

REGIONAL REPORT FROM FAR NORTH ORGANICS

OFNZ AGM AUGUST 2021

Far North Organics held their AGM March 2021 at Jan Arie and Ineke Kamsteeg's property. The committee has stayed the same as last year.

We currently have 6 OFNZ certified producers, this is down a couple of producers due to selling of their properties.

Three field days are hosted throughout the region each year and it is with a sense of sadness that it was unanimously voted at the recent Far North field day that the Far North Organics would begin to wind up its Incorporated Society.

This in essence means the Far North Organics is no longer operating as a regional body for OFNZ. Escalating compliance costs and the Organic Regulation Bill being a few of the driving factors.

Jose has stepped down from the CM position in March and was thanked by all for her time in this role.

This upcoming spring field day the members will pass a resolution to wind up the Society and after 33 years will be permanently retired at our next AGM in March 2022 as per our Constitution.

We would like to thank John Clarke for his time involved as our NCC rep.

Wishing all the regions the very best.

With regards, Rich Van Alphen, Chair Far North Organics

**Auckland Region – Chair Report and Minutes for zoom meeting
held 29th May at 1pm and 1 45 pm 2021**

Welcome to everyone

Sarah read minutes from 2020 AGM

Sarah read her report from the chair

Sarah read Betsy's Cert Manager's report, which specified 9 members (4 individual and 5 pod members)

Bridget corrected Sarah who had itemised Rene and Vibrant Earth Creations separately.

Bob read his financial report with \$4421 in assets after some outstanding bills were paid after 7th April. At present the income /outgoings equation is relatively stable but with more Northern members the travel costs and audit payments would increase the loss in total assets, which this year was \$438. The loss was caused by the substantial travel costs in auditing the two individual Central north properties. The funds transferred from the Central North's account compensate for this loss for now.

Brendan talked about the NCC . He welcomed Tom as our new Cert Manager. He said that the Organics Bill is priority and that OFNZ needs to restructure to come into line perhaps under one Certificate manager nationally. At present we were acting as a pilot with Tom as Cert Manager for North, Auckland, Coromandel and Waikato.

OFNZ will be putting into the submission to MPI at the end of next week.

The workshops being offered around locations in the North Island were important to get our views across.

The present officers were to continue in their roles, Sarah as chair and Bridget as auditor. Bob was hesitant to take on the financial role for the Amalgamated region extending to Waikato but he was assured that it was only the area he already was responsible for.

Move to accept Tom as C.M. and ratify Brendan as NCC.

Meriel talked about having to fight for the PGS system and that at present there were stipulations in the proposed regulations such as all the members in the pod/group fail if one person fails their certificate.

There is a constitutional view underway to bring the OFNZ constitution in line with what would be likely to be acceptable to MPI and to get consistency across organic growers.

This is likely to mean that OFNZ producers would all have to move towards being in a pod if they were presently individual in order to reduce MPI costs.

One way of encouraging individual producers to move to pods would be to raise their fees to more accurately reflect the costs of the organisation. Another option would be that individual producers change to Bio-Gro if they do not want to be in a pod..

Tom Bannister introduced himself. He was in training as Cert Manager with Jon Russell. He was interested in how the OFNZ processes worked and the legal side and the organic standards. He would receive \$90 for each management plan based on 3 hours and his auditing period would start on 1st July and go till 15th September.

Meriel asked several questions around this new time for management plans to be viewed.

* when would we, as producers have to get our management plans in?

*Also are there changes to the paper work ?

* July 1st is coming up soon

*Jon talked about google docs to download the plans.

*Brendan talked about mini training sessions.

These questions are still being worked out.

There was a discussion over charges for auditing.

It was unclear what differences there were in Producer /processing audits and how mileage and travelling time were accounted for.

Jon related how he had worked out costs with his Waikato audit:

Based on travelling times and costs of auditing properties in his region, which were calculated at \$30 per hour travel time and the lower of the two-tier IRD travel claim for km, they had arrived at a flat rate for a site visit of;

\$60 per audit , \$80 reimbursement for travel.

The pod fee was \$300 each member and \$560 for individual.

Bridget said that she took a lot more hours as a new auditor with insufficient training because she was learning on the job and standing in for Betsy as CM on occasion.

.Jon said it was necessary to record all the hours spent because otherwise you are being grossly underpaid.

Jon was sorry Bridget had had so little mentoring in the role and explained the procedure.

Bob raised the point that we were there to support growers rather than base it all on user-pay principles.

It is apparently the auditor's job to organise auditing visits so that the travelling time is reduced between logically close locations. This was previously not clarified for Bridget.

There were several motions to accept/ ratify were addressed at the AGM.

1. Amalgamation of the regions –North, mid north, Auckland, Coromandel. Waikato under 1 CM
2. To treat North, Mid north and Auckland as 1 region under Auckland's jurisdiction
3. All people who are contributing keep an account of their hours (paid or voluntary) and that free-riders pay more for their certificate.
4. Adopt a \$300 fee for pod members and \$550 fee for individuals
5. To charge \$90 for Certificate Management, \$60 for auditing and 50c per km for petrol

The zoom meetings closed abruptly at 2 30 because of zoom timing.

There were two outstanding items not addressed;

*Reforming pods

*Trialing virtual pods

Thank you to all who took part and to James for setting up my zoom access.

Betsy has found her new enterprise with composting from the retirement villages so huge that she has eased herself out of the Certificate manager role she has accomplished so admirably all these years and we wish Betsy all the best in her new endeavours.

Brendan was seconded to be the rep for our region because of his experience of being involved with OFNZ from the outset and we needed his knowledge in working out the new MPI Registration and the submission to the Minister of Primary Industries regarding the new Organics Bill. We are pleased to accept his offer to stand again.

Bob was again our treasurer and Le -chen our book keeper. Thankyou to you both.

Bridget has been auditing as far North as Maungatoroto , in the Auckland area and in the Coromandel area. Thank you Bridget.

Meriel has been very involved with the OFNZ submissions to MPI. She is part of a dedicated team working for OFNZ on the Organic Bill.

Brendan and Le-chen hosted a lunch and discussion at their Titirangi home mid-year and it was lovely to meet people over from Waiheke who had made the trip and find out more of what was happening on the Organics bill before parliament .

Report from Bay of Plenty Regional Body Chair to the OFNZ 2021 AGM

The OFNZ Bay of Plenty Regional Body held its 2021 AGM on 26 June. This year the AGM was held in the new Omokoroa Sports & Recreation Centre Pavilion.

Our membership at the time of the AGM was 28, the same as last year. Although there is one new member one has resigned because of selling their property. In line with the PGS concept of discouraging individual membership unless there is a valid reason we will now have 27 of our 28 members in one of the 8 pods. Last year we had 4 individual members. Three have now agreed to be in a pod and the remaining individual member is aware that she will also be required to join a pod in the near future.

Certification fees are to remain the same for the coming year. Pod members are \$300, individual members \$350 and processors \$400. The peer reviews are now underway with auditing to follow with the target of having the process of certification completed by our annual renewal date of 1 September.

Jim Bennett, as our NCC representative, updated the meeting on the discussions with MPI on the implications for OFNZ of the Organic Products Bill. He reported that the NCC is very aware of the need for OFNZ to be ready for the new era and adapt where feasible so that the organisation can continue providing those supplying the domestic market with affordable certification. He explained that we need to update our compliance documents, undertake a long overdue re-write of the constitution and review the role of the regions and how we elect the NCC. He also reported on progress with having a national certification manager.

Election/Appointment of Officials:

- Chairperson - John Palmer
- Secretary/Treasurer - Jenny Lux
- Certification Committee members All pod leaders and the Certification Manager
- Certification Manager - Arthur Dixon

This year there are 2 nominations for the BOP representative on the NCC, Jim Bennett and Jenny Lux.

Therefore an election will be required which is to be conducted through the national Office. The 2 nominees were each invited to speak for 3 minutes as to why they should be the BOP NCC representative.

The guest speaker at the AGM was Peter Bacchus from the Biodynamic Association. Peter gave an enthralling talk on biodynamics and the importance of building soil health and weed management.

The week before our AGM BOP and Waikato members were involved in setting up and managing the OFNZ stand at the Mystery Creek Fielddays. A number of new members inquiries were received and these are being followed up. Our thanks to Bill Quinn for the opportunity to have OFNZ take part in this big agriculture event with a stand in the OrganicAg marquee.

John Palmer

Chair, Organic Farm NZ - Bay of Plenty

14 July 2021

Waikato OFNZ inc.

Supplementary regional report. 2020 /21

We had a new Chair elected at the beginning of the season, who unfortunately had to give up the role early in the year.

We were very grateful to Phil Patje, who took on the role for the remainder.

Waikato OFNZ inc. has continued to reinforce its community by holding bi-monthly meetings throughout the year, mainly via Zoom, due to Covid lockdown, and concerns.

Rory Fogerty was forced to walk away, due to a health event, from the excellent work that he had been doing on our behalf at NCC, Jon Russell stepped in as representative for the remainder of the term.

We have been very proactive in our support of the National body stance on the proposed Organic Products Bill, this has been the core subject of several meetings, and our members have made submissions to MPI, and presented a good turnout at the local MPI workshop held in Hamilton, where we endeavoured to make our voice heard.

We farewelled Peter Downard , a life member and stalwart of Waikato OFNZ , Peter had been instrumental in our formation, and had been an auditor for many years, his knowledge is greatly missed.

We certified 12 members in 3 pods of 4 in the past year. And remain very grateful to our auditor, Tania Ashman for her dedication to organics, and considered, knowledgeable approach to auditing our properties.

Our 2021 AGM resulted in the following agreement on fee structure:

Pod membership - \$350

Associate membership \$35

Individual membership \$750

We recorded a slight profit for the year.

Individual membership fees have risen as we disincentivize this option, and set a charge that reflects the true cost.

We have also sent out Health & Safety templates for our members to fill out this year with their PMPs, to make them aware of their responsibilities in this area at review and site audit. The templates make it clear that property owners are inviting pod members and auditors onsite, they are not there as agents of OFNZ Waikato.

We also created a new office of Promotional and Marketing Manager (PAMM), this person is charged with promoting OFNZ Waikato inc. The intention is that they will grow both, our presence locally, and our membership of producers and supporters.

The office holders elected for 2021/22 are:

Chair Jon Russell

Secretary Janice Bell

Treasurer Rory Fogerty

PAMM Margaret McQuillan

CM Tom Bannister

Cert Comm Sarah Oliver

John Stanley

Murray Handley

OrganicFarmNZ Coromandel chairperson's report

Sunday, 30 May 2021

Dear members,

The last twelve months have been busy for us all, on and off the farm, with a wide range of projects. Some of us became published authors, others took over a well-established organic local business, and yet others decided it was time to take a small, partial step back from fulltime work and discontinue certification. Looming in the background, there was often the possibility of a Covid-19 lockdown, forcing many of us, once again, to rapidly adjust the way we produce food for our customers.

Our numbers have shrunk a little bit, and so a reshuffle of our pods was in order, resulting in two new pods – three properties in the North Pod, and five in the South Pod. We have now all done our yearly peer reviews which are arguably the most important step in our participatory guarantee system (PGS) of organic certification. Well done, everyone, for making time once again for this exercise which ensures we have a robust certification process which our customers can trust.

I'd also like to acknowledge the presence of two young people who are here today for the first time. They are seriously considering getting started with the certification process of their land in the next year or so. To that end, they joined the South Pod members for five peer reviews over two days. It will be wonderful to have them join us once some of their other projects are underway. Welcome.

We're a pretty varied bunch, living and working on a diverse group of properties. But what unites us is a love for the biosphere and atmosphere, and for the communities we live in. In subtly different ways we care for the land and the people, and we produce a wide range of food products for a growing number of people who do appreciate our efforts, and who know that organic really tastes better, and who reward us with their repeat custom and loyalty.

These are constants in what we do, but of course we operate in a regulatory environment which is changing. One significant piece of legislation we as an organisation had to grapple with recently was the Food Act 2014, which you're all intimately familiar with! Now, under a new government, OrganicFarmNZ's national co-ordinating committee (NCC), along with other bodies, is negotiating with and lobbying MPI to make much-needed changes to the Organic Products Bill, which in its first version was highly unsatisfactory for us, and which is still not fit for purpose. Regulating the organic sector in some way is probably desirable, especially the use of the term "organic", but not in the way that Bill initially proposed.

Whatever the final text of the Act and regulations may be, we do need to change how our organisation operates, and a substantial part of our time today will be used for discussion of some of those changes. I'm by nature a cautious optimist, and expect OrganicFarmNZ to not just continue to function in a new legislative framework, but to emerge stronger, better, and more resilient.

The time has now come, dear members, for me to thank you for the confidence and trust you have shown me over the last year while I have chaired our regional organisation, with my frequent long silences punctuated by a few emails and a couple of Zoom conferences where we enjoyed presentations from Betsy Kettle and Peter Bacchus.

My sincere thanks to you all.

Korbinian Poschl

Chairperson, OrganicFarmNZ Coromandel

South West North Island

ANNUAL REPORT TO ORGANIC FARM NZ - 7 July 2021

The 'Organic Bill' has been on the mind of many members this year, and there has been active participation in the workshops run by MPI. Members have responded to the workshops with submissions also. Several members also attended the OANZ roadshow in late June 2021.

Submissions have been made by individual members on a range of local and regional matters including land planning and water quality in the greater Wellington region.

Our membership is increasing steadily, with a couple of members withdrawing this year to assess their future planning out.

OFNZ SouthWest North Island region now has 30 members which includes 4 new members, including Wholegrain Organics who have rapidly evolved into an organic vegetable production and vegan cooking school which involves 450 students to date from the Palmerston North area and three properties.

Some of our members have been involved in building and trialling a new database for PMPs and Pod Reviews.

We are also actively involved in Organic Week – there will be an "Organic Farm, Food and Forest Tour" in September which will involve OFNZ members and BioGro licensees.

And finally, we are delighted that one of our members (Waikawa Blueberries and Olives) have done so well with their olive oils, having been awarded a gold medal at the NY International olive oil competition.

SWNI AGM Summary

Date: 23 May 2021

Present: Jenny Potaka, Barbara Harford, Rogan Boyle, Dave Treadwell, Helen van der Valk, Tim Borer, Marjorie & Clinton Muvezwa, Kelvin Lim, Sally Murrey, Mark & Anna Rudings, Gregg Fletcher, Carolann Murray, Geoff Smith, Lisa Buchan, Jane Bura, Peter Davis, Neville Chun

Apologies: Neil and Renee Cohen, Anne

Elected officers

Chair/Report: Peter Davis

Secretary of Certification Committee: Sally Murray

Treasurer: Jane Bura

OFNZ NCC Representative: Barbara Harford (with assistance of Jenny-Kaye Potaka and Lisa Buchan)

Secretary: Rogan Boyle

OFNZ Canterbury/Nelson Bays Branch Annual Report 2021

The Canterbury/Nelson Bays Branch of OFNZ has 14 Certified growers within the region. The number of growers is presently static but there is always a few new growers expressing interest. There are 10 Individual Members and 4 POD's in our Region, a factor due probably to the wide geographical area between growers. Three Individual producers have discontinued certification from OFNZ Canterbury. Another members Full Certification has lapsed and so he will now continue with that property from C2 status.

The Canterbury/Nelson Bays Branch holds two committee meetings at the BHU in Lincoln twice a year, in March and August. Our administration has become streamlined and functional with responsibilities divided between committee members. We are very fortunate in having hard working dedicated members with a diverse range of talents and expertise working well together.

This years OFNZ AGM meeting of the Canterbury/Nelson Bays Branch was also the 20th AGM of Canterbury Organic Incorporated. All Canterbury Organics Executive Committee Members retire at the AGM. They are eligible for re-election unless they have resigned from the Committee. All positions were filled at our AGM. Discussion was held on the possible change to a National Certification position. There is a strong preference to have a CM within the region. It was felt that this supports the integrity of local growers. The certification fee is set at each AGM. The fee remains at \$350 for Group Certification and \$520 for Individual Certification for 2021.

We encourage the use of Google Docs from grower through to audit. This has streamlined the documentation process with the added advantage of saving postage and printing costs. Maps are sourced from google earth and previous Soil Tests etc are scanned in with new ones being electronically added.

The Canterbury Organic website is under development and being updated. The hope is that this will profile local Growers/Producers. A Facebook page is also proving useful. Our district is geographically very large and these tools are very helpful when representing regional diversity.

National Council Representative, Canterbury/Nelson Bays

Alvina Murphy

Report from the Chair, Otago Organics

The new year started with a group consisting of Dennis Enright, Andy Barratt, Graham Leach, John McCafferty, Clinton Chambers and myself Ann Broadfoot

After a few weeks of zoom meetings and emails, initially guided by Dennis Enright, we came up with the following Vision and “Big Hairy Audacious goal BHAG”. This was not without considerable commitment from this group. And their efforts are very much appreciated. Thank you to all.

This vision will guide our efforts and help us stay on course in the work that we do:

- **Vision**

Lots of land being used, producing safe nutritious food, in a socially, and economically viable way.

- **BHAG... Big hairy audacious goal**

By 2030 the Otago-Southland region will have seen a 3 fold increase in the number of organic food producers, supported by a diverse range of local sales and distribution options to the benefit of producers, consumers and service providers.23.8.20

The Organic Products Bill

The year has been dominated by the development of the Organic Products Bill to develop a National organic standard. This bill is to ensure that foods labelled organic can be assured to have met the highest standards of organic production, and will meet international standards for trade. MPI has been mandated with sorting this out, but this has resulted in putting at risk the very existence of the Participatory Guarantee system (PGS) that is the OrganicFarmsNZ(OFNZ) organic certification scheme of which we, Otago Organics, are the administrators.

This scheme is important an important grassroots scheme, a first stage level of certification for new or small-scale growers. OFNZ has been working hard, and submissions have been sent in from our members to support this scheme. While the MPI policy development team fully supports this concept of this scheme, theirs is an advisory role, and does not mean that their recommendations will necessarily be accepted in passing the bill.

Whether you are a producer or consumer, if you are concerned about the safety of your food, the protection of environment and the health of producers, consumers and animals, it is important that you stay aware and put in submissions, and generally voice your concerns to your local MP.

Acknowledgments and thanks

Firstly to Graham Leach who has diligently and consistently kept the organisation running smoothly and has ensured we keep to the constitution. He has kept us safe as far as how we conduct our affairs. He is a consummate minute taker and a great support in running the organisation. Thank you Graham, your work and support has been invaluable.

As said before, Graham has also run workshops in the Southland area, supported a community garden in Invercargill. He continues to support and promote Otago Organics in the Southland area.

Beth Linklater has been diligently attending RC meetings and has been successful applying for funds for the organic week and Claire Beynon’s day. Thank you, Beth.

Clinton has represented us on the National Council of OFNZ, a challenging role given the issues has been facing, and complexities of a nationwide group of Organic growers. Thank you, Clinton.

Rosemary Innes was appointed treasurer. She has simplified the accounts and organised auditing, keeping us safe as far as IRD and others are concerned. We are very lucky to have her expertise and guidance. Thank you, Rosemary.

To all the producers who have given their time, served on the Regional committee and helped to support the activities of the organisation, thank you.

Irina and Pia who keep the certification records and auditing processes sweet. This part of the organisation is running smoothly because of them. Thank you to you both.

And to all members thank you for your contributions.

Programme Coordinator report

We have had workshops and field days.

Organic week in September was held at Clinton and Rodney's property in Waitati. Beth Linklater worked hard to secure grant funding for this event. A special thanks goes out to her, and to Clinton for providing a wonderful venue. He even sorted out great weather.!

Jason Ross collaborated with us on another well received permaculture workshop.

John McCafferty ran another successful open day. Both members' days boosted the OO funds.

Bart Acres of Mycologic collaborated with Otago Organics when he ran a mushroom growing workshop, and contributed a handsome income to the OO coffers. Thank you Bart.

A soil workshop was postponed to be run by Andy due to the water woes in Karitane, and we 6th hope to join in with the Vegegrowers association in due course.

We have had people attending from out of town. Emberley Wetherall, from Wanaka is one such member, and is doing some great things with Wanaka Grow. She is keen to collaborate with OO when possible.

Graham Leech has held pruning workshops in Southland with great attendances. He has had connection with the Southern Environment centre in Riverton. He has represented Otago Organics in supporting Bainfield community gardens in Invercargill, teaching them how to establish and use organic practices.

Beth worked her magic again and has secured a grant for us from the DCC to run a day to celebrate and encourage connection with our home gardens through art poetry and sculpture. **Claire Beynon, artist poet writer and generally fab person will run this workshop on Sunday 26th September in Dunedin in her beautiful home garden.**

Time and experience has shown that having only one or 2 people to plan and coordinate this is unsustainable. As I have previously said in emails, I am standing down as programme planner and coordinator. There is such opportunity and potential for an exciting programme The membership has grown, and funds have been accumulated. It would be great to continue with a programme that allows sharing of information, and

creating community, and serving our wider community by sharing our knowledge and practice of organics. We need someone to coordinate the programme, and the for the membership to step in and contribute to the programme. **Contribute what you can where and when you can.**

REPORT TO AGM OF THE OTAGO ORGANIC ASSOCIATION, SAT JULY 17TH 2021, AT COMMUNITY ANNEX OF NORTH EAST VALLEY SCHOOL

At the last NCC AGM which was online due to the jittery aftermath of Aotearoa containing/eliminating Covid-19 and before we had much of an idea of the implications of the continuing vigilance that would be needed, our world of organics took on a whole new meaning post covid19 lockdown. As I reflect upon my 2020 report to Otago Organics where I outlined some important key factors that the NCC were facing for the year ahead, it appears many of these have been side-lined and were overshadowed by the ever-looming Organic Products Bill and regulation standards.

Organic Products Bill

Most of the spare energy in the organic sector has been taken up with the Organic Products Bill (OPB). The response to this has been ably handled by our umbrella group Organics Aotearoa NZ (OANZ). Unfortunately the progress we were making with the Primary Producer Select Committee went west when the new Committee was announced. This has resulted in the Bill being effectively in the hands of the Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) who wrote the Bill in the first place and do not really want to see changes. We continue to advocate for a system that contains an adequate definition, reasonable costs and control by the organic movement. Many NCC meetings were taken up with discussions around the challenges that OFNZ were to face not only against the OPB not recognising a PGS but the control mechanisms that MPI are enforcing on us all. We owe a big thanks to the endless lobbying by the NCC chair Jim Bennet into ensuring OFNZ had a voice. With the final submissions closed off the sector now waits patiently for the outcome after having our say. We cannot control how the government or MPI determine our fate, but our battle may not yet be over. The NCC will continue to campaign for a fair system that properly represents and supports our domestic market and growers. For the NCC and the future of OFNZ, it's focus has now shifted back to building a robust organisation, that meets regulation standards, continue to deliver an affordable certification system while supporting our local domestic market.

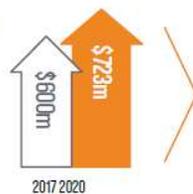
Organic Market Report

AS a board member of OANZ, we launched The Organic Market Report 20-21 in April. I think it is imperative for the organic industry to be reminded of how important our sector is to the national economy.

Key Changes 2017-2020

\$723 million value for New Zealand organic sector, compared to \$600 million in 2017.

20% increase, or \$123 million,
with an average growth rate of
6.4% per annum



58% of the organic sector output is exported and **42%** is consumed locally



Organic dairy is now the largest organic sector, with exports of **\$153.8 million** Up **55%** from 2017



Fruit and vegetables are **#2 at \$143 million** Up **6%** from 2017



The wine sector is **#3 at \$65 million** Up **40%** from 2017



Organic purchases through supermarkets represent **69%** of all organic sales, an increase of **13.8%**