

Olives New Zealand
Minutes Synopsis of Executive Meeting
Sunday 4th October 2015
The Bolton Hotel, Wellington
9am – 10.30am

1. Present

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

2. Executive Officer Report

Gayle spoke to her report which had been circulated.

Financial

Approval was given to replace the Olives NZ notebook with a new HP Pavilion at a special price of \$900 including GST.

2015 Certification

Certification is now completed for 2015 with a total of 119 samples submitted. Five of the non EVOO oils were resubmitted and four came back with the same result and one was reclassified as EVOO.

Judging Seminar

There had been 15 attendees at the judging seminar which had gone very well despite the challenges with the venue. It was agreed that there was an issue with getting members to attend these seminars. It was agreed to get quotes from 2015 seminar attendees for future promotional use.

In 2016 a Sensory Analysis workshop could be offered on Conference weekend or the day before, in Wellington. This could be run by the Head Judge from Italy.

It was agreed to look at regional field days or workshops on sensory analysis and blending prior to harvest 2016 and that Regional Chairs would organise and promote these events.

Focus Grove Project

Ray Lilley had offered to write an article for the website, etc. on the Focus Grove participants and it was agreed that this would be a good introduction for members ahead of the formal reporting. It was suggested that Ray should attend the initial visit in the Wairarapa and interview the other participants by telephone.

The total pledge of \$57,698 exceeded the amount required by the Sustainable Farming Fund which meant the project could be got underway immediately. Gayle and Andrew were due to meet with Stuart Tustin on 12th October to go over the project plan.

Marketing

The members of the Food Writers Guild who had attended the Awards judging to observe the process and meet the judges had been very enthusiastic. As a result of the visits an opportunity had come up for an advertisement in the bumper Christmas issue of Cuisine. There was budget provision to cover this and the ad would feature a photo of the Best in Class winners and a push of the OliveMark.

Gayle would be presenting a short session at the Food Writers AGM this month showing the Simply the Best DVD and offering tastings of the top winning oils from the Awards.

Grove Census

There had been a poor response thus far to the 2015 grove census. Non respondents would be followed up but if the response rate was not improved there would be no point in writing up a report.

Australian Olives Conference

There had been several very interesting presentations at the AOA Conference and a couple of likely presenters for the Olives NZ 2016 Conference identified. The field trip to Boundary Bend had been excellent. A report on the Conference had been drafted and would be available to members via the website.

2015 NZ EVOO Awards

The Food Bowl venue had proved to be most unsuitable for the Seminar and the Awards Judging. Accordingly hotel venues will be investigated for 2016. Apart from that the judging had gone well and there had been very positive feedback from the panel about the high standard of entries.

The Executive ruled that the use of medals is limited to forward use only by purchasers of bulk oil that has won an award, subject to the approval of the seller, and is not retrospective to the seller should a purchaser win an award.

2016 Conference and Awards Dinner

Because the clash with WOW impacted on the cost and availability of accommodation in Wellington the dates for 2016 were looking to be pushed out to the weekend of 15/16 October. Saturday would be Conference and Sunday a field day at the Wairarapa focus grove. Quotes were being obtained from hotels as it was necessary to confirm a booking as soon as possible.

GIA Biosecurity Forum

Olives NZ has been requested by MPI to attend this forum on 29th October. The forum is to look at biosecurity issues and how these will be managed and funded in the future. The intention is that industry should contribute towards costs. MPI had offered to pay for flights for Gayle to attend.

3. General Business

Processor Courses

There had not been a processor course since March 2014 and there were strong drivers to have one in 2016 including new processors and issues with processing highlighted in certification. However there needed to be buy in from processors to ensure viability to run a course.

It was agreed that an Oil Production course needed to be ahead of 2016 harvest and River Estate was the preferred venue because of plant size and availability of fruit at the start of the season. It was agreed that Andrew and Gayle should look at options for overseas presenters to run the course.

Award Winning Oils

Olives NZ needs access to Gold and Best in Class winning oils to use as gifts for judges, seminars, etc. but there was a reluctance from some members to donate these rather they required payment. It was agreed that the Award rules be updated to include a requirement for Gold and Best in Class winners to provide a set number of bottles to Olives NZ to be used for a variety of purposes.

Export Enquiries

Olives NZ had received a constant stream of enquiries over the past three years about exporting, especially from China and Japan. However growers have been unable to conclude deals. A driver in selecting a Japanese judge this year was an effort to establish a relationship that might assist with export opportunities and this had come to fruition. Olives NZ has been invited to attend an international olive oil exhibition in Osaka in October 2016.

The Focus Grove Project focussed on improving production and was supported by the majority of members as evidenced by the pledges. However there will be a challenge in the future from members on how/where to sell their oil. It was therefore timely to now look at an international high value market and research showed that Japan had the right population and demographics.

It was agreed that Gayle investigate a project further and come back to the Executive with an idea of a model and costs involved so that a decision can be made on whether to progress. This would need to be a user-funded project outside the normal operating environment of the organisation.

Judge's Excursion

These excursions provide an opportunity to promote olive growing in New Zealand and for judges to understand our industry by grove visits and meeting growers. This added value for the New Zealand industry.

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 10.30am

**NEXT MEETING: THURSDAY 19TH NOVEMBER
TELECONFERENCE CALL STARTING AT 7PM**