

Olives New Zealand
Minutes of Executive Meeting
Saturday 30th September 2023
9am at The Boardroom, Te Pania Scenic Hotel, Napier

Present

Craig Leaf-Wright (President), Tricia Noble-Beasley (Vice President), Geoff Crawford, Chris Moore, Hamilton McConachy, Neil Smith, Emma Glover

Craig welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Apologies

Charles Chinnaiyah (Treasurer)

2. Previous Meeting Minutes

Read as true and correct.

3. Financials – September 23

Once the final Awards and Tastings Course costs are received and entered that is it for all income and major expenses for 2023 except the EO fees. With uptake on Awards Entries, Awards Evening and Tasting Course lower than budgeted, the expectation is that they will have all operated at a small loss. Emma has adjusted spending where possible.

There is \$58k in term deposits that will need to be used to cover any short fall in the remainder of 2023.

4. Executive Officer Report

Emma gave a verbal report.

Financial systems - Everything else was covered off above, no more to add.

Membership – New member Andrea and Greti Barzotto from Barzotto Studio in Central Otago. 2023 total membership is 157, 2022 total membership was 181.

Certification – Final number of oils sent for certification in 2023 was 142, with four failing. This is compared to 191 in 2022.

Grove Census – the Census is slow coming in and have not all been entered. But it would be lucky if there had been a 40% response. Emma will ask for a final response before doing the Harvest Report. The slow response is probably due to the challenging season.

Sponsorship – No more sponsorship except for the Awards Sponsorship.

Productivity and Polyphenols Project – No further work has been done. Once the Awards are finished the project will be picked up again. ONZ needs to complete the funding application, which requires detailed planning, budgeting etc.

NZ EVOO Awards:

Awards Entries & Judging – A total of 119 Entries, 59 Commercial, 43 Boutique and 17 Flavoured oils. The judging was cut back to 2 days in order to try and save costs. The six judges were split into 2 panels (3 in each) and judges a category each. The top oils from each class were then re-tasted by all judges to confirm Best in Class quality and top awards. This worked Ok, but only because the oils were mild and medium, if they were robust the judges would not have been able to judge in 2 days.

Awards Sponsorship & Grants – Discussed about in financial systems

Awards Evening – A total of 49 have registered for the Awards evening, 35 are paying members, the remainder are Sponsors, MC etc. The venue will be fine with the smaller numbers. Everything is going as planned. The food and drinks are variable costs the remainder are fixed.

Weekend Excursions – there are 20 registered for the Tasting Course that afternoon and 35 for the Arataki Rd Field Day. Both Stuart Tustin and Garry Burlace will be attending the Field Day.

Course and Field Days:

Reni's Tasting Course – The entire trip has been fraught with travel issues. Central Otago's one was cancelled part way through, attendees have been refunded half the course cost. The first part of the courses Reni talked about fruit ripeness/harvesting, processing etc and what customers are looking for, before she moves onto the tasting of oils.

5. Grove Management – Spray program communication

It will be time for the Northern members to start putting Boron fertiliser into their spray tanks. Need to communicate that flowers going brown is a sign Anthracnose is in the grove, however it is more likely it's not currently visible in the grove only to become apparent at harvest, when it is too late. Spraying Protec or Serenade during flowering will protect the fruit set and harvest. Manzate (active ingredient Mancozeb) spray every 20 days or 20ml rain continues to be the best non-systematic option for managing Peacock Spot year round.

HortiCentre have an Olive grove calendar, to make it easier for members to see and plan ahead with their grove management.

6. General Business

a. Field Days

- Northland is poorly attended. Touched on why take big cuts out.
- Wairarapa, Chris Penman's a good day – trees hadn't been touched for a few years. Showed what is needed to do to control trees. Big cuts to bring trees under control. Only 15 attended.
- Waipara only had a few attend.
- Kapiti went well, was combined with their harvest Tastings. Looked at a variety of trees at different ages.
- Cromwell, Central Otago group pruning day. Neil flown down pruning, tastings and group dinner. Really good to see a big group engaged and passionate.

Neil wants more people in local areas to do the pruning. Field days are good for growers, but need people to pick up a chainsaw to attend. First question is how to harvest.

Workforce has contacted Emma for course content, she told them to contact her again after the Awards. She will follow up.

Neil is finding that trees he has pruned 3-4 years in a row are now a lot easier and faster to prune. Making the job easier for Neil to prune but also to clean up and cheaper.

b. Branch Updates

- Wairarapa – Budding happening in some varieties. Some trees have had a lot of leaf loss through Peacock Spot.

- Kapiti – Tasting and Pruning at the same time. Pruning on mature trees, good to understand why to take them down.
- Canterbury – Good pruning field days. Held the tasting field day which was well attended. Neil will be busy in Canterbury
- Hawke's Bay – Nothing to report. Tree growth is positive so hopefully a good season. Waiting for Arataki Rd field day, the grove has had Grove Project input from day 1, now 9 years old.

c. Judges Training

Reni is aware there is no continuation plan for ONZ judges and agrees we need to urgently do something. She suggested Turkish judge to be head judge who is also a qualified trainer and can run a 3 day course with a certificate of qualification. Emma to follow up with her.

Need younger judges to come on board.

d. ONZ Membership

Emma presented an initial proposal to restructure the membership to a user pays type. Currently all members have access all everything ONZ offers no matter what membership they pay. She is aware some members are listed as Hobby Member, but have bigger groves. Under the proposed structure each membership type will have access to different offerings:

- ASSOCIATE - Associate Members are those who do not own an olive grove, for example - suppliers, processors, contractors, grove employees, and other industry related parties.
- HOBBY GROWER - Hobby Grow members are interested growers that don't sell their oil, they either don't harvest or harvest for friends and family only.
- COMMERCIAL GROWER - Grow commercially to sell their oil to a third party i.e. do not sell the oil under their own brand. Or have their own brand, but do not use the OliveMark or enter the Awards
- FULL MEMBER - Full Members sells olive oil brand under their own brand.

The next step is to take the proposal to the next level, with financials to back it up.

Levy industry levy for industry good, is always an option. It can be worked on in conjunction with changing membership structure. The levy would need to be done at pressing, but how many growers use a commercial pressing facility verses their own private pressing. Would need to talk to other levied industries or consider being part of than existing horticulture body and look at the legislation required. This will take a few years to put into place.

- e. Awards event location – Wellington easiest to get to. People from Kapiti and Wairarapa can go home after awards. Emma has talked to Kay McMath she is available to facilitate the Awards if we hold them two weeks later. Although the Northern regions have harvested early and want to get their Awards stickers on the oil, Canterbury and often Wairarapa struggle to get their oil racked off before Awards Entries close. Does it matter as long as stickers are on oil for Christmas and summer sales?
- f. Succession Planning - Craig is working on a plan, he will firm it up by next meeting.
- g. A new orchard manager of Lincoln University is keen to sort out the university grove. He contacted Neil Smith looking for ONZ and industry support to apply for funding. Neil has provided a supporting letter on ONZ behalf. It will be really good to have documented a project on restarting an over grown grove. This can then be a useful reference for many groves in NZ.

Meeting closed 11.40am