

## **Organic Farm NZ 2008 AGM – Chairman’s Report**

The National Coordinating Committee has met monthly by teleconferencing using 3way dialing. We have dealt with a number of issues this year which include the following:

### OFNZ National Office

Early in the year Carol drew our attention to the fact that we were three months behind in our monthly payments to Soil and Health (and this has been the case for some time it seems). Heather, Carol and I spoke by teleconference with Steffan and Philippa (Co-chairs of Soil and Health) about this and we came to an agreement to pay this off at \$150 per month. We have now paid back about half of the arrears.

We have revised Carol’s job description as it previously contained activities that were the responsibility of the NCC.

We appointed a Treasurer from the NCC to assist with the finances. Thanks Paul for the work you have done on this through the year.

We discussed ways in which we could raise money for work that we would like to undertake, such as Auditor and Certification Manager Training and promotion of the scheme. As a result we applied to the Scottswood Trust but we were unsuccessful.

### Auditor training manual

Richard coordinated a small subcommittee to take the best ideas from a number of different documents that have been written and used by regions, and produced an OFNZ Auditor Training Manual and Accreditation Checklist.

### Between regions review

OFNZ is a national certification scheme administered by the regions, so it is very important that we have some way of ensuring that the scheme is implemented with consistency across the regions. It has always been intended that this would be achieved through an independent audit process.

However we are restricted by finances, so in the interim, a review scheme has been adopted. It consists of a member’s paperwork from each of three regions being exchanged with one of the other regions to conduct a certification committee review on. Reports from each of these regions were passed to our Standards Committee for comment.

This year was the first occasion and while the Standards Committee commended regions on good and conscientious work, they highlighted a number of points that needed to be addressed. For example, improving the layout of some of the documentation, ensuring members give proper attention to “Off Farm Inputs”, and the need for a Processors Management Plan for processors as the present PMP document is not adequate.

We very much appreciate the work done by the Standards Committee which is comprised of Peter Downard, Terry Higginson and John Fawkner, and have begun to implement all recommendations.

### OFNZ Standards

Several years ago it was proposed that we adopt our own standards, and a draft version was prepared. Voting on their adoption has been delayed for various reasons. This year we will complete the voting process and the outcome will be available at this AGM.

### General

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Carol for attending to our office business and the members of the NCC for their contributions. Meetings have always been harmonious and pleasant.

At times however, it has felt like, and may appear that, progress is slow. However it is important to remember that this high quality, low fee certification scheme exists because people who have full lives outside of OFNZ give time voluntarily. This of course applies equally to regional groups, who are the heart of this organization, and to whom I express my appreciation also.

This scheme derives strength from the diverse range of people who have input to it, but that strength will only be maintained if all members recognize their responsibility to fully participate.

Dennis Enright