

Olives New Zealand
Executive Meeting Minutes
Thursday 21st October 2021
ZOOM Conference Meeting
7.05pm – 8.05pm

1. Present

Craig Leaf-Wright (President), Charles Chinnaiyah (Treasurer), Geoff Crawford, Andrew Priddle, Ray Gregory, Alan Blakemore, Gayle Sheridan

2. Apologies

Tricia Noble-Beasley (Vice President)

3. Financial

Charles spoke to the Financial reports that had been circulated.

The Budget Variance Report showed that Awards Income was up because of the increase in entries over the number budgeted but this was offset by an increase in Expenses. The current small surplus will be offset by the cost of the entries for New York.

Interest income is down because interest rates are less than budgeted.

Certification Income is over budget because more samples were submitted than budgeted.

OliveMark Promotion Income is under budget because merchandise sales are down but this is offset by a reduction in Expenses.

Sponsorship is under budget because the Kiwi Labels in lieu contribution for the Awards Medals was costed at \$2021 rather than \$3000 for normal Gold Sponsorship. C-Pack also changed their sponsorship from Gold to Silver.

Charles said the Balance Sheet showed the organisation continued to be in good shape with the Term Deposits totalling \$50,119.

4. Executive Officer Report

Gayle spoke to her report that had been circulated.

First off she thanked the Executive on behalf of Lionel and herself for the dinner vouchers received and the wonderful gift hamper, in thanks for the Awards work. These were much appreciated.

Membership

The two new members shown on the Agenda were Sarah McGrade and Glenn Hughes who had taken over the grove established by Helen Clausen and planned to rejuvenate this and Grant and Diana Crosse who have brought Kapiti Olives but don't take over until 1 April. Another new member this week is Neville and Junko Chan, Wairarapa. They have a yuzu orchard and supply fruit to The Olive Press and Lot Eight. While they don't have an olive grove they wish to sell the yuzu oil made by TOP and use the respective medal, therefore they have joined as Associate Members.

Focus Grove Projects

An email was sent to Branch Chairs and Focus Grove owners outlining the agenda for the October Field Days. These have got underway with Hawke's Bay on Wednesday. A good attendance of 15 including the new Kapiti owners, new members who have brought a chunk of the Matapiro Grove, as well as representatives from Matapiro and the Village Press.

Geoff said that people at the Field Day had seen discussions on spraying as a no brainer but had been interested in more work on maximising harvest and increasing oil yield.

Nest week is Nelson, Canterbury and Wairarapa with Northland to be scheduled as soon as travel opens up for Auckland.

Certification

2021 Certification is now completed and with a new record of 218 samples. The Certification Statistics 2012 – 2021 show a dramatic increase in numbers. For example, Wairarapa from 28 in 2012 to 111 in 2021 and Kapiti from 2 in 2012 to 18 in 2021.

2021 Awards

The judges once again found remote judging to be very efficient and effective, especially managing the large entry. The quicker turnaround in producing the final results took a lot of pressure off the other deadlines around certificate production and the medals order, as well as the administration associated with the Awards.

Wairarapa and Kapiti were stars in relation to the top awards. TOP produced all of the five major winning oils and well deserved the Processor Award for the eighth year in a row.

Awards Dinner

The Awards Dinner went very well although it was a shame that our members and the judges from Auckland, Northland and Waiheke Island could not attend. The Wellington Airport venue is very convenient for people both flying and driving in. The meal was very good and plentiful.

Special thanks to Tricia for acting as host and doing the concluding remarks. Tricia got around most of the tables during the evening and received positive feedback from attendees.

Marketing

The press release resulted in good media uptake – print, online and radio.

Grove Census Harvest Data Report

The 2021 Harvest Data Report has been compiled and circulated to members. It is also available under the Focus Grove section of the website.

There was a similar response rate to previous years with 62%. None of the super groves contributed as per usual. What is extremely pleasing is that for the first time since harvest data has been recorded, the national average crop is now slightly more than 10kg per tree. When the Focus Grove Project started 7 years ago, this figure was less than 5kg per tree. All of the Focus Groves out-performed their regional average, again.

Section 33 Exemption

Geoff had asked for an update on what is happening with non-compliance to the requirements of the S33 Exemption for National Programme One registrations.

Gayle printed off a list of all people who had brought a NP1 template and then ticked them off as their oil was received for Certification. There were around 20 who had not submitted oils but some of these are contract growers for TOP and TVP, so unlikely to do any bottling. After taking off these, that left around 12. The list was provided to MPI who confirmed that only one was NP 3 registered but they needed more detail to delve further on the others.

That is being worked on. It may be that some did not harvest but the list needs to be checked that others are not bottling under the S33 Exemption without having their oil certified.

5. 2020 Executive Priorities

Productivity – see Executive Officer Report above.

Processing – Pablo is keen to run a course in 2022 should he be able to travel.

Marketing – see Executive Officer Report above.

6. General Business

Branch Updates

Wairarapa

Andrew said that Rod and Elaine Corlett were blown away to receive Best Boutique at the Awards. They had thought perhaps they may have won Best in Class.

Andrew said the weather in Wairarapa had not been conducive for spraying or pruning. Budding is starting so people are planning for the Protec and Boron sprays.

Lunch for the Field Day has been planned at the Gladstone pub.

The Branch has an oil tasting coming up and will especially target new members. Gayle offered if any branch wanted oils from the Awards for tasting to please let her know as she had many left over from the judging.

Nelson

Ray said people are catching up with pruning and spraying, which had been delayed because of rains.

A couple of groves were changing hands and he would endeavour to keep up with new owners.

Branch members are looking forward to the Field Day on Tuesday. Andrew said he hoped to be there.

Hawke's Bay

Geoff said the local Field Day had a very good turnout and there was very good discussion. He had raised with Stuart late flowering which seems to be because of the mild winter. Stuart had said that there had been only 200 chill hours versus 1200 normally, which slows the start of flowering and will also result in a spread of flowering. This was evident at Aquiferra where the Frantoio were covered in good buds but the Picual and other varieties had pretty much nothing at this point.

Andrew said he had noted the same in Wairarapa, Frantoio and Barnea are well advanced but other varieties appear to be behind.

Craig wondered if chilling hours would have any impact on PPs.

Geoff said there had not been much change in grove ownership. He said that the new (Australian) owners of Mohaka may look to sell the property.

Matapiro has coppiced 7,000 trees in a plan to regenerate the grove.

Geoff said he had asked for feedback at the Field Day on next steps once the current Focus Grove Project finished. The consensus was for more work on increasing fruit set and increasing oil yields taking into account factors such as irrigation, fertilisation and timing of harvest. He said it would be good to start taking measures of oil in fruit at harvest and then comparing to the post pressing figures.

Geoff said the new owners of Aquiferra have done a good job with the pruning and have been doing a lot of research.

Canterbury

Alan congratulated Olives NZ on a splendid night and venue for the Awards Dinner. He thought the event went very well. He said he would encourage more Canterbury growers to participate but the outcome of 5 groves winning 19 medals was pretty impressive.

Alan said there had been reasonable rain and groves in South Canterbury were looking good. It would be interesting to see the groves in North Canterbury next week.

Alan said they had done a heavy prune in their grove and was reflective of harvesting with branch shakers. Previous advice on pruning had been for machine harvesting. He expected harvest tonnage to be down in 2022 because of the heavy pruning.

Craig said that Alan might be surprised. When Aquiferra had done a severe pruning by Shona, they actually harvested bigger fruit with a higher oil yield. This resulted in more oil than previously.

Alan said there was an issue for growers in Canterbury with markets and fetes being cancelled as these were normally where the bulk of sales happened for smaller groves.

Alan said he hoped to see a potential new member from South Canterbury at the Field Day.

Craig said that there were a number of forthcoming fairs in the lower North Island that were dependent on a move to Level One.

There being no more business, Craig thanked all for their participation and declared the meeting closed at 8.05pm