

Olives New Zealand
Executive Meeting Minutes Synopsis
Thursday 19th November 2020
ZOOM Conference Meeting
7.05pm – 8.12pm

1. Present

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

2. Apologies

Ray Gregory, Geoff Crawford

3. Financial

Charles spoke to the Financial Statements which had been circulated.

The Budget Variance Report showed that Awards income and Certification income were ahead of budget. Conference income is slightly under budget because the reduction in cost with Rydges meant that attendance fees were \$200 for the first Registration and \$150 for subsequent compared to \$250 for the first as budgeted. Also most of the registrations were for at least two people. Membership income is also down because of the members who did not renew for 2020. The Awards and Certification expenditure are up to match the increase in income.

The Balance Sheet reflects that the short term deposit matured, showing in the Saver Account. However \$30,000 has now been moved to another term deposit (6 months at 0.8%).

4. Executive Officer Report

Gayle spoke to her report which had been circulated.

Financial

There had been affirmative feedback from members on receipt of the credit note for their Awards entry (ies). One member had requested this be paid as a refund and this had been processed.

Focus Grove Project

The third round of Field Days for the new project have been completed and the report made available via the website. The report and other attachments were loaded to the MPI portal as well as the invoice payable. Our MPI Advisor was very impressed with the two marketing campaigns and had circulated these wider with the Wellington MPI team.

Focus Grove participants and others will be reminded that leaf tests need to be done mid-December to mid-January.

The next major activities will be the March Field Days.

If there is no International Head Judge to tour in October the Field Days can be pushed out later in the month as in 2019 to avoid the school holidays.

Certification

The final total was 194 samples and 106,278 litres certified. All samples were certified as EVOO. The 2020 samples are now in cool storage and the 2018 samples disposed of.

DPI has advised that their Organoleptic Panel has been accredited by IOC for 2021 but unfortunately the Lab has fallen short of IOC accreditation by ½ point. DPI has requested a review of this score. The new Panel Leader had worked hard with the Panel over 2020 as evidenced by the number of samples requested from NZ for Panel training. The Lab is accredited by the American Oil Chemists Society.

Awards

Remote judging had worked very well from the judges' perspectives and from an administration perspective. The judges had especially enjoyed having more time to work through the entries and felt they had done a better job accordingly. Based on this feedback it would not be fair to continue to expect the judges to work through the current level of entries in two days with centralised judging. Rather there would need to be two Panels of 4 judges.

Conference and Awards Dinner

Both of these events were sold out. Thanks to Bill Hey and Tricia for their help at Conference.

In relation to Conference there had been very good feedback on the programme and presenters. The presenters also enjoyed the day.

There was general agreement that the venue was very good for another Awards Dinner but perhaps not another Conference if attendance was to increase.

2021 AGM

The positions of President, Vice President and Treasurer were all up for election in 2021. The current incumbents indicated they were available for re-election and call for nominations would be sent out in January.

There was general support for the AGM to be held by Zoom meeting.

Branch chairs to look at also have a centralised venue with a Zoom link so that members could gather together for participation, should there be sufficient demand in their region.

2021 Awards

Jet Park has cancelled the 2021 booking for the Awards judging as their Government contract has been extended until at least end of 2021.

It is too soon to be able to predict what travel will be possible for international judges in 2021. However it could be assumed that there may be a bubble with Australia. If we use centralised judging in Auckland, then at least two international judges will be required.

However, remote judging using New Zealand and potentially overseas judges is an option, given how well remote judging worked this year. One of the attractions of remote judging, apart from giving the judges more time to work through the entries, was the reduction in costs that could be passed back to members via reduced entry fee.

Branch Chairs might raise remote vs. centralised judging at their AGMs to see what members thought.

Mancozeb/Manzate EU Approval

The EU has advised that Mancozeb does not meet their new registration criteria and all existing authorisations for use will not be renewed. The primary issue is around residue in/on products. Olives NZ has previously done residue testing for the Focus Groves 2018 EVOO and no Manzate was detected.

It was agreed to have residue testing carried out on 2020 EVOO from the Focus Groves.

5. 2020 Executive Priorities

Productivity

See Focus Grove Project above.

Processing

Our ability to offer a Processing Practices Seminar in 2021 would depend on Pablo being able to come to New Zealand. It was noted that if there was a trans-Tasman bubble, Pablo could also do quarantine in New Zealand.

Marketing

The report received from @consult and Thorn PR had been circulated.

Craig said he had received a lot of feedback from people who had seen the campaign, both from within Wairarapa and further afield. It seemed that the Awards campaign had wider audience exposure than usual and it was a good start given the investment. He thought Mike's presentation on social media at Conference was very good.

Andrew said that obviously the boosted posts had better reach but the numbers are not all that impressive given that the audience was all of New Zealand within the other parameters. He said that Wairarapa Farmers Market has moved to a different venue so it would be difficult to know if any increase in sales was a result of the campaign or the venue change.

Charles said that there is a need to follow-up on initial campaigns with fine tuning. He agreed that given the population targeted the reach was not all that impressive.

Tricia noted that it was not possible to measure how many friends or followers see and share the posts. She said that the OliveMark promotion in particular has been especially good.

Niall said that Jan had noted a marked increase in sales and there is more willingness to pay the price. Perhaps this is as a result of the campaign.

Gayle said she had received feedback from quite a few members that their sales were up post lockdown and 2019 oils have been sold out. But it is difficult to know why the Buy Local has taken off.

6. General Business

Branch Updates

Wairarapa

Andrew said it had been challenging keeping up with the spray programme because of wind and rain. Flowering is looking very good, especially those following the Manzate programme, and earlier by about two weeks.

Charles commented that this could be pointing to an on-year with biennial bearing.

Craig said he had got the first Protek spray on a little earlier and would be monitoring to see if this impacts on fruit set. He noted it was good to be able to have a scientific approach to grove management.

Andrew added that spray restrictions because of COVID lockdown had resulted in the re-emergence of Peacock Spot.

Craig noted in contrast, with having control over their own spraying operation, this resulted in being able to maintain the spray programme and this has pretty much seen elimination of disease and biennial bearing headed off. In fact harvest tonnage is steadily increasing. Craig noted that Aquiferra, Kapiti and River Grove are also reporting consistency in their crops, elimination of disease and without the huge crop variances of the past.

Kapiti

Tricia advised that the branch had a new season's EVOO tasting and luncheon at Waikawa Glen, followed by a grove walk. There was an excellent turnout of 20 people. Tricia was delighted with the region's performance in the NZ EVOO Awards. She noted while attendance by branch members at the Field Day was a little down, there was good support for Conference and the Awards Dinner. Tricia said that flowering was looking promising across the region. The branch did not plan a Christmas get together as people were busy.

Canterbury

Niall said that flowering in Canterbury appeared to be a week early but the region was in drought conditions.

Nelson

Ray had advised that the branch had had a grafting workshop.

Other Business

It was noted that payments for the Wairarapa Field Day lunch at The Swan Hotel were two payments short, even after following up with those registered. This shortfall was covered by Olives NZ.

It was noted that Craig and Gayle need to follow up on Olives NZ purchasing the database.

There being no further business Craig thanked everyone for their participation and offered best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. The meeting was declared closed at 8.12pm.