

Olives New Zealand
Minutes of Executive Meeting
Thursday 16 June
Teleconference
7.20pm – 8.10pm

1. Present

Andrew Taylor (President), Tricia Noble-Beasley, Bob Marshall, Niall Holland, Gayle Sheridan

2. Apologies

Craig Leaf-Wright, John Dunlop

3. Financial Report

There was nothing untoward in the financial report that had been prepared by the Treasurer.

4. Executive Officer Report

Gayle spoke to her report which had been circulated.

Financial

Membership

New members continued to join and total membership was now back to the same level as in 2015. Now was a good time to attract new members with fees discounted 50%.

Focus Grove Project

There needs to be a Project Team Meeting before then end of July.

Some members are asking now that harvest is over when should they prune and restart their spraying regime. Spraying should start again the first fine day after harvest and then on an ongoing basis with the 21 day regime. On pruning, Stuart Tustin has emphasised the need to determine the future crop load before starting to prune and pruning accordingly. At the Field Days late last year Stuart made the observation that over cropping was apparent and typically because people had pruned too early. The recommendation is not to prune until September earliest and even later in the year.

Japan Export Pilot

The labels are being finalised and this will enable the gift box and brochure to be finalised. The label machine has been delivered and the DVD translation is in progress.

Certification

Some 26 samples have now been received which is ahead of the same time in 2014 when 21 had been received.

DPI has advised today that the Oil Testing Service has been working hard to improve the NIR calibration for polyphenols following on from issues identified earlier this year. As a result, they are now to include the polyphenol content as part of certification information.

Australian Olive Association

The Olive Growing books have arrive. Niall offered to do a short review of the book to assist with promotion.

Marketing

There had been media interest following on from AOA putting the spotlight on imported oil that did not meet the Australian standard for EVOO.

2016 Conference

The proposed programme is being finalised.

2016 NZ EVOO Awards

The Awards Information Pack had been distributed for approval. The entry fee will remain at \$250 each for the first 3 entries but \$100 for any subsequent entries. Hopefully with a discounted fee this might encourage more entries, especially flavoured oils. The break-even point for the Awards was 75 entries and there had been 90+ in 2014. As most of the costs are fixed additional entries add to the income.

5. General Business

Branch Updates

Kapiti – There is a large crop load in Kapiti but the season is later than usual. There was some unhappiness at the situation with processing capacity and time frames, particularly with the threat of frosts. One batch of olives had been rejected by the processor because of frosted fruit. Kapiti would be offering a tasting seminar after harvest in August or September. Local food writers had been contacted and several had expressed interest in attending. Lucy Corey, who writes for the Dominion, has said she will use NZ EVOO in recipes rather than just EVOO.

Canterbury – The big challenge for Canterbury had been to find shareholders to buy out a half share of the processing plant. This had been finally sorted and a new operator has been trained and is now operating independently. Some people have lost crops to frost and it is apparent that Banks Peninsula is not prone to the same issues affecting the rest of Canterbury in relation to frost and also a poor pip to flesh ratio. Another issue has been with harvester break downs.

Hawke's Bay – There was a very dry summer and there has been quite a lot of wizened fruit as a result with low yields. However there had been very good crop loads reported although some issues with getting the fruit off. There have been issues with processing breakdowns and severe frosts. The regional executive are meeting soon and will be deciding on a date for a table olives workshop, which will be made available to other regions.

Andrew said he harvested a bumper crop of Barnea in Hawke's Bay, averaging 39kg per tree. He attributed this to the spraying and pruning program and noted that Craig had a similarly impressive harvest. Niall said that they had also noticed an improvement in the quality of their fruit and the yield now that they were following the same spraying regime and with a proper sprayer.

Wairarapa - Has had a similar situation with drought and then some severe frosts. Frost damage is sometimes not apparent on the trees but becomes evident after the fruit has been harvested. There has been an issue with the main processing plant and their waste water discharge permit. This has impacted on harvest and will result in a protracted harvest and processing season. However, there had been some good yields reported.

Bob added that he had been using a tow and blow frost prevention machine again and with excellent results. He suggested that there would probably be orchardists across the country that had these machines sitting idle that would be approachable to hire to olive growers. Andrew said that two growers in Wairarapa had also purchased frost machines and been pleased with their performance.

Other Business

Andrew advised that he had sent his old harvester down to Otago where it was being used. This has resulted in good harvests.

Andrew said that as in previous year, he intended taking the Head Judge on an excursion to visit the regions. This year he would like to get down to the South Island; Nelson and Canterbury and maybe Otago. He noted that he did not charge for his time and that many members offered accommodation which helped keep costs down. However expenses associated with the excursion needed to be covered and visiting the South Island would mean a greater cost. *(The 2016 budget is \$3,000.)*

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 8.10pm.

2016 Meeting Dates

18 August

14 October (James Cook Hotel, Wellington starting at 5.30pm)

17 November