

Olives New Zealand
Minutes of Executive Meeting
Thursday 19th November 2015
Telephone Conference
7.15 – 8.54pm

1. Present

Andrew Taylor (President), Craig Leaf-Wright (Vice President/Treasurer, Bob Marshall, Tricia Noble-Beasley, John Dunlop, Tony Millar, Gayle Sheridan

2. Financial Reports

Craig explained that most activities have run according to budget with the exception of the Conference, Awards and Sponsorship. Currently there is a \$5,000 deficit but this will be \$15,000 by the end of the year. The cash in the bank includes \$18,000 received for Focus Grove Sponsorship leaving a balance of \$30,000 in real funds to cover the deficit. This situation means that the organisation is now at the point where membership subscriptions must increase to cover operating costs. He noted that membership fees had been static since the new structure was implemented in 2013. The 2016 Draft Budget has been based on a membership increase of \$80 for Full Members and proportionately for the other categories. He noted that Awards Entries and Conference have the potential to positively influence the budget if well supported.

There was consensus discussion that there was no option but to increase membership fees to cover operational costs. It was generally felt that most members would be understanding and accepting of this situation as the membership fee was a minor cost to olive growers with the benefits of membership far outweighing the cost.

(See <http://www.olivesnz.org.nz/about/benefits-of-membership/>)

The 2016 draft Budget was approved, including the increase in membership fees of \$80 for Full Members and proportionate for other categories.

3. Executive Officer Report

Gayle spoke to her report which had been circulated.

Financial

The final out-turn for the Awards was a loss of \$4,352 and for Certification was a surplus of \$1,500. Neither activity carries any loading for the administration overhead.

Membership

Was now 195. The Focus Grove Field Days had attracted non-members and it was hoped that these people would join in the New Year.

Awards

There had been several good newspaper articles on the Awards.

There had been issues with a minority of members, over the past three years, in providing the summarised judging sheets with close scores or points that added up differently to the medal awarded. This was often when an oil was re-tasted but only the medal to be awarded was recorded rather than the rescores. Whilst these situations could be explained it created angst with the members. There was discussion as to whether providing this level of detail

was of use to members given that potential for issues. It was felt that while the individual scores are interesting the value add is with the judges' comments. It was agreed that the summarised Judges Scoring Sheet for Awards entries be replaced with just the Judges' Comments.

Focus Grove Project

Pledges now total \$61,000 and pledges received had funded the preliminary visits underway. These would cost approx. \$12,000 or \$2,400 per visit. The mini field days in Hawke's Bay, Nelson and Canterbury had been well attended with around 20 people at each and there were more than 35 registered for Wairarapa.

Given that 60 pledges had been received from a membership of 195 and that all members would benefit from the project, it was apparent that more members should be contributing. It was thought that now members had seen at first hand the value already, that more pledges may be forthcoming. The outcome of the SFF application would not be known until December but given the additional funds pledged and already advanced, the project had been started on the basis that the pledges would be honoured.

Grove Census

About half of member groves had returned their 2015 census form but none of the five large groves, who accounted for 30% of the trees. At this point, no meaningful analysis is possible but the data would be made available to the groves that had participated in December.

Food Writers Guild

The presentation at the Food Writers Conference had gone well. The regional contacts for the Food Writers Guild would be advised to the Branch Chairs.

Sponsors

The Olive Grove from Australia had signed up as a General Sponsor and Amanda Bailey would review the level of sponsorship ahead of 2016 Conference.

Lakewood Products had also expressed interest in becoming a Silver Sponsor.

Annual General Meeting

It was agreed that the 2016 AGM would be held on Saturday 19th March at Masterton. The Focus Grove update would be on the Agenda.

There were no positions due for nomination and a call for remits would be made with the notice of AGM in January.

Branch Chairs are advised that Branches MUST hold their own AGMs within 60 days of the end of the financial year (December). This means that these must be held by the end of February 2016. Notice of meeting, financial report and annual report must be sent to all branch members no later than 21 days ahead of the AGM date. The approved financial report and annual report must then be sent to the Executive Officer within 7 days of the meeting being held.

Japan Export Project

Gayle has started work on the draft budget for the project but was waiting on samples of the Dorica botte, pricing, etc. to progress. Information was also needed about labelling and testing requirements in Japan

A legal contract was required for potential partners on an 'all care but no responsibility' basis to protect Olives NZ.

2016 Awards Judging and Conference Venues

Quotes have been obtained for the Awards judging in Auckland and the Conference in Wellington. Based on the most competitive quotes, the confirmed venues are Jet Park Hotel for the Awards judging and James Cook Hotel for the Conference. There were some items already for the Conference programme but with scope for others.

It is hoped to have the Awards Dinner at Parliament and to be a shared Italian meal in honour of the Italian Head Judge and hopefully with the Italian Ambassador attending again. The Marketing Sub-committee had discussed having the presentation of the Bronze, Silver and Gold medals in the late afternoon at Conference with the major awards being presented at the dinner. This would take some of the time pressure off the evening and mean that people could relax and celebrate the successes rather than the evening ending once Best in Show had been presented. This format would also enable some form of entertainment. There was consensus that this new format would be good to trial.

World Olive Oil Trade Group

Olives NZ has advised that we are interested in a watching brief of the proposed new group only at this point.

Government Industry Agreement for Biosecurity Readiness and Response

While the GIA is of interest to the industry, Olives NZ is not in a (financial) position to be proactively involved. MPI will keep Olives NZ up to date with happenings. If there was interest from members a guest speaker from GIA could be arranged for Conference.

4. 2015 Executive Priorities

Productivity – covered off with Focus Grove Project.

Processing

It had been previously agreed that Andrew and Gayle look at options for having a Processors Course ahead of 2016 harvest and in Auckland because of the press availability and timing.

Marketing

The subcommittee continues to work on promotional material and the Japan Export Project is underway.

There had been feedback at the Canterbury Field Day that some members require help in selling their oil. Olives NZ has provided presentations at Conference on marketing options and provides merchandising material to assist members.

It was pointed out that members need to take responsibility for their decisions on marketing (own brand, to other producers, co-operative) and that Olives NZ had limited budget provision for marketing.

It was agreed that the major issue is variation in production. Consistent sales were linked to consistent production so addressing the latter would improve the situation.

5. General Business

Phenom Phenol Reporting

The paper received from Ross Vintiner and Ray Lilley was discussed in great detail.

The importance of polyphenols as the differentiator for EVOO was agreed and this is shown on the Health Benefits brochure. It was noted that individual data was provided to members via their certification certificate but this is confidential information. Feedback from members was the key priorities were improving productivity and selling their oil.

It was noted that the paper referenced the UC Davis research which used a lot of 'mays' and 'shoulds'. The UC Davis summary included that further research was required.

The polyphenol research was certainly of real interest and a watching brief needed to be kept for future reference. It was agreed that Bob would discuss the UC Davis paper with Ross Vintiner.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday 18^h February 2016 – Teleconference