 1 December and membership fees would not be invoiced until January.

In relation to the current Profit and Loss the Last Year figures were shown for comparison. Gayle would now arrange journal entries of In Advance items shown in Annual Accounts.

4. Executive Officer Report

Gayle spoke to her report which had been circulated.

Workload – October had been a huge month because of the Awards, Awards Dinner and AGM.

Membership – there were now 161 paid members and another 11 unpaid members.

Certification – samples continued to be received. DPI had advised that their charges related to costs of being IOC accredited. The Income/Expenditure showed only a nominal surplus compared to a large loss that would have been incurred with the previous system. This is because the certification costs now relate directly to the samples received rather than being a fixed contract cost. It was agreed to put an article on the Members Only section of the website on certification and showing the cost recovery basis.

Awards – The Awards judging had gone very well and there were a number of observations made to bear in mind for the future in relation to using a professional Facilitator, specialist laboratory, and the judging panel. Fernando Martinez had been very impressed with the organisation and operation of the Awards. It was the first time Fernando had been involved in a competition that required entries to have been certified as EVOO and where all the judges were required to be trained and/or experienced tasters. He had also commented very positively on the Facilitator and venue.

Fernando Martinez observation was the lack of balance in the oils in 2012 was because of the wet season.

The issue of the two other major competitions not requiring entries to be certified and the makeup of their judging panels not being olive oil tasters were discussed. Andrew said it was important for Olives NZ to maintain its differentiation from these other Awards but of course this came at a cost. It was agreed that the relationship with GEA Westfalia had brought about huge benefits in 2011 and 2012 with the experts they had been able to arrange.

Allan said we need to add more pizzazz to the Awards Dinners, perhaps using an MC and having banners or bunting.

Andrew said he had received many positive comments about the Awards particularly in relation to using a professional Facilitator. He reminded that the aim of the Awards was to encourage and recognise excellence.

The comments from members in relation to Certification and the Awards were discussed and it was agreed that some interesting comments had been made.

AGM – the draft Minutes were on the website along with the other AGM documents.

5. Business Plan

It was agreed that for the 2012/13 Business Plan it was necessary first to look at key issues facing the industry.

- Grove production – increasing the yield on current trees as this was critical to achieve profitability
- Processing – issue with presses available and how used
- Marketing – to ensure sales and profitability.

5.1 Grove Production

John D said the Focus Farm project would look at this and he was hopeful that funding could be obtained from the Sustainable Farming Fund to assist. The project would look at trials and sub trials across the country to increase production levels. He has already contacted potential partners and sponsors. Andrew emphasised consistent production is the key and the measure is production per hectare.

The information on the baseline of the project needs to be available on the website, including the participants, their location, variety and age of trees, historic volumes and results of soil tests being undertaken.

5.2 Processing

Fernando's address at the AGM had given constructive suggestions on improvements required to processing. The paper from David Walshaw highlighted a mismatch with the location of presses. The presses available shows that there was also an issue with capacities and operating requirements. The availability of suitable presses on a regional basis needed to be looked at.

It was agreed that there is an urgent need improve the quality and quantity of oil produced. The Field Day at Conference would provide the opportunity for this, with a general Olives to Oil in the morning and an advanced Processors course in the afternoon.

5.3 Marketing – Promoting the OliveMark and NZEVOO

Andrew noted that Olives NZ has made no recent investment in promotion or branding and this was something that had been consistently requested by members. Craig said that promotion of the OliveMark was the most important aspect of marketing NZ EVOO. He said we need to have the public clamouring to buy the OliveMark products. Allan had also raised the need for Olives NZ to have consumer information available on the website.

Andrew suggested a project group to develop a marketing strategy. He noted that there was provision under the Constitution to co-opt someone and this would provide the means to bring the appropriate person on board.

6. General Business

6.1 Master Contact Database

Lionel Sheridan joined the meeting after lunch to demonstrate the Olives NZ Master Contacts Database. He explained that the database had been motivated because when Gayle took over as Executive Officer, Olives NZ had more than four databases all with disparate and out of date data. There were also issues with people accessing services and products for which they were not eligible. The Master Contacts Database had been set up initially based on the updated membership data held in the Xero accounting package and this was then used to update the newsletter database.

A suite was added to manage email communications with members, based on criteria and business rules with personalised and common messages and attachments. The messages were pre-set for consistency and forms were able to be pre-filled with individual data from the database. Other specific suites had been developed – Grove Census, Certification and Awards.

The Grove Census now held valuable data that was able to be used in a variety of ways and would be easy to update on an annual basis. Certification processes and forms had been agreed with DPI and they were extremely pleased with how the system operated. Entering of results was straight forward and communications back to members with their certificates, etc had been automated for speediness and accuracy. The website list of certified oils was also automated. The Awards suite checked the eligibility of entries and produced the spreadsheet used by the Facilitator to record results. After the results were added to the Master Contacts Database, the system produced the certificates spreadsheet for the printer, the list of medals required and the website report.

Andrew thanked Lionel for the presentation and the work that he had put into developing the database. Andrew said that the system had greatly improved the efficiency of the organisation and this had been noted by members

6.2 Executive Make-up

Allan said there was a need to look at succession planning. Andrew suggested the need to involve other Branch Chairs if/when Branches became re-established.

6.3 Australian Olive association

Lisa Rowntree had approached Olives NZ about possible co-operation and collaboration. It was agreed that working closer together on areas such as sharing awards judges, developing tasters and judges, looking at how to grow more olives, dealing with imports, etc could be beneficial.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 3.20pm

NEXT MEETING – SUNDAY 2 DECEMBER IN MASTERTON