

Olives New Zealand
Executive Meeting Minutes
Thursday 18th November 2021
ZOOM Conference Meeting
7.15pm – 8.30pm

1. Present

Craig Leaf-Wright (President), Tricia Noble-Beasley (Vice President), Geoff Crawford, Andrew Priddle, Alan Blakemore, Gayle Sheridan

2. Apologies

Charles Chinnaiyah, Ray Gregory

3. Minutes of the October Meeting

Matters arising

2021 Awards

It was noted that it needs to be clear to members that Best in Show is Best Commercial oil. Boutique entries are eligible for all other awards including medals, Best in Class and Best/Reserve Boutique.

Focus Grove Field Day

It was noted that there are non-members attending some Field Days. If they attend repeatedly then they needed to be shoulder tapped to join by the Branch Chair..

4. Financial

In Charles absence, Gayle spoke to the Financial reports that had been circulated. Budget Variance – the anomalies in relation to Awards and Sponsorship have been discussed previously. While Interest income was under budget because of the current rates, there was a payment due this month from one of the Term Deposits of \$121.37.

2022 Draft Budget – was presented for discussion and to be formally approved in February. Gayle pointed out that the Awards had been budgeted on the basis of remote judging with one centralised meeting only. While the intention would be to use one or two Australian judges there was no budget provision to bring them over. The draft budget allowed for a \$200 entry fee for the first three entries, \$100 for subsequent entries. Any changes to remote vs centralised judging would require the entry fee to go back to \$250.

While it was hoped to offer a judging seminar this would need to be done by Zoom and would need to break even.

In relation to the Processing Practices Seminar, Pablo was keen to be able to do this in early April. However that would depend on him being able to come to New Zealand and isolation requirements

5. Executive Officer Report

Gayle spoke to her report which had been circulated.

Sustainable Practices Paper

Gayle has made start on drafting the paper. She made the point that much of this information was already available in other Olives NZ documents. For example the Focus Grove principles promoted sustainable practices, especially in regards to control of disease and pests, control of weeds, soil nutrition and efficient land use. The reports on the website reiterate these practices.

In relation to environmental contribution the Olives New Zealand Overview Paper on the website had a small section on this including carbon footprint and better production footprint.

Gayle said she has spent quite a lot of time researching for the paper and creating the outline. She and Tricia had discussed including 'stories' about what individual members are doing in regards to environmental contribution. For example the processor making briquettes out of processing waste and other processors making fertiliser from waste and a local grove making charcoal out of prunings.

Focus Grove Project

The October Focus Grove Field Days had drawn very good attendances. Unfortunately Northland could not be held because of COVID travel restrictions and has been deferred to a second visit in 2022. It was noted that there was only one remaining round of Field Days to be held in March 2022 and the project was due to finish in November 2022 with the final report.

The October report has been loaded to the website and provided to MPI along with the Milestone invoice.

The Disease Management Fact Sheet has been updated to include Anthracnose so all of the information is in one document.

Marketing

Ian Warren of Tuscan Downs Grove had picked up the work on exploring an export project for Canterbury. He had had discussions with NZTE and "Made", a North Canterbury group that supports the local food industry. He had also done some of his own research and has come up with a project potentially targeting the USA. He had shared where he was at with the attendees at the Canterbury Field Day. Ian will do some more work on the project outline and then call a meeting of interested people.

Awards Wash-up

Because only one of the Nelson judges attended the Awards Dinner Gayle took all of the judges and their partners to dinner on the night of the Nelson Field Day, along with the Branch Chair. They were most appreciative and the night provided an opportunity to talk more about remote judging and managing the large entry number, which appears to now be the norm.

The Auckland judges and the Facilitator have been sent a dozen of the Gold medal oils, including the four top winning oils. A couple requested some of the flavoured oils and that has been arranged.

Stuart Tustin was also supplied with three dozen Gold and Silver winning oils for his own use and promotional purposes. The Wine Awards have not held their annual Awards Dinner, which provided the opportunity to use the unused bottles.

Section 33 Exemption

MPI does not have a list of who has used the Olives NZ exemption, rather this information is recorded at a Council level. Gayle contacted the groves that did not get oil certified in 2021 to ask if they are bottling their own oil. Those that have responded said they did not harvest or only harvested for their own use. The list of those who have not replied will be provided to MPI along with their addresses so that MPI can follow up, should they chose.

Future Projects

This list is now included for reference and it should be noted that a scoping paper is required from those suggesting the project.

- marketing (several members, see BMSW Initial Recommendations paper)

- updating the Best Practice Management manual in line with the Focus Grove Project findings (several members)
- sustainable growing standard (David Walshaw)
- re-design of the OliveMark and Olives NZ logo (Nalini Baruch)
- online market place (Gordon Legge)
- Polyphenol production, yield increase for oil (harvest timing), increasing fruit set, growing larger fruit (Geoff Crawford)

2021 Conference – suggested topics

- Polyphenols – how important are these to health aspects of EVOO
- Polyphenols – how to increase these in olives and production
- Rejuvenating a super grove (Andrew Taylor)
- Focus Grove Project – final conclusions (Stuart Tustin)
- The High Value Nutrition Project

MPI – High Value Nutrition Project

Olives NZ has been invited to participate in a new initiative. The initiative is a collaboration mainly between Auckland, Canterbury and Otago universities, and funded by MBIE. They will use science to validate the benefits of a healthy diet based on high quality NZ food and beverage products for consumers and their wider families. It appears to be similar to the Mediterranean diet. The study will be conducted across New Zealand and use a dietary pattern based on scientific evidence associated with a reduced risk of lifestyle related health conditions such as diabetes and heart disease. Alongside the science programme, they intend to co-develop with industry some tools to help NZ businesses to give consumers confidence they're making the right purchase decisions for their health and the health of their loved ones. This would include a mark that could be used on approved food items. For the study they will require 400 litres of quality oil so could be a good opportunity for Olives NZ to be involved.

There was discussion around the many studies that had already proven the health benefits of NZ EVOO. However it was noted that this is a more holistic approach. It was agreed, that subject to more information, this was a study that should be supported by Olives NZ.

Gayle will prepare an article for the newsletter and call for expressions of interest from growers who would each be prepared to donate 40-50 litres of Certified EVOO.

Olivetì

A new member to Olives NZ is on the Oliveti committee and has asked how Oliveti could align with Olives NZ as he sees many benefits for their members. The main benefits he saw were access to the National Programme templates, the Section 33 exemption, Certification, Awards and Field Days. It was agreed that Oliveti members be invited to attend the Northland Field Day in March where a discussion could be held on benefits of Olives NZ membership. As an incentive to all new members, the National Programme templates could be offered at a reduced price.

Craig thanked Gayle for her report.

6. 2021 Executive Priorities

- Productivity – see Executive Officer Report
- Processing – 2022 Course subject to presenter
- Marketing – see Executive Officer Report

7. General Business

Branch Updates

Wairarapa

Andrew said that it has been very windy which has limited spraying. Budding is looking to be impressive. The first flowering is just underway in Martinborough so on track to do the first Protek application.

The Branch had a tasting session with about 14 people and with 10 2021 Gold and Silver oils. The target had been the new members.

Kapiti

Tricia said Kapiti had run a tasting session prior to the Awards with about 20 people, including some new members, and 11 oils. This had been at Huhana Smith's grove and the grove walk had been interesting.

Tricia said flowering was looking to be very good with huge numbers of buds however there had been some bad weather, including torrential rain, hail and wind. Protek applications were underway and growers were feeling positive about the 2022 crop.

A committee meeting was due before Christmas and then the next activity would be the Branch AGM in February.

Hawke's Bay

Geoff said flowering was underway and the varieties were quite close together rather than being spread. The weather has been dry but there has been wind to aid pollination. Growers are hoping for a better fruit set than this year. The Branch had an oil tasting including a number of Bronze through to Gold winning oils. Georges Feghali had attended and is keen to be involved in the Branch.

Canterbury

Alan said Terrace Edge was about to flower with tremendous budding. However the balance of Canterbury was probably not looking as good but flowering was a few weeks away yet.

The Focus Grove Field Day had gone very well with an excellent turnout. The day had started at a grove that had been neglected but the new owners planned to rejuvenate. Malcolm McKenzie had done a demo of his machine harvester and three trees had produced on average 30kg per tree. The pruning demo with Neil Smith and Stuart had also been very useful for people to see how to renovate overgrown trees. The new owners of "Two Old Soldiers" are looking forward to getting the grove into full production. There were quite a few new faces at the Field Day and a lot of new interest, boding well for the region. There is particular interest in rejuvenating neglected groves.

There being no further business Craig thanked all for their participation. He noted this was the last meeting for 2021 and wished all a happy festive season. He declared the meeting closed at 8.30pm

New Members:

Dave Dell, Auckland