

OrganicFarmNZ

Annual General Meeting Minutes

Saturday 5 July 2014
The Green Living Show, Auckland



Agenda:

- 1. Apologies:** Clive Craymer, Bob Uhe, Valda Muller, Jen Stiger
- 2. Attendees:** Sean Wilson, Linda Samways, Annie Stone, Alvina Murphy, Jim Bennett, Dave Treadwell, Marion Thomson, Dennis Enright, Jan Arie Kamsteeg, Paul Hamilton, Heli Matilainen, Brendon Hoare, Steffan Browning, John Palmer, Meriel Watts, Victor Grbic, Bronwyn Blair, Tony Banks.
- 3. Minutes of 2013 AGM accepted as a true and accurate record.** Moved by Annie Stone seconded by Alvina Murphy. If anyone would like a copy of these minutes, please contact the National Office.
- 4. Chair's Report – written report from Jim Bennett, Chairperson, OrganicFarmNZ NCC**

It has been a short year – only 9 months since our AGM in Wellington, 2013. In this time, the organisation has essentially been in a holding pattern, but we have made progress in the aspect of communicating with our members.

The national office has run smoothly with Linda fitting into her new role like a hand in a glove.

I offer my thanks to the members of the NCC. We have worked harmoniously. Particular thanks to Dennis Enright and Sean Wilson who have decided to retire from the Committee this year.

My thanks also go to the regional personnel, the certification managers, the committee members and auditors who beaver away on our behalf.

The focusing question for the organisation in the year ahead is how to rebuild in preparation in preparation for a possible surge in new members. We must retain our membership ethos. We will consider opportunities for marketing. We need to ensure our regional structures are facilitating communication. We need to strengthen our networking with associate organisations in the organic sector.

It will be a busy year.

5. Financial Report (presented by Linda Samways)

Financial statement for the year ended 30 June 2014

Income	2014	2013
AGM Contributions	1,733.00	-
Certification Fees	15,463.00	15,765.00
Donations	-	-
Interest	0.28	11.19
Merchandise - signs	15.00	144.00
Merchandise (stickers)	-	-
Sundry income	-	17.40
Total Income	17,211.28	15,937.59
Expenses		

AGM Expenses	1,733.00	120.00
Bank Charges	1.50	1.50
Charities Commission	51.11	51.11
Documentation / Training	-	0.00
Marketing and Promotions	-	369.00
Merchandise	-	338.10
NCC Expenses/Travel	-	0.00
OANZ Contribution & Conference	-	500.00
Otago tote bags	-	0.00
Soil & Health Contract - National Administrator wages	10,925.00	
Soil & Health Contract - General Charge - rent, overheads etc	4,255.00	15,180.00
Stationery & Photocopying	312.49	203.02
Sundry expenses	65.31	0.00
Website	80.50	382.25
Human Resources	50.00	145.00
Total Expenses	17,473.91	17,289.98
Current Assests		
Cash in bank - 00 account	3,542.79	3,410.14
Signs	675.58	692.48
Merchandise	-	0.00
Accounts receivable	136.50	1,329.01
Total Assests	4,354.87	5,431.63
Current Liabilities		
Accounts payable	550.28	1,004.03
Total Liabilities	550.28	1,004.03
Cash Movement		
Income	17,211.28	15,937.59
Less expenses	17,473.91	17,289.98
Accruals - Accounts receivable 12-13	1,329.01	982.13
Less Accruals - Accounts payable 12-13	1,004.03	135
GST refunds	697.77	351.02
Less GST paid	397.32	323.07
Net Surplus/Deficit	362.80	- 477.31
Year End		
Cash in bank at 1 July 2013	3,410.14	4,569.79
Cash in bank at 30 June 2014	3,542.79	3,410.14
Movement in Funds	132.65	- 1,159.65
Accounts receivable	136.50	1,329.01
Accounts payable	- 550.28	- 1,004.03
Net Assets	- 413.78	324.98
Working Capital	3,129.01	3,735.12

All figures include GST

Prepared by Linda Samways, OFNZ National Secretary - July 2014

Confirmed by Paul Hamilton, Treasurer - July 2014

The Financial Report is self-explanatory. There have been no extra funds in the account for such things as marketing or improving the website. Growth in membership base will lead us to be able to increase our marketing functions and to upskill and remunerate fairly.

Meriel asks if there is room for certifying home gardeners to increase income.

Jim asks if regions would consider a request for a developmental levy – say \$5 per member?

Financial Report for year ended 30 June 2013 accepted as a true and accurate record. Moved by Paul Hamilton seconded by Annie Stone.

Forecast Budget for FY14/15:

Income	Amount
Member levies (based on 125 members)	\$17,250.00
Total Income	\$17,250.00

Expenses	Amount
S&H General Charge	\$15,180.00
Direct Costs	\$ 1,001.00
NCC Expenses (AGM related meals)	\$ 250.00
Marketing/Promotions/Branding	
HR / Staff costs (Flowers, gifts, cards)	\$ 100.00
Website development	\$ 200.00
Charities Commission (filing annual return)	\$ 51.11
OANZ Contribution	\$ 500.00
Total Expenses	\$17,282.00
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$ (32.00)

S&H General Charge (includes):

Salary – One employee 7.5 hours per week (with phone cover 4 days per week) for general admin with assistance from Soil & Health staff as appropriate
Accounting services
Rent for Office Space and collateral storage
Stationery – envelopes, paper, pens/staplers etc, fax paper,
Phone/Fax/Tolls
Insurance
IT Charge – Computer and computer depreciation, software, email, internet access, repairs and maintenance etc
Secretarial services for meetings (AGM, Monthly NCC meetings)
Promotional and advertising space in Organic NZ

Direct Costs (does not include):

Postage (Certificates)	\$ 140.00
Photocopying / printing	\$ 100.00
Stationery – Business cards (\$35), certification paper and printing (\$165)	\$ 200.00
Printing (general)	\$ 200.00
Farm Gate signs (x10)	\$ 200.00
Teleconferencing facilities + toll calls	\$ 80.00
Web Domain – organicfarm.org.nz + organicfarm.co.nz	\$ 80.50
Total	\$ 1001.00

6. Confirmation of NCC Members:

- Dennis Enright is resigning from NCC and Andy Barratt will be replacing Dennis. A handover and introduction has been completed.
- Alvina wishes to remain NCC rep for Canterbury area and this will be decided at the upcoming Canterbury AGM.
- Sean Wilson is resigning as NCC rep for Auckland region and his replacement is pending the Auckland region's AGM.
- Jan Arie Kamsteeg will remain NCC Rep for Far North.
- Dave Treadwell will remain NCC Rep for Wairarapa region.
- Jim Bennett will remain NCC Rep for BOP Region.
- Annie Stone will be NCC Rep for Coromandel/Waikato region.

7. Regional Reports

Bay of Plenty Regional Body Report (John Palmer)

The Bay of Plenty Regional Body held its 2014 AGM on 21 June at Whakatane. The 2014/15 year commences with 16 members, an increase of one from the previous year. There are 13 members in pods and 3 individual members. One individual member is a grower/processor, one is a grower who is in a remote location at Te Kaha and the third one is a local packhouse. Enquiries from a further three potential new members are being followed up.

The certification status of members as at the date of the AGM was as follows:

Certification Status	Number
C0	2
C1	0
C2	3
Full	11

The pod peer reviews and audits for 2014/15 will be undertaken in July and August and so the status of those in conversion will alter accordingly.

The main item on the agenda for discussion was the certification fees for the coming year. Following the increase of \$20 + GST in fees to OFNZ the following fee structure was adopted at the AGM:

Pod members	\$270 (\$30 increase)
Individual members	\$320 (\$25 increase)
Processor members	\$370 (\$20 increase)

The fee for pod members was last increased in 2006 whereas the other fees were set in 2011.

The main points of discussion at the AGM were:

- Certification for all products claiming to be organic to ensure the integrity of the organic label in the market place.
- A more liberal approach to membership to accommodate medium size businesses that cannot justify the certification costs of the mainstream certifiers.
- Certifying all parts of the supply chain from grower to customer.
- Improving the level of support and communication from OFNZ for the voluntary positions essential to the organic certification process.
- Keeping the OFNZ website up-to-date, particularly with regional contact information and current membership fees.

The BOP Regional Body is in a healthy financial state, the members are positive about the future and there are regular enquires for membership.

John Palmer – Chairperson, BOP Regional Body
23 June 2014

Far North Region - from J.A.W. Kamsteeg

The region has 16 OFNZ certified properties and a hand full of properties certified under the local far north scheme for properties selling small quantities locally only. The number of properties has been stable for the last couple of years with an occasional new member and occasional member falling out. We cater for a wide range of property types. Some market gardens, olive groves, orchards, a vineyard and beef. We are not certifying any dairy properties. The only industrial property (Small scale organic fertiliser production based on organic coffee grounds) has moved to Auckland and we stopped certifying the organisation.

There are no pods in the region. All properties are individually certified. The main reasons are the physical distances between the properties and the diversity of production. We offer the possibilities to form pods, but until today no groups have been formed. Co-operation between individual members do exist in collective purchases and helping out with marketing. Currently we are looking into streamlining this further.

Far north organic growers (FNOG) is the regional organic supporting organisation. The membership consists of all certified properties (OFNZ and FNOG) and people who want to support the organic movement with an annual support fee. FNOG organise 3 field days per year, where in a short meeting all matters are discussed. If possible we get a speaker to inform us a bit deeper on a specific subject. The shared lunch is always a delight of homemade dishes. A tour of the property closes the day, after which all go home inspired by the impressions of the day. Besides the field days FNOG is issuing a magazine "The Networker" issued in advance of the field days. Any other information for members is send around via e-mails. For those members with no access to e-mail the networker is printed and send by surface mail.

Certification Managers Report (Kris Khaine - FNOG):

At this present time we administer 14 OFNZ certifications and after years of many FNOG certifications we are down to 5, with one in the wings making up their minds. Most have grown old or moved on or moved into OFNZ.

We are very proud of our producers, as we visit some stunning properties, that make for great fielddays.

My personal aim has been to encourage folk to grow organically, which I do from the Kaitaia Market, share clean food with family and friends and get organic produce known in the Kaitaia community.

Unfortunately, with the government not proceeding with the issue of using the word “organic” to sell uncertified produce, it is giving anyone the right to claim they are “organic” which in my mind undermines all the hard work coming from the honest certified producers. If this word “organic” was to be made prohibited to those only claiming to be, without certification, there could be a marked increase in the number of certifications.

As yet we haven't set a date ~ but, in Oct or Nov FNOG will be holding their 25th anniversary at a beautiful FNOG certified organic property in Kaeo. Our website contains most issues of our latest Networker and details of our activities.

OrganicFarmNZ Waikato, Inc Annual Report (Tony Banks)

We were successful in our application to Waikato Regional Council's Environmental Initiatives Fund, for it to partially fund three field days. We also gained minor sponsorship from Ceres and Daltons, as well as committing some of our funds. Our purpose in holding the field days was partly to promote farming/gardening organic principles to the public and partly to enlist new members to our group.

Have three news members with one field days to go (19 July).

So on 29 March and 12 April we held two afternoon field days at my property. Peter Downard and I presented the field days entitled 'Growing Your Soil'. About 50 people attended, with positive feedback being received by attendees. The third field day, 'Growing Animals' will be presented on 19 July by Morrinsville research veterinarian Dr Jaimie Hunnam and me, to be held at Judy Chrystall's property. About 20 people are expected at this stage.

Last year's decision to hold meetings at member's properties has proved to be successful, giving all of us an opportunity to see how other members are growing organically. Also, including discussions about aspects of organics has made our meetings more enjoyable.

Five properties were in fact certified for the 2013/2014 year. It is anticipated that this will continue for the 2014/2015 year, with the possibility of a large sheep/cattle farm becoming certified. There has been a small increase in our Supporter Membership category.

Annie Stone from the Thames/Coromandel group was informally appointed as our representative on the National Committee just before the OFNZ National AGM. Initially Annie was not contactable via email, so we didn't receive reports from her, or send reports to her. However she has now remedied this, so hopefully communications both ways will ensue for the coming year.

Thanks to Peter and Dyan for their continued role in the certification process. Thanks to Clare Jackson in her contribution to the field days, especially her role in making the WRC application successful, as well as arranging the minor sponsorship. Thanks to everyone else who has contributed to the group over the last year.

Taranaki / Whanganui (Dee Turner)

- We now have 2 pods of 2 members, 1 pod of 3 members and an individual.
- 6 members are fully certified, and other 2 have just joined in the last month.
- We have a new auditor – Jim Bennet who has just done an audit of our members.
- Whanganui pod did not get themselves together at all last year and failed either to meet and have a peer review in the time given. Jim has been to see them this year to get them back on track.
- Annie Hope from Foxton contacted me last year and wants to join OFNZ Taranaki and Whanganui as an individual producer.
- A good year for the producers, paperwork from Taranaki all completed on time and full attendance at our AGM – a positive feeling amongst the producers and a warm welcome given to the new members.
- I am stepping down as a producer this year as I am selling my property, but will continue as certification manager.

COROMANDEL OFNZ REPORT TO NATIONAL AGM 2013 (Annie Stone)

General Local Activities:

Following another summer of water shortages, the region has still had some increase in wealth throughout the wider area, but not due to an increase in the perceived value of organics. One of our largest garden centres closed down last year, but has reopened this year. Five new cafes have opened in Thames – one of the indicators of hope that wealth is increasing in the area!

Our local vital signs of good organic spirit include the fact that we have completed our Certification process and Certificates have been issued.

We now have 14 certified and paid up members in Coromandel district.

Mrs GreenJeans, an organic seedlings business, and other certified growers who are selling at the Thames market have survived well.

The Organic Co-op shop has had a refit and now looks uncluttered with more space for an excellent range of products.

The Natural Growers are still helping each other with monthly working bees.

The Organic Strategy Group has less time to devote to national concerns and is now limiting activity to managing the flourishing Community Garden - "Bright Smiles" Garden.

Agriculture NZ ran two organic courses in Thames and about 30 students passed Level 3 and Level 4 courses in Thames and have received their Certificates. Unfortunately, there was not enough funding to run the course at the next level. There was an offer of Level three again, with an extra unit about riparian planting, to be held in Waihi. One of the tutor says there was insufficient numbers and the course was dropped. We will have to lobby again for education about organics for next year and continuing into the future.

Questions for National AGM from Coromandel AGM

1. How and when should Auditor and CM training be done?
2. Technical support for members should be available via an email or website.
3. What is OFNZ going to do regarding correct procedures for certifying off-farm inputs?
4. Request for Advice on Action on G.E. Certification

Gwenyth Wright emailed requests to Mana, Green and Labour Parties for clarification on their policy on genetic engineering and certification of stock feed and tabled their responses. Jeanette Fitzsimmons added that her livestock cannot be certified organic without stock feed being certified organic. All at the meeting expressed the wish to be more politically active on this point.

Can Coromandel continue this line of political activity, or should it be coordinated at national level?

Hawkes Bay / Gisborne Region – as read out by Marion Thomson

Need to form a committee and become more formalized. Also need an Auditor for the region.

General discussion had on the website and OFNZ standards vs BioGro standards (see website).

Auckland Region - from Victor Grbic

Have experienced some initial changeover teething problems.

CM and Auditor are stepping down.

Thanks to Paul and Bronwyn for their ongoing support.

There is a feeling of being scattered.

Members are a mix of 60% individual and 40% pod.

Will be holding the AGM after this AGM.

No hub to find things and compare.

Canterbury/Nelson Bays Region - from Alvina Murphy

The Canterbury/Nelson Bays Branch of OFNZ is in good heart with a stable core of producer groups, individuals and supporter members.

Canterbury has 17 Producer Members with one new member in the process of applying. Of the 17 members we have both individuals and pods; a North Waimakariri, a South Waimakariri, a Peninsula/Plains and South Canterbury pod. We also have a few supporter members.

Encouragement is provided through a free mentoring system on the Certification Process for all potential new Producer members. This provides support for those starting the process of understanding the certification system. This is provided by volunteer producer members.

The Canterbury/Nelson Bays Branch has a dedicated committee of 10 members. It has been a challenging year for Committee Members with some shifting home/properties, others having EQC issues - in general, earthquake affects are still being felt. These members have a diverse range of talents and expertise. The Committee is supported by an excellent Office Administrator who oversees the day to day running of the Branch and our Branch monthly Newsletter, Canterbury Organics. Present projects for the group includes; stimulating new membership (a focus for 2013), having more farm visit style field days (which we achieved successfully with our Field Day on Raising Stock Organically in North Canterbury) and both marketing and promotion (which will need further discussion with suggestions implemented).

Branch funds for the year are expected to balance with a balance as of the 31st March 2013 of \$9,511.22. In the past year Producer members have decreased with supporter members also decreasing. The branch is looking at initiatives for encouraging more members.

With widespread membership regular email contact has been vital. This allows all to be kept up to date, consulted and informed of the many issues and various undertakings as necessary in a very efficient way. The success of this communication system has been demonstrated and culminated in the running of the successful OFNZ Conference last year.

It is a pleasure representing such a supportive group of people on the National Council.

Wai Organics Regional Report from (Dave Treadwell)

This last year has been a much more seamless process for the Certification of license holders with most of all queries regarding inputs and derogations able to be administered promptly.

Numbers of Pods and Individual License holders remain the same although one Pod has had one grower removed from Certification Process due to that particular grower proving too difficult for the Certification Committee to administer.

There is still a small issue with contact for some of the License holders and I am hopeful that I can improve as the year continues.

There has been some interest from new growers and there maybe one or two new applications for this coming year, although time is running short for them and I will endeavour to have new applications in time for the Certifying Schedule.

Thanks to a strong and active Board, along with the Certification Committee, I feel that Wai Organics OFNZ Certification Process is robust and able to carry out the requirements of the National Movement.

Otago / Southland Regional Report – Dennis to email through to me

Regional Reports year ended 30 June 2013 accepted as a true and accurate record. Moved by Jim Bennett seconded by Dave Treadwell. Carried

Guest Speaker - Brendan Hoare (Organic Aotearoa NZ - OANZ)

Brendan began by conveying the general sentiment in the organic sector was that it is time to smarten the sector up.

Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) recognise it takes time but we have to work together for growth to happen. Nikki Kaye is championing it to date so we need to start lobbying her to help us.

Steffan Browning conveys there is an issue of making certification a mandatory thing, as to how you treat the home gardener. If we can come up with a declaration for the home gardeners. Would this come under OFNZ's wing?

Steffan spoke to this around certification vs affidavit system. He felt there could be a staggered fee structure which would take into account the home gardener (ie: the likes of Margaret Jones and Bob Crowner).

There is the Commerce Commission under the Fair Trading Act that the consumers adhere to around a definition of organics.

Brendan does discuss allowing a PGS style system. The fee is part of it but the paperwork is the issue.

Brendan has asked the question as to whether OFNZ is going to be strong enough if MPI moves on the certification issue; will OFNZ be able to handle a possible influx of certification requests?

Need to consider how we scale up our operations to cope with increasing producers and production.

Alvina comments that there is a 'support a member' scheme in place already.

OANZ Chair's Report

(on progress on the Work Plan July 2013 –July 2014, and proposals for the year ahead

The leadership remains focussed on the core tasks approved by OANZ. The two main ones are:

1. Regulation
2. Communications

Other core issues covered in this report are:

3. OANZ's structure and function
4. Work plan 2014-2015

1. Regulation

Regular reports on progress have been provided through the *OANZ Buzz*, *Organic DirectionNZ*, reports to our quarterly OANZ meetings, emails to OANZ Council, and individual communications with engaged members. The July/August issue of *Organic NZ*(p.9) also contains an appeal to wider organic community to assist us with the task, by reporting dubious claims to be organic.

The process has been positive and progressive so far, with the only set back being that our 'champion' within MPI has just been promoted. This may be good news for us in the long term, but the immediate effect is a potential set-back in momentum.

Highlights have been the multi-sector OANZ meeting with MPI on 21 March 2014, and the IFOAM's President's visit to MPI on 17 June 2014.

Key concerns are the dysfunction of the OANZ technical working group, and the lacklustre response from members on what is a defining moment.

2. Communications

In addition to work detailed in the report tabled by our communications manager Christine Dann, the key ongoing piece of work will be around the opportunity to communicate what we mean by 'organic' throughout the regulation process. MPI agree with this as a core objective and opportunity.

We've started this by beginning work on a set of FAQs on what is meant by 'organic', and by opening discussions with a communications and design company, Moxie Design, in Wellington. They have been working closely with OANZ for over 6 years, assisting us with the 2012 Market Report and leaflet and newsletter design. This is a wonderful opportunity -but we have no funds to do it. Nor, as discussed in Christine's report, do we have a website that is fit for this or other communications purposes.

3. OANZ's structure and function

OANZ as a whole is currently barely operational and somewhat dysfunctional. My role as Chair, which under the current OANZ constitution should be governance-related only, has (due to lack of appropriate OANZ staff) actually been that of an Executive Chair, doing both management and administrative work. As the communications report indicates, while most OANZ members now open and read communications from OANZ, less than a third responded to the regulation questionnaire. Hence there is no change from last year, when I reported that nearly 30-40% of my time can be spent (if I choose) chasing people up, or responding to questions with answers that have already provided in e-communications that have not been read. There are also other issues around participation, including funding the OANZ core functions through membership fees, which are addressed in (4) below.

I've concluded that either the age of voluntarism is over, or that the organic community has matured to the point where the voluntary sector cannot serve it effectively. Either way, to be effective and to meet the demand for improved performance by government, business and the wider community, we're required to change.

I find this 'change moment' exciting, and believe it will be a defining moment, (although some may not agree).

My recommendation -and the OANZ Executive supports this -is that we push on with the plan to *set up a working group to review the OANZ constitution*. There is an AGM agenda item and motion to this effect.

In the meantime it is urgent that the role I am currently undertaking for OANZ is formalised and it is agreed that my role is that of an Executive Chair, and that I will report monthly to an additional two member board which also oversees the financial spending on a monthly basis, and reports quarterly to the full OANZ Board/ Council. This will be discussed under the Election of Executive agenda item, and there is a motion to this effect.

4. Work plan 2014-2015

My proposed work plan, if confirmed as the Executive Chair of OANZ for 2014-15, is as follows:

- Stay focussed on the core tasks of regulation and communications;
- Increase funding -especially for additional core projects e.g. 2015 Market Report, potential Oceania conference;
- Approach more potential affiliates and gain their support -'we need core decision makers around the table, informing us and being informed by their needs';
- Take a leading role in finding common ground with primary sector leaders/lead organisations to ensure that we are around the table of critical decision-making bodies.

However -very little of the above can occur unless there is core funding for it. As our budget indicates we have 30% below our budget to date for 2013-14. This is mainly because 50% of OANZ members are either not paying their fees at all, or are not paying them at the full rate, or are no longer in existence. This strongly suggests that if OANZ is to continue to exist as the peak representational, advocacy and communications organisation for the organic sector as a whole there need to be some hard decisions made about who it actually represents, and how, and also on how its work can best be funded. I am hoping this report stimulates questions and discussions. My commitment does not wane in providing leadership nationally nor serving the organic community. However like many of you I recognise we need to be realistic and very honest with ourselves to truly make a change and or move forward.

OANZ - Treasurers Report

Income very poor compared with budget
Needs of organisation not being presently met by members
Volunteer ethos failing to provide adequate service.
Members don't seem particularly engaged with OANZ mission
GST issue due to hand-over been resolved by Brendan
Li Chen has taken over accounts & data input at \$20/hour
Brendan is providing exceptional value to the sector
Members not sufficiently well financed to support OANZ
Associate membership scheme needs further rollout.

OANZ Communications Manager's Report (By Christine Dann)

The past year in outline:

Since the 2013 AGM I have been providing communication services to OANZ/its Chair for 28 (billable) hours per month, as per my contract, and sometimes working more (unpaid) hours when special opportunities (such as the visit of the IFOAM President) arise.

During that time I have established (and written and edited) two e-newsletters -the monthly internal newsletter, the *OANZ BUZZ* (20 issues to date) and the monthly external newsletter, *Organic DirectioNZ* (10 issues to date). I have written short articles on organics for the *Green Living* magazine, and provided OANZ news to *Organic NZ* magazine.

I have also created a media name and e-address list for OANZ media releases, and written media releases for the Chair. In June 2014 I worked with the Chair to organise Andre Leu's visit to Auckland and Wellington and related events, and did associated media releases.

Finally, I have learned how to add content to the OANZ website, and have made content updates to the news page and the front page.

The past year in review

Reviewing what I have done for OANZ and how successful it has been, or how it needs to improve, I have the following observations on each aspect of my work:

OANZ BUZZ

The *BUZZ* was created as the primary regular means of internal OANZ communications, and it goes out monthly to all OANZ Council members, and to members of the executives or boards of OANZ member organisations (where these addresses have been provided to OANZ) and to those working for those organisations. There are currently 61 people on the mailing list. With 3 exceptions, OANZ Council members are now reading The *BUZZ* regularly, but most of the executives/boards of the member organisations are still not reading it as often as they should if they want to stay fully informed about –and participate in –OANZ business.

Note: is everyone receiving Brendan's Buzz and if not please let Linda know and she can inform Brendan, or contact Brendan directly.

Organic DirectioNZ

Internal feedback (from OANZ members) on the content and look of *Organic DirectioNZ* has been favourable, but I have received no external feedback from non-members at all, so have no idea on how it is being received by the wider readership. I do know that the initial August 2013 mail out list of some 1300 'subscribers' (which was largely based on old OANZ lists) had dropped to 958 by June 2014 as Simple Mail (the company that sends it out) has pruned dead addresses and duplicates and has also taken off those who have unsubscribed.

This is a pathetically small number considering that the owners and employees of the hundreds of organic producers, processors, retailers and marketers now in business in New Zealand alone would number in the thousands, and to them should be added the tens of thousands of regular consumers of organic products.

However, the mailing list cannot be increased until or unless OANZ funds the development of a database which contains all of the businesses and their staff in the first instance, and then funds adding consumer subscribers via the OANZ website. The good news is that we have finally obtained data base software and will be able to generate a more effective data base in the next few months.

OANZ website

Unfortunately the OANZ website is still (18 months after it was constructed) not fit for purpose, because it has not been yet properly designed to be both attractive and user-friendly. There is little point in putting content on a site which is hard to use and looks awful. The medium is the message, and visitors will take away a very poor impression of OANZ as an amateurish, not very functional organisation from the way the website looks at present. Again, funding is required for a professional designer to make the website look and function the way it should, as an attractive and exciting 'shopfront' and news hub for everything organic in New Zealand.

Media releases

I have not done as much media work for the Chair as either of us would like, but there is no point in putting out media releases on what OANZ thinks about things which will not get coverage because the media are well aware that (unlike Federated Farmers, the Consumers Institute, and other large, well-funded, representative bodies that cover some of what we care about) we have no financial or policy clout. (Nor are we 'sexy'.)

They will, however, cover things that we do that involve money and/or politics –so the message is –we have to do more of what they are interested in if we want to get media coverage.

Regulation communications

I have done only internal communications on regulation matters so far, as there is no point in trying to reach a wider audience until (a) the details of what we are trying to communicate are firmer than they are at present, and (b) there is the budget to do a proper publicity campaign around the issue. This in turn requires that the two in-house tools we already have for doing this campaign –*Organic DirectionNZ* and the website –receive the funding they need to be fully functional; and also that the development of other in-house tools (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) is funded. Only when these tools are all fully operational and working well does it make sense to spend any money on advertising, story placement, etc., since all ads and stories should direct readers to OANZ communications platforms.

Christine Dann

OANZ Communications Manager

8. Matters Arising:

OFNZ Website:

Regions to check details on Website are correct, including fees, and let National Office know if any changes are required.

OFNZ Standards – a general consensus that BioGro standards were being used. Question around whether BioGro standards need to be on the website.

There is a need to come up to speed with the documentation available on the website.

Sean to upload the link to Andre Leu's interview onto OFNZ Website

All NCC newsletters to be uploaded to website.

Standards Committee

Try to find people with expertise within this area. Paul Hamilton suggested we invite Mark Levick to be part of this. Dennis may also get a request like this. Three people sounds like the correct number for this role. Not everyone has to be involved every time there is a question.

Action: Get discussions going on who can be nominated.

Heli Matilainen - www.helixorganics.co.nz

Jim met Heli at the recent Soil & Health AGM. Heli was, until recently, the Technical Director at BioGro. Question Jim asks how could OFNZ use her to discuss matters of a technical nature? Members could consult her, obviously at their cost.

Heli can offer possible technical support for any technical issue.

She is available for the range of services she has outlined and left her business cards for people to contact her. She also has a website which outlines exactly her services.
Heli spoke about her colleague who works as Future Farming Centre who offers consultancy services and operates out of Wellington.

Certification Manager and Auditor Management Issues.

Sharing knowledge is a big part of the participation aspect of OFNZ but it is widely felt that this is not being done.

The challenge for the NCC is to respond to this and to improve the communications sent out.

Sean moves the above. Annie seconds. Carried

The Contact List will be emailed out again to all CM's and Auditors by Linda and any changes to be made should be sent back through to Head Office.

All NCC newsletters to be uploaded to website.

It has been recognised that NCC members are conduits of information to which there is a need for an operating committee so the person on the NCC is not just representing themselves. The regional organisation does not exist in one or two areas

Online Google Forum Discussion Groups (as set up by Sean Wilson): The Forum 'How To's' have been emailed out to everyone.

One suggestion made – set up a list serve and sign everyone up to it.

Sean suggested that Tony be given sign-on authority to update as required. Dennis drew attention to the fact that we cannot give someone access as a licensee to the website without NCC sign-off.

Compost (CM Raised Issue): as acting CM, I have had some members dispute the need to hot compost manure, non-certified off-site inputs, and/or fish products, despite this requirement being in the Bio Gro standards. Some members have even stated that they will continue to compost manure / seaweed / fish etc in 'cold' compost even though they are required to hot compost. What is the OFNZ view of this? (B.Blair)

- Putting manure through worm farms – is this ok or not? Decision on this to be forwarded through to CM's and Auditors by Jim Bennett

National Fee Structure

Jim Bennett has suggested that as of next year the cost of NCC's travel for the AGM should be added to the certification fee. At present, the costs are divided up and then the regions invoiced per member.

Boundaries

There are regions who feel that they belong to a specific area and where the communication for them would be more likely to happen. Jim highlighted some of the suggested boundaries and will follow up on this and revert back to everyone via email.

Limits to scale and complexity for OFNZ certification: Regional groups are sometimes asked for OFNZ certification by producers, pack houses, processors etc. who are of a scale or complexity that does not seem to fit with the OFNZ scheme. OFNZ requires guidelines that describe these limits to reduce confusion and uncertainty. We would like to determine these guidelines with discussion and participation from the membership.

Dennis received an email confirmation from Michelle Glocau (CEO BioGro) outlining OFNZ can go through a BioGro certified packhouse and still have OFNZ certification on the produce.

The wider debate is around what OFNZ was set up initially to do. Is OFNZ able to take on a larger scale of operation?

Questions around this raised include:

- Is this our bread and butter?
- Do we want to go down this road?
- Do we currently have the resources and knowledge?
- Do we have an Auditor that satisfies us with their ability and standards to carry this out?
- If we were to go down this road, the fee would be substantially more.

The auditor has mentioned that audits for a property tend to occur at the same time each year. This means that they are seeing the same operations repeatedly and are dependent on the PMP to guess what is happening at other times of the year. Somehow the audit process needs to vary throughout the year without hampering the certification process. (C.Craymer)

Issue of the process of conversion to organic status. We have come across a case where a member was not asked to complete a soil test for heavy metals. The previous Certification Manager said that it wasn't necessary until just before Full Certification was granted. In this situation one of our current members at Level 2 has found that their property has high levels of heavy metals. Some standardisation of the process needs to be implemented. (C.Craymer)

Meeting Closed: 4.00pm