

OLIVES NEW ZEALAND
MINUTES SYNOPSIS OF EXECUTIVE MEETING
WEDNESDAY 19 FEBRUARY 2014
TELEPHONE CONFERENCE 7PM – 8.20PM

1. Present

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

Andrew welcomed all to the meeting and said that 2014 was looking to be a great year for olive growers.

2. Apologies

Tony Millar, David Walshaw, Allan Frazer

3. Financial Report

Craig said that the 2012-2013 Financial Statements are due back from the Auditors and no issues were raised by the Auditor. The statements are just pending signoff by a partner.

The changes required by IRD have been circulated twice to members; in January with the Notice of AGM and in February with the revised AGM Agenda.

4. Executive Officer Report

Membership

Approximately 2/3 of 2014 membership fees have been paid. The original invoices were emailed at the start of January and statements posted at the start of February. Copy invoices will be sent again before the end of this month.

Conference 2014

There are now 51 registrations for Conference, including 4 presenters. There are 42 registrations for the Dinner and 33 for the Excursion, of which 17 will be travelling independently. Early Bird registration has been effective in getting early registrations.

AGM

Only one nomination had been received for Vice President – Kay McKelvie from Northland. Thus Kay's appointment to the position would only need to be formalised at the AGM. One remit had been received from Nelson Branch. An updated Agenda with details of the Executive and Nelson Branch remits and voting papers have been emailed to all members.

Grove Census

Grove Census update forms have been sent to all members who have previously supplied their data. New Grove Census forms have been sent to all members and non members who have not yet returned any data. Forms were coming in slowly and members would be reminded in the newsletter.

2014 Certification

The 2014 Certification documentation would need to be sent to all members and posted on the website prior to harvest starting. The Executive had previously agreed that fees would remain the same. There was one issue in relation to whether plastic containers should be

added to the list of acceptable retail packaging for use of the OliveMark. Research in 2013 was inconclusive apart from the fact that this was a short term solution only and not a retail option. Australia Olives do not support plastic packaging.

After discussion, the consensus was that there be no change to the packaging specified for retail oil in the Certification documentation; that is glass, tin or bag in box.

Marketing

The Facebook page is operational and both Cindy and Gayle are posting articles, etc.

Feedback on the shelf wobblers trial is coming in and will be collated for the April meeting.

A price is being obtained for woven bags that could be pre-printed with the OliveMark and other data and made available at a nominal cost to OliveMark users for use at Farmers Markets, etc.

5. Executive Officer Visit to Australia

The planned meeting with Lisa Rowntree was cancelled at short notice and was not able to be rescheduled. This gave a free day on Monday ahead of the AOA Board meeting on Tuesday/Wednesday. Gayle was able to organise a tour of olive groves in McLaren Vale on the Monday and found this to be an excellent use of the time in meeting the growers and visiting their cellar doors.

Paul Millar was very welcoming and generous in allowing Gayle to sit in on their full Board meeting. The AOA Board comprises the President, Vice President, four state representatives (Victoria is not currently represented), a Large Scale Enterprise representative (Boundary Bend) and the Code of Practice Administrator plus the CEO.

AOA has 400 paid members and membership fees are based on hectares planted.

Horticulture Australia Ltd fund special projects and had previously organised the AOA Conference. Conference 2014 will be held in Newcastle in September and Paul Millar extended an invitation to Gayle to attend.

There are two key focuses for AOA; the Code of Practice and Consumer Awareness. The Consumer Affairs Australia and New Zealand (CAANZ) is looking to recommend mandating the standard to Consumer Affairs Australia. New Zealand is represented on CAANZ by the Department of Business, Innovation and Employment.

The Code of Practice Administrator randomly tests EVOO labelled products on supermarket shelves, other retail shelves and sold via websites.

There is also a Code of Practice for table olives and a committee oversees this sector.

Their awards are run by Richard Gawler. Richard is running a series of state tasting seminars in an effort to increase the pool of judges.

A number of Australian exporters have had their shipments refused entry into China because they have been tested and found to contain a level of DEHP (plasticiser) that exceeds the Chinese specified limit. AOA will be recommending to all members looking to export to China or supplying to exporters, to not use any plastic containers in their storage process. John A said that China requires any potential exporters to conform to pre-export requirements but that they are obviously testing again at point of entry.

Paul Millar is almost totally committed to working on addressing food fraud and spend a lot of his time in the USA. It will be very interesting to watch what is happening in the USA and Australia in this regards.

Australia Olives had a substantial TV marketing campaign in December promoting Australian EVOO as being fresher, tastier and healthier than imported oils. There has been a complaint laid with the ACCC and it will be interesting to see the results.

Paul Millar invited Gayle to talk about the olive industry in New Zealand and this was very well received. Paul Millar said that AOA welcomed the opportunity of working closer with Olives NZ in the future.

Gayle had dinner with Gerri Nelligan, Editor of the Australian & New Zealand Olivegrower and Processor magazine on the night before she left. This was beneficial for both to get to know each other better.

The McLaren Vale tour was excellent. Five producers were visited; three of these were also wineries (Lloyd Brothers, Primo Estate, Hugo Estate) with excellent cellar door outlets, one was a commercial press operation (Diana Olives) also with retail, wholesale and export outlets, and one was a retail outlet (Brian Swanson Olives) and a major producer of table olives. The producers were all very generous with their time and happy to answer a myriad of questions. Photos of the outing are on the Olives NZ Facebook page.

Gayle said that the AOA Board are required to sign off a Director Responsibilities document. Allan Frazer had drafted a Confidentiality Agreement previously for Olives NZ and Gayle suggested that she could draft an expansion of this to be an Executive Role and Responsibilities document for signing off by the Executive members. This was agreed.

6. General Business

Chris Fortune

John D reported that this was ongoing

Plant & Food Project Proposal

Andrew said he had been approached by Alan Woolf of Plant and Food Research regarding the possibility of using a Masters student to do further work on harvest maturity indicators. Alan had estimated that this would cost Olives NZ \$2,000 - \$3,000 and would require a substantial commitment from participants to send in samples. Andrew asked if there was support for such a project.

After much discussion, it was agreed that productivity is the key issue although investment in determining optimum harvest time would also bring a tangible result. To this end, NIR testing is recommended.

In summary there was not support for the project proposed by Plant and Food Research at this point.

Retiring Executive Members

Andrew noted that John Arthur would be standing down after a significant commitment as Vice President and David Walshaw form his co-option to the Executive. Andrew said he would be formally acknowledging the contributions of John A and David at the AGM.

John A expressed his appreciation at being involved in Olives NZ and wished the Executive all the best for the future.

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 8.20pm.

NEXT MEETING – Sunday 13th April in Wellington