

Olives New Zealand
Minutes Synopsis of Executive Meeting
Thursday 18th February 2016
Telephone Conference
7.45 – 9.00 pm

1. Present

Andrew Taylor (President), Tricia Noble-Beasley, John Dunlop, Niall Holland, Gayle Sheridan
Andrew welcomed Niall Holland to the meeting and thanked him for taking on the role of Canterbury Chair.

2. Apologies

Craig Leaf-Wright, Bob Marshall

3. Minutes of the November Meeting

Matters Arising

Bob had discussed the Phenom Phenols research with Ross Vintiner and Ross had requested that he and Ray be able to do a presentation on the research at the AGM and they would prepare a background paper for distribution. The request was agreed to providing no more than 20 minutes plus 10 minutes for discussion/questions.

4. Financial Reports

The draft 2015 Audited Accounts had been received. It was noted that the \$25,000 deficit was as a result of loss of sponsorship (\$15,000) and income from Certification and Awards being under budget because of the poor harvest year. In relation to sponsorship there had been optimism that the previous sponsors would continue and every effort had been made to retain them. Every effort had also been made to find new sponsors with limited success. The Executive approved the distribution of the audited accounts to members.

Dwarf Groves

Requests had been received from 2 groves with dwarf trees for a special membership category. There was significant discussion around factors such as returns per ha, capital investment, varying crop loads, etc. There was also discussion on the danger of linking membership fees to production because the situation last year, where half the groves in New Zealand had no harvest.

It was noted that while many activities of Olives NZ are user-pays, all members have equal access to the service provided by the Executive Officer (which is covered via the membership fee) and therefore needed to contribute accordingly.

In summary it was felt there was no justification for a change in membership fee and the two groves be advised accordingly.

5. Executive Officer Report

Membership

Some 19 members had resigned on receipt of their 2016 membership invoice. Most of these were genuine reasons and this was a typical scenario. Only two of these were because of perceived lack of value. However, the number of resignations was higher than the 11 received in 2015. There were also approximately 20 members who have yet to pay.

It was noted that with the number of groves for sale across most regions, it was up to the regional groups to follow up with new owners to introduce Olives NZ and encourage their membership.

It was also noted that it was important for the President to visit the regions at least annually as this raised the profile of Olives NZ significantly.

Annual General Meeting

No remits had been received. A final Agenda and relevant attachments would be emailed to all members in the first week of March.

Focus Grove Project

An interim Fact Sheet on disease management had been emailed to members and was also available on the website.

Processing Practices Seminar

There were 16 registrations already with several pending. All processors had been targeted directly, including non-members. Chris Iacono from Australia, a supplier of mechanical harvesters, would host a Happy Hour at the end of the first day.

2016 Certification

AOA had not been involved in the decision to stop providing the NIR Polyphenol level as part of the certification package. Rather, the Australian “industry” was actually the group of competition judges

The Oil Testing Service has agreed to provide sufficient data to Olives NZ to enable the showing of the intensity of the oil on the Certification certificate. The Polyphenol box would be replaced accordingly with an Intensity box showing Mild, Medium or Intense. Members would be advised of the advice received from the Oil Testing Service in the February newsletter and how Olives NZ would change the Certification Certificate accordingly. Also that wet chemistry PP testing was available, as are other tests, at an additional cost.

Concern was expressed at the process where the Australian ‘industry’ was able to impact on the commercial business relationship between Olives NZ and the Oil Testing Service. This was a dangerous precedent and should not happen again. Any future decisions on the arrangements between Olives NZ and the Oil Testing Service must be done in consultation with Olives NZ. The Oil Testing Service would be advised accordingly.

New World Trade Olive Group

The report released by the Olive Oil Times stating New Zealand was involved in the meeting to discuss a proposed NWTOG was incorrect and members had been advised accordingly. No report has been received from this meeting.

Japan Export Project

The draft budget was circulated. The Letter of Intent was with the lawyer for working on. This document detailed the project overview and detailed the terms of engagement for potential participants. The sales and marketing person from Te Mata Estate, had proved invaluable in finding information about exporting olive oil to Japan and also generic information on exporting. Given that she was Japanese and experienced in exporting from New Zealand to Japan, her attending the Kansai Exhibition with the Olives NZ representative

had been built into the budget. This would improve the opportunity for successful engagement immensely.

The project objective was to facilitate the promotion of NZ EVOO. It was apparent that smaller growers were unable to get export opportunities underway and therefore Olives NZ is acting as a facilitator. Some members will question a perceived elitism of the project but that was not the case. The project was being budgeted as user-pays. The project participation fee may be a barrier for some members and without a quorum of 5 participants the project would not progress. However, the model would have been developed and could be picked up another time when there was more interest.

It was agreed that Pilot would be a better title than Project and also was clearer as to the intent.

The budget, letter of intent and timeline for the Japan Export Pilot would now be finalised for the Executive to sign off at the March meeting. It would then be ready for distribution to members.

Sponsors

The Executive welcomed Point4 Ltd as a new General sponsor. Promotional material had been emailed to all members and there would be an article on them in the February newsletter.

2016 Conference

The 2016 Conference had been booked at the James Cook Hotel for Saturday 15th October with a Sensory Analysis Workshop on Friday 14th and a Focus Grove Field Visit in Sunday 16th. There was a base Conference programme drafted.

The Awards Dinner was booked for Parliament on the evening of Saturday 15th, with the Bronze, Silver and Gold being presented at Conference and just having the major awards presented at the Dinner.

Food Writers Guild

Olives NZ was in a position to sponsor one of the Conference guest speakers to the Food Writers Conference on the same weekend and was waiting to hear back on what might work for them.

Marketing

Some new recipes had been obtained and an order placed for a reprint of the recipe pads. Some members need guidance on how to use the pads as having all them on the table was not effective. Rather having samples available from one recipe and only those leaflets available would help upsell oil as people could see how to use the oil.

2016 NZ EVOO Awards

The judging venue has been confirmed at Jet Park Hotel where the judges would also be staying. The judging panel comprises:

Dr Antonio G. Lauro (Head Judge) – Italy

Westerley Isbaih – Australia

Georges Feghali – Lebanon (currently in New Zealand)

Charlotte Connoley – Auckland

Rachel Costello – Nelson

Rachel Priestley – Wairarapa.

There had been negative feedback from one member that the Awards had been pushed out into October. This was at the request of members who wanted the Awards Dinner in conjunction with Conference and at a time when accommodation was cheaper in Wellington.

6. 2016 Executive Priorities

The current focus for the Executive, based on feedback from members, is as follows:

- Productivity – Focus Grove Project
- Processing – Processing Practices Seminar
- Marketing – Merchandise, Facebook.

7. General Business

Kapiti AGM is on Sunday.

Nelson AGM had been held on Wednesday evening with a good attendance. They were looking at a regional strategy with follow-up meetings planned to look at USA and Hong Kong.

Canterbury AGM had been held.

Hawke's Bay AGM had been held on Wednesday evening.

It was noted that getting a Northland/Auckland group back into action was a priority and there might be an opportunity at the Processing Practices course to progress this.

Tricia said she would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge and thank Andrew for the major contribution he made to Olives NZ and its members.

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 9.30pm.

NEXT MEETING
19 March (Carterton, following AGM)