

OLIVES NEW ZEALAND
MINUTES SYNOPSIS OF EXECUTIVE MEETING
WEDNESDAY 16 OCTOBER 2013
TELEPHONE CONFERENCE 7PM – 9.12PM

1. Present

Andrew Taylor (President), John Arthur (Vice President), Craig Leaf-Wright (Treasurer), Tony Millar, Bob Marshall, David Walshaw, Gayle Sheridan (Executive Officer)

2. Apologies

Allan Frazer

3. Minutes of the September Meeting

Matters Arising - Action Points are all progressing.

Branch Funds

Tony advised that the grant of \$2500 from Canterbury had been discussed at the branch AGM and it had been agreed that \$1500 would be a donation to the Focus Grove Project and the balance of \$1000 was a loan to be repaid in June 2016. The Branch expected mirror contributions from the other regions. The Canterbury branch saw the research project as very valuable and there would be direct benefits for all growers.

John D said that an important criteria in the SFF application was cash contribution and if other regions could commit funding then it would be up to the project group how or if that funding was used.

Gayle said that the project brief on the website did not have a budget because this would not be known until after the meeting with Plant and Food. The paper would then be updated accordingly.

While the previous SFF application for the Focus Grove Project had failed, the project had got underway. The project was outlined at Conference and was a direct response to dealing with the issue of lack of productivity. Andrew said that the Executive need to promote the need to improve productivity to members and those he had discussed it with were all supportive.

John A said the risk with the project was the funding that Olives NZ was required to contribute but the reward was increased productivity. He said accordingly this was an easy proposition to sell to members.

Craig agreed that productivity was a key issue for members and said that individual growers did not currently have access to relevant advice. He said the project would benefit all growers, small and large and in between. He said the desired outcomes need to be clearly communicated.

John D supported having an expert from Plant and Food involved in the project as this was critical to the success of the project.

Andrew said that productivity gains will be the biggest bang for buck that Olives NZ can provide to members.

4. Financial Report

Craig spoke to the financial reports that had been circulated.

John A said that the 2014 Budget needed to be drafted so that the 2014 membership fees could be set. He also pointed out that without a major sponsor the current situation with surplus funds would be an issue and thus the major sponsor needed to be confirmed for the next period. Andrew said that recent discussion with GEA had been positive and further discussions on sponsorship were scheduled for March/April.

5. Executive Officer Report

Gayle spoke to her report which had been circulated.

There continued to be new members joining the organisation.

Awards

Several entries had been flagged by the Judges as no longer being EVOO. These had been sent to DPI for retesting and only one was not re-affirmed as EVOO. Andrew said there was a need to advise members in the newsletter ahead of the 2014 Awards of the process if oils were deemed not to be EVOO by the judges. It was noted that the Awards rules would be updated accordingly.

There had been only 8 entries for Boutique and no Gold awards, thus Best Boutique was awarded to the highest scoring Silver oil. Gold medals had been awarded across volumes as follows: 101-150: 2, 151-200: 1, 201-500: 5, 501-1,000: 1. John A said Australia had a micro category for less than 200 litres and it was timely to review the level for Boutique.

There had been excellent media coverage of the Awards; regional and national newspapers and Radio New Zealand. The articles had been collated into a document that would be published on the website and promoted to members. Feedback from growers featured in articles that they had immediately received enquiries on where their oil could be brought. Andrew said the Executive needed to reiterate to growers the effort that had been put in on their behalf in marketing the Awards. This had required substantial effort by Gayle over last year and this year.

Income for the Awards was \$22,312 and Expenses thus far \$24,028 making a loss of \$1716. The loss associated with the Awards had been reduced by the AGMARDT grant. There was still one invoice to come for the expenses incurred in taking Sue Langstaff on the tour of the regions.

All of the activities on the Awards Dinner weekend had gone very well with great feedback, the only pity being that more attendees would have benefited. The format of the Awards Dinner had been enhanced at the request of members and the evening had been very enjoyable. David expressed thanks to Andrew for taking Sue Langstaff around the regions and said her workshops had been excellent.

Certification

DPI has been asked if they will review charges based on the volume being submitted and/or including additional tests (e.g. Polyphenols).

6. Business Plan

In October 2012 the Executive had set its priorities for the forthcoming year. The key issues are being addressed as follows.

Grove Production

Was covered off at Conference and would be addressed with the Focus Grove Project.

Processing

The visits to the regions had shown that some oils were not at the required level of EVOO, even if they had been certified. Members need to know how to make sound decisions in relation to processing and processing capability. There was a challenge in getting the current press operators to work collaboratively and to improve their practices. It was in everyone's interest to attend these Processor courses; processors and growers. There needed to be emphasis on continued improvement and reinforcement of the factors that affect good processing – fruit condition, timeliness in processing, processing practice and storage.

Marketing

Conferences barely broke even but were well received by those members who attended. There has to be the AGM in March so coinciding with a Conference made sense. We have had an influx of new members and some good stories to tell, thus a Conference was needed. John A suggested using Amada Bailey from the Olive Centre to talk about how the Australians had educated the public about EVOO and how they had taken over market share.

David said basic marketing was what he heard people asking for. It was agreed that this should be the primary focus for Conference.

It was agreed that Saturday 22 March would be the date and Wellington the venue.

Andrew suggested also offering an optional excursion on the Sunday, perhaps to Wairarapa, as this had worked well on Awards weekend.

Marketing Tools – Gayle had circulated a paper on trialling shelf wobblers as a marketing medium for people who used the OliveMark. She suggested emailing these people with the offer of 6 shelf wobblers free for them to try and then report back on effectiveness. The cost of less than \$400 would be charged back to Certification. This was agreed.

Andrew asked that a photo of the promotional banners be posted to the website with their cost as these were very effective and reasonable priced. Gayle said that this would also be in the October newsletter.

7. General Business

David said that members need to be reminded that certification required both chemical and sensory assessments and is only available in New Zealand via Olives New Zealand. He said that he came across people who thought that chemical assessment fromASUREQuality was sufficient confirmation that an oil was EVOO. This would be added to the article on the close off date for certification in the October newsletter.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.12pm and Andrew thanked everyone for their participation.

New Members:

Derek and Sally Holland, Auckland

Just and Pauline Cochrane, Auckland

Francesca Fantino, European Foods Ltd, Auckland

Graham and Barbara Ingram-Monk, Nelson

Wayne and Nini Wooff, Nelson

NEXT MEETING – Wednesday 20th November (teleconference)