

Olives New Zealand  
Executive Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2019  
Teleconference 7.10pm – 8.30pm

**1. Present**

Tricia Noble-Beasley (Vice President), John Dunlop, Niall Holland, Charles Chinnaiyah (Treasurer), Andrew Priddle, Craig Leaf-Wright (President)

**2. Apologies**

Geoff Crawford, Craig Leaf-Wright (for lateness)

**3. Minutes of the February Meeting**

Matters arising

Focus Grove Project - the revised budget out-turn was a deficit of \$2,000.

It was agreed that those who attended the Field Days but not contributed towards the project be invited to make a contribution towards the deficit.

**4. Financial**

Charles spoke to the financial reports circulated. He noted that as the travel costs for Craig and Gayle attending the Field Days had been coded to Meetings and Travel this account was now almost fully spent.

Charles said there had been some unbudgeted items, for example the Template sales income and the expenditure for the EU lunch.

**5. Executive Officer Report**

Gayle spoke to her report which had been circulated.

Membership

The drop in financial members from 200+ at the end of 2018 to 189 is because of grove sales and resignations because of the Food Safety requirements. Membership numbers should pick up progressively over the year as in the past.

Focus Grove Project

There had been an excellent attendance of 153 across the five Field Days. Four of the groves are looking exceptional and the fifth is making good progress. Noted that Kakariki was the only grove to not have scale. There was general support for the Field Days to continue.

The demonstration of the ATRAX4 harvester was well received. Vera had been unable to find any sign of disease at most of the groves she visited and was very impressed.

Sustainable Food and Fibres Application

The new project expression of interest had been drafted and preliminary discussion held with the SFF advisor. The SFF advisor said that the olive industry was not known by the project evaluators and Olives NZ needed to have more information available on the industry strategy, the industry story, analysis of the industry, innovation and industry engagement. She said a position paper was needed that could be referenced in the SFFF expression of interest. Gayle said she could do this as a priority.

Two budget scenarios had been drafted for the new project; using one consultant or with two consultants. A decision is needed on whether one or two consultants be used on the project.

John said it was important to look at grove management practices not requiring capital expenditure, such as nutrients and other applications affordable by smaller groves. He suggested inviting product companies such as Ravensdown to provide advice. He noted that Stuart was more open to considering other business drivers.

Charles questioned whether there would be double the benefits with two consultants and was comfortable at using just one consultant.

Craig said it was more affordable to run a new project with only one consultant.

Tricia said that the Focus Grove owners themselves now had the practical experience of the grove management techniques and needed now advice on other and new aspects. She noted that Stuart Tustin is already talking about organic and holistic approaches such as putting pruning mulch back around the trees. Tricia said that project affordability was a key factor.

Craig raised that a funding model for industry contribution needed to be agreed and Niall suggested that this be pro-rata on membership type. Gayle asked on this basis, could not a straight increase in membership fees be considered but Charles said this could result in a loss of members as membership fees appeared an issue. Andrew agreed that he heard frequent comments about the cost of membership. Craig added that funding may not be such an issue as those who had not contributed to the current project must surely see the benefits in funding a new project.

It was agreed that the new project needed only one consultant which would also make it more affordable.

Niall said that at this point he needed to be excused from the meeting but wanted to raise several points.

1. Olive oil does not travel well between countries therefore the need for local product.
2. The loan repaid to the Canterbury Branch would be used to fund future Field Days.
3. He asked for a formal thank you to be made to the Focus Groves and also acknowledge if they had made a presentation to Andrew and Stuart on behalf of the region.
4. He and Jan had visited the Edwards on Waiheke Island and noted the grove health with using other management techniques.

Niall then exited the meeting.

Andrew said that opening up the canopies and removing shelter belts on Waiheke Island plus the good salt/wind environment resulted in some impressive groves. He said in the past he had used a salt water and vegetable oil product to good effect but it was no longer available. Andrew said that sand and peat seemed to well suit olive trees, perhaps because of free drainage.

Tricia said that a grove in Kapiti who had been following the recommendations, including using Protek, had Anthracnose and also a poor crop load. There was a suggestion that the grove need to look at its soil. Therefore the new project is on the right track with the more holistic approach.

### 2019 NZ EVOO Awards Dinner

After considering feedback from members and looking at the various options to hold the Awards Dinner at a Wellington hotel, it was agreed that this be held on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> October at The Bolton Hotel.

### Marketing

It was agreed that the proposal from Fine Food NZ was very expensive and there was minimal interest from the commercial groves. On this basis the proposal would be declined.

### Food Writers

Olives NZ has had a corporate membership of the Food Writers Guild since 2014 and the current membership due is \$350 plus GST.

Membership was recommended by Beef and Lamb NZ because of potential for support by the organisation and particularly its food writer members. Olives NZ sponsors gift packs for their conference, hosts food writers to meet the NZ EVOO Judges and sit in on the judging plus we have paid to be able to do things at their conference (tastings, presentation). In return there has been nothing tangible.

Gayle recommended that membership of the Food Writers Guild not be renewed accordingly and this was accepted.

## **6. Executive Priorities**

Productivity – see Executive Officer Report

Processing – Seminar 2020

Marketing – see Executive Officer Report

## **7. General Business**

### Branch Updates

Wairarapa – Andrew reported that the Branch committee had its first meeting and set in place the schedule for future activities such as ongoing Field Days and a tasting session. There was looking to be a record harvest for a number of groves, including all those following the Focus Grove recommendations, but others had very little fruit. An exception to trees performing well was Barnea which is looking poor across the region.

Kapiti – Tricia reported that crop load is variable across the region from very little to excellent. Kapiti Olives in particular is looking excellent and both Josu and Vera were very impressed when they visited.

Andrew noted that Kapiti Olives had applied lime in the past.

Tricia said that some groves not strictly following the Focus Grove recommendations had their best ever crops. She said that their grove had been partially heavy pruned for tractor harvesting and those trees were looking rather sparse. However the balance of trees have a very good crop, which was attributed to the spray programme.

The Branch committee has met and set some forthcoming activities – tasting session after harvest in August and tentatively a field day at Kapiti olives in October.

Nelson – John reported the Branch committee had met and already held one activity. This was a degustation dinner show casing different olive oils and wines. Other planned activities include a field day on grafting, a tasting workshop, and visit to the Jacket Island grove.

John said groves needed to do soil tests because PH was extremely important with a PH of around 7 being ideal.

John commented that the demonstration of the battery harvester had been very well received in Nelson. Andrew said The Grove Supply Company had taken delivery of their first shipment and a number had been pre-sold.

A report from Canterbury Branch had been included in the meeting pack.

Gayle reminded Branch Chairs that the Head Judge would do the normal regional tour in October. She and Andrew needed to work on a draft itinerary but it would be up the Branch committees to organise their regional activities using the Head Judge.

There being no further business, Craig thanked all for their participation and declared the meeting closed at 8.30pm.

New Members:

Cornel de Ronde, Northland

Rong Zhang & Ying Shi, Canterbury

Roger Smith, Wairarapa

**2019 Meeting Dates**

20 June

15 August

October (decide at August meeting if a meeting on Awards Dinner weekend is required)

21 November