

Olives New Zealand
Minutes Synopsis of Executive Meeting
Thursday 21st June 2018
Teleconference
7pm – 8.45pm

1. **Present**

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

Craig welcomed everyone to the meeting and especially the new Wairarapa Chair Andrew Priddle

2. **Financial Report**

Charles spoke to the Financial Report which had been circulated. He noted that income was down over May and the organisation is now drawing on reserve funds for expenditure. Charles said there were no overdue debtors and even some overpayments. Charles summarised saying that the accounts were looking healthy.

3. **Executive Officer Report**

Gayle spoke to her report which had been circulated.

Financial Systems

Noted that \$467 had been saved by changing insurance companies for the management liability insurance and that Hunter Valley Enterprises would not be renewing their sponsorship.

Membership

Membership continues to grow despite losing a few members.

Focus Grove Project

The October dates have been confirmed. Noted that Nelson will include a visit to Weka Olives and Wairarapa will include River Grove.

The Conference presentation has been drafted and needs the 2018 harvest data for Frantoio. The presentation will then be fine-tuned by Stuart and will also be used by Andrew Taylor for his presentation at the AOA Conference. The Olive Oil Times requested information on the Project and this has been provided.

Andrew said that there was an apparent positive difference in tree health and fruit harvested from the groves following the Project recommendations.

Consumer Survey

The three surveys have been completed (general consumer, Food Writers, NZ Chefs Assn.). These will be discussed under Executive Priorities.

Food Safety Act

There has been positive feedback from members to the news that MPI has advised approval of the packaging dispensation for growers, subject to specific criteria. There have been 10 sales of NP1 this financial year and these, added to the 4 sales in 2017, mean the

development costs have now been covered. In addition there were 2 purchasers of NP1 that have since upgraded to NP3.

MPI changed their advice that all growers who sell olives/oil must be at least NP1 as follows. *Growers, who sell their total harvest, may not need NP1 registration if the buyer/harvester/processor captures the growing activity under their registration and are willing to take responsibility for the growing aspects. For the growing to be covered under the harvester/processor's Risk Based Monitoring, they would be accepting legal responsibility for food safety at the growing stage.*

Noted that some harvesters and processors act as brokers so this would be their decision to make. Also noted that growers who produced for their own use only would not need NP registration.

There has been discussion of co-ordinating verification visits on a regional basis to reduce costs. This needs to be followed up by Branch Executives.

IOC Visit

This visit had gone extremely well and had culminated in the request that the Executive approve a request to MPI for New Zealand to become an observer country. This is being progressed at present by MPI.

Craig said the visit was an eye opener for Jaime and Ender in looking at the growing conditions and the groves they visited. They commented how different these were to the groves in the Northern Hemisphere. The visitors commented favourably on their reception at the formal visits arranged with MPI and then MFAT/MPI as well as with Olives NZ members. The visitors were also interested in the Telegraph Hill operation. The presentation at MFAT went very well and there was a very good response from the MFAT and MPI staff present. The point that New Zealand produces EVOO only was emphasised.

Craig noted that the cost for full membership of the IOC was prohibitive for New Zealand and Chris Carson had said the Government would consult and take advice from the olive industry in this regards. Becoming an observer country was seen as a first step at this stage.

Tricia added that Chris Carson had accompanied Minister Damien O'Connor on his visit to the IOC in Madrid. She said that O'Connor was interested in alternative agricultural/horticultural sectors and the olive industry was seen to fall under this. Tricia also noted that the IOC presentation had included carbon emissions and sustainability of olive trees.

Certification

Certification is underway and 28 samples have already been sent to DPI with some results back, all being EVOO. The Certification section of the website showing certified EVOOs is updated as results are received.

Conference and Awards Dinner

The break-even point of 55 attendees should be easily achievable. Craig commented that the Focus Grove visit will be a good attractor as had been the case with the AGM weekend.

NZ EVOO Awards

Noted that Adva Webber and Greig Kai would be Guest Judges.

The break-even for the Awards will be 95 entries, which should be exceeded.

Government Industry Agreement

It was agreed that re-joining Horticulture NZ and going through the GIA deed signatory process was not worthwhile and Olives NZ would continue with a “do nothing” approach. Craig noted that Hort. NZ are currently voting on the membership levy of 14%.

Membership Categories and Fees

In order to progress the motion from the AGM, some direction is required from the Executive so that Charles and Gayle can work on some scenarios. There was discussion around the intent and practicalities which would now enable Charles and Gayle would to do some modelling based on the above feedback and bring this back to the Executive.

Discussion

It was agreed to offer a discount of \$100 on the National Programme Templates to members who had previously purchased the Food Safety Plan Template¹.

4. 2018 Executive Priorities

Productivity – Focus Grove Project

Craig noted there was a significant increase in productivity by groves in the Wairarapa who were following the Focus Grove recommendations. The Village Press had also told him that it was also obvious in the quality of fruit received for processing which groves were following the methodologies.

John said there were still issues with leaf loss but this is a minor issue. Also with Anthracnose although the spraying programme was stifling this to an extent. However several groves who had not sprayed had harvested early and have avoided the problem.

Andrew said he had noticed that Anthracnose was a real problem in unsprayed and unpruned groves. Especially with Barnea and Picholene.

Processing

Seminar run 9-10 April

Marketing

The Consumer Surveys on oil use in New Zealand have been conducted and the results collated for the various target groups. With the general consumer group, 75% use EVOO and 52% use NZ EVOO (but maybe not exclusively). However 90% buy from the supermarket and the most used brands are Lupi, Olivani and Pams although The Village Press also has a good following. With the Chef and Food Writers surveys, interesting that the most purchased EVOO was The Village Press for both groups, followed by Lupi and Olivani.

Bob said the surveys had confirmed some things but had highlighted other things not known. There were quite a few comments from people who liked using (NZ) EVOO and flavoured olive oils for the flavour but pricing was an issue. He noted that the general consumer survey was a sample size of 300 with respondents across New Zealand, fairly representative of geographic and age demographics. He noted that EVOO use was across all age bands from 20-65 years.

¹ The Food Safety Template was developed in 2008 by Olives NZ at a cost of around \$20,000 and was intended for processors. To encourage uptake it was priced at \$250. However there was minimal uptake with only 8 out of 24 processors. Several processors however had to pay considerably more to the developer to access the Template ahead of time.

Gayle said that the full survey results would be presented at Conference but also would be ideal to present the next steps. Reid Research had recommended using Rob Bree of BMSW to do further work - <https://www.bmsw.nz/> Rob had suggested the next steps from the surveys would be for his company to provide strategy recommendations based on the research. This would include recommendations re actions and an estimate of the costs of those actions / campaign. The cost for this work would be \$3,000 and there was still a balance of \$8.500 in the OliveMark promotional account. Bob said he thought spending \$3,000 would be a good way forward but the Executive needed to provide input on their preferences, suggestions, messages, etc. for the marketing company brief.

The Executive approved the allocation of \$3,000 to developing a marketing plan incorporating feedback from the Executive.

5. General Business

Branch Updates

Hawke's Bay - Bob said that the harvest season was running late with fruit taking time to ripen. There had been very few frosts with sunny days. The Village Press had reported huge variations in oil yield of fruit processed, from 6-8% to 18-20%.

Wairarapa – Andrew said there had been no sunny days and weather had been very wet. However harvest has been progressing well and is almost finished. There had been feedback from Pablo at The Olive Press that some fruit had been over-ripe and the high water content in fruit was resulting in a lower yield, for example 11-12% vs. 17%. Charles added that over-ripe fruit was resulting in cloudy oil and yield was affected because of the weight of wet fruit. He also said that this had caused challenges with processing.

Kapiti – Tricia said most groves have completed harvest with yields between 10-16%. She said that slow ripening had also been an issue. Craig noted that people have been surprised at the slow ripening with fruit not being ready as anticipated.

Nelson – John said whilst there had been a lot of rain January to March, there had been little since. Fruit was typically 4 weeks ahead with ripening and good yields. Bird strike had been an issue but management techniques such as canons and shot gun had been effective. He said there had been requests from Marlborough for assistance with harvesting but this was not practical.

Canterbury – Niall said initially it had been thought harvest would be early but this has not been the case. There has only been a small amount of processing carried out thus far with the major press now in production and the smaller press having finished the small grove runs. The oils that have been produced thus far, namely Barnea, Leccino and Manzanilla, were quite mild. Bird strike was an issue.

August Meeting

John, Niall and Bob apologised that they would not be available for this meeting.

There being no further business, Craig thanked everyone for their participation and declared the meeting closed at 8.45pm.