

Olives New Zealand
Minutes of Executive Meeting
Thursday 20th September 2018
Teleconference
7.15pm – 8.30pm

1. Present

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

2. Apologies

Craig Leaf-Wright, Charles Chinnaiyah and John Dunlop

In the absence of Craig, Tricia would chair the meeting and welcomed everyone.

3. Financial

In Charles' absence he had briefed Gayle to speak to the Financial Reports which had been circulated.

August Financial Report – Charles had provide the normal Profit and Loss and Balance Sheet plus a more detailed Profit and Loss showing monthly transactions right up to date in September. Charles had said that he felt it would be more meaningful for the Executive to receive a Management report showing more detail than the current reports.

Membership Scenarios – Charles had reviewed and provided some membership scenarios which had been an action point from the AGM. Charles had said that he did not recommend any change in membership structure of fees as there could be a loss of members affected by any proposed fee increase. Rather Charles said the focus should be on continuing to increase membership numbers.

There was discussion about the review and the consensus was to support the recommendation.

4. Executive Officer Report

Gayle spoke to her report which had been circulated.

Financial

Gayle said that Complete Packaging were paying their Gold Sponsorship in two instalments as per 2017. Lakewood Products, had decided against renewing their Silver Sponsorship as they had not found this worthwhile. She had approached Hills about sponsorship given that the proposed new Focus Grove Project would include leaf and soil testing but their preference was to just include a flyer in the Conference pack. Niall suggested that it would be worthwhile inviting Hills to do a presentation on their services at a future event. Gayle to look at this for the 2019 Field Days.

Membership

Gayle noted that membership was now 204, which was the highest it has been in more than seven years.

Focus Grove Project

The October Field Days will be attended by the Head Judge and Vera Sergeeva will also attend Northland, Hawke's Bay, Canterbury and Nelson.

Bob said that Hawke's Bay were looking to have a dinner with Esteban on the Saturday night.

Niall said Canterbury had considered just allowing the Wednesday night to be a free night as the week was going to be very intensive for the Head Judge, especially following on from judging week.

Gayle said that it would be good for the Focus Groves to speak briefly at Conference about any weather events that had impacted on harvests. She said that this was evident in the harvest data comparisons.

There was support for the recommendation that the industry co-funding for the new project be by levy on all members as all members benefitted. For the current project only 61 members had contributed and there had been a lot of comments about "free loaders" attending the Field Days. A levy would require a much lower contribution than members had contributed for the current project because the cost would be spread across the full membership.

Niall suggested that there be parallel groves using other more organic products to gauge their effectiveness. There was general support for this but would to be user-funded as was outside of the project scope.

It was agreed that any decisions on funding, etc. be deferred until once the success or otherwise was known of the new project application.

2018 Certification

There had been 184 samples from 85 members sent for certification and one late sample due this week. There had also been one from 2017 and seven from 2016, of which only one had not passed as EVOO. There was a dominance of mild oils whereas normally there was a fairly even spread across mild, medium and intense.

Growers were reporting a major issue with cloudy oil again this year and the oils were not clearing. The problem appeared to be water in the oil and was across regions and across processors. Pablo Canamasas would cover cloudy oil in his Conference presentation but had said cloudy oil would only have a shelf life as EVOO for 4-5 months.

2018 Conference and Awards Dinner

There now have been almost 70 registrations for Conference with a break-even of 55. It was noted that as most of the registrations were from couples, this was a low proportion of members attending.

Entries for the Awards totalled 115, 99 EVOO and 16 Flavoured. The break-even was 100.

Harvest Data

While more than 50% of groves had returned their 2018 harvest data more responses were needed before a meaningful report could be produced.

Table Olives Seminar

This was cancelled due to insufficient numbers.

Food Safety Act

There have been reasonably low level of sales of the National Programme Templates. However several growers already have reported successful registrations using these.

Pioneer Award

The recommendation that a Pioneer Award be presented at the Awards Dinner was agreed.

Government Industry Agreement

Noted that the GIA group were hoping for an SFF grant for a Xyllella project.

Horticulture New Zealand

Leanne Stewart from Horticulture NZ will be attending the Wairarapa Field Day and Conference. Gayle will check if she would be prepared to talk briefly about GAP if the issue of industry farm certification was raised.

Food Writers Conference

It was agreed that Olives NZ sponsor gift packs for the presenters at this Conference being twin packs of surplus EVOO and Flavoured oils from the Awards judging.

Australian Olive Association

Gayle drew the attention of the Executive to the change in the AOA shelf life of EVOO to 18 months unless additional tests were carried out to prove a longer period (e.g. 24 months). Pablo Canamasas would no doubt talk about these additional tests in his Conference presentation but the issue is that these double the testing costs and AOA are working with the two laboratories to try and get some preferential rates.

5. 2018 Executive Priorities

Productivity – 2019-2021 Focus Grove Project submitted

Processing – Seminar run 9-10 April

Marketing – Consumer Survey

Bob spoke about the presentation planned for Conference. This would be in two parts. The first part would be the results of the three surveys including differences with the groups. The second part would be the Rob Bree interpretation of the results, implications, suggestions on what could be done and suggested costs/budget. The presentation was basically a road map of where NZ EVOO is at and where it could/should go. The aim was to determine the feedback and support from members for the recommendations and then options on how to fund and how to determine support for funding – for example a postal vote now or remit at the AGM.

It was noted that health benefits were important but other oils made similar claims and the challenge was in promoting EVOO as superior. Tricia said this is where someone with credibility such as Nadia Lim would be ideal.

Ahead of the Conference, the Executive agreed to publish the Consumer Survey and Rob Bree Report on the Olives NZ website and to promote these to members in the September

newsletter. This would allow those particularly interested to look at and think about the results and recommendations and make a more informed contribution at Conference.

6. General Business

Branch Updates

Bob said he had recently returned from overseas and had nothing to report.

Andrew said the Wairarapa Branch were trying to co-ordinate verification visits to reduce costs but there had been a limited response. This may be because not many are ready for a visit. He said that Ross Vintiner was going to give a presentation on brix testing as he had quite detailed records of using this approach. Plus the branch were also involved in providing catering support for the Field Day BBQ. Andrew said that members re-joining was a reflection of the availability of the National Programme Templates and the exemption approved for those who package their own oil.

Niall noted that if Canterbury had not been affected by fruit spoilage the region would have had the biggest harvest on record. Niall added that Bel-Hamed was about to go on the market and Sally and Malcolm Mc Kenzie had brought a home in Amberley. Malcolm hopes to continue to assist at the press and aims to keep the harvesting equipment in service in Canterbury. He has not committed to operating it himself and unless a viable arrangement can be made it may yet go on the open market.

Tricia said that a verifier would give a 2 hour presentation to Kapiti branch members on the National Programme requirements and also answer questions. The cost would be covered through accumulated Branch funds. She said that Branch funds were also being used to enable a collaborative presence at the major Labour weekend market at Waikanae. This would be like a mini olive festival to enable people to try as many oils as possible from the region. Andrew said that the Wairarapa branch had previously participated in a "Made in Wairarapa" event and the grower that sold the most was the one whose oil was being used by a bakery for tasting with their breads.

There being no further business Tricia thanked everyone for their participation and declared the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

New Members:

Brian and Yvonne McDowall, Canterbury

Esther and Arjen Ritmeester, Bay of Plenty

Amanda Currie, Central Otago

Christabelle and Stephan Gil, Northland

Helen Wilson, Wairarapa

Rejoined – Nalini and Colin Baruch, Ian Silver, David and Penelope Brosnan, Gavin and Lisa Birrell