



The Organics Networker

FIELD DAY  SUNDAY 17 MAY
HOKIANGA ORGANIC HERB FARM

Speakers on Herbal Medicine for Families, tour of property and Workshop on concrete and clay plaster raised bed.

COME AND ENJOY THE DAY AND MEET OTHER GROWERS
See details below

No 40 Autumn 2009

Greetings to all members and a warm welcome to new members



Giant bamboo at the Hokianga Herb Farm

As the smell of bread baking in the oven wafts through the house and the soup bubbles on the stove I am reminded that winter is drawing near. However, no one told the tomatoes, which, now that the green beetle is leaving them have come to a second flowering and promise of more fruit. Hopefully, it's not too cold before the already green ones get ripe!

We have had a very busy summer making raised beds for the herbs and veges and renovation the top cottage, soon to be eco-tourism accommodation! We have enjoyed so many friends, family and Woofers who have given so much wonderful energy to the place. It will soon be garlic planting time again; meantime, we are busy planting brassicas and more medicinal herbs for use when Jesse qualifies as a Medicinal Herbalist!

Warm greetings to you all; I hope you have your firewood organised for winter and are not like us, still collecting it from around the property. At least it is dry. Our wonderful whanau are out collecting and chopping as I write!

Arohanui
Jesse at the Hokianga Organic Herb Farm

NEXT FIELD DAY

SUNDAY 17 MAY at
HOKIANGA ORGANIC HERB FARM
50 Blue Mountain Road KOHUKOHU.

HOW TO GET THERE

If you are coming off the ferry turn left along the coast road, or if you are coming through Kohukohu keep going past the ferry. Take the first right into Hawkins Road when the road forks take the right hand road, Creamery Road at the top of the hill turn left into Blue Mountain Road. Hokianga Herb Farm is on the right first gate green letter box, red gate (or could be purple by then!). If you don't have much to carry and are able, please park on the road and walk up the drive to the top cottage. For more information please call Jesse on (09) 4055598

PLAN FOR THE DAY

10am: Field Day Meeting and coffee.

11.00: Speaker on Herbal Medicine for Families using Native Herbs.

Anah and hopefully Ritx from The Herb Shack Kaitaia will sharing their knowledge and Anah will demonstrate making an herbal cream.

12.00: Tour of the property before lunch.

12.30pm: Workshop to make a raised bed, using a concrete base and clay plaster. (Weather dependent)



WHAT TO BRING Please bring lunch to share and something to sit on inside, gloves for the raised bed

workshop. The day will finish about 3.30- 4pm with afternoon tea.

Come and enjoy the sharing of knowledge, the social get together, information sharing, gaining tips and tricks along the way.

TRADE TABLE

You are welcome to bring items to either sell or give away. The free sharing seed bank will be available.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED AT FIELD DAY to take photos and write an article for the paper. Kris Khaine has been doing this for quite a while and would like a rest. Please let Jesse know if you can do this (jessejsummers@hotmail.com). Many thanks in advance.

CHANGES TO THE COMMITTEE

Dear Members,

During the last AGM I was elected by the attending members to chair the meetings of the Far North Organic Growers and Producers Society.

Speaking for all the members I want to thank Terry Higginson for the nearly decade he worked hard as the chairman of the society. Terry has not only a big heart for FNOG but also for the Kiwi Foundation, for which he was trapping stoats and possums on a large scale. Not being the chair doesn't mean that Terry won't be giving valuable advice to FNOG members, and specially me as the new chairman. Again, thank you Terry for your hard and conscious work for the promotion and protection of the organic products in the Far North.

We will also miss the departing Secretary, Helen Guthrie, who stepped down as the FNOG's secretary as well as treasurer. Besides those functions Helen also managed the library and was always very much involved with the organization of the presentation of the FNOG at show-grounds. The Networker was promptly created, edited and distributed by Helen. Most of the functions of Helen are now taken on by Jesse Summers with myself as Treasurer and Helen still running the library.

Terry and Helen will remain on the FNOG Committee for the coming year.

Peter Harrison has handed over the seed bank to Michelle Metcalfe. Peter has become very much

involved with different organizations, for which he needs more time. We would like to thank Peter for his work to maintain good organic seeds available for the members.

As new chairman I would like to express the hope that more members will become more involved in FNOG. More sharing of knowledge between members as well as helping out each other out. A good example is the picking of Peter Brake's organic olives during the last weekend of April. Co-operative buying of organic feedstock, fertilizers or other inputs will help the individual growers to keep the costs down. Helping out small organic growers in processing might be another field where FNOG can be more active. Pressing olives, shelling macadamia nuts, drying fruit or herbs, often need special equipment, which is not economic for the small organic growers who want to eat their own produce and share some with friends and relatives.

You will see a number of new headings in the Networker, which we hope you will find useful for sharing and supporting each other. We want to be more of a contact medium between members rather than a message board from the committee to members.

Another tool for this is our website and email contact, through which we can contact the members and inform them of activities happening before the next issue of the Networker is published. For members without an e-mail account, perhaps you could keep in touch with a member near you that does have email and ask them to inform you whenever an activity e-mail is sent around.

Besides all these changes the committee will continue to represent you in the relevant nationwide organizations to let your voice be heard.

It remains me to say that I hope to see you all at the next field-day on the Sunday 17th of May where we will learn more about herbal medicine and growing and jointly build a raised bed at Jesse and Donna's Hokianga Herb Farm.

Jan Arie Kamsteeg,
Chairman

The Committee members are now as follows:

Chairperson/Treasurer : Jan Arie Kamsteeg
 Vice Chair: Rob Downing
 Certification Manger: Krisse Khaine
 Auditors Terry Higginson
 Jan Arie kamsteeg
 Secretary: Jesse Summers
 Librarian: Jan Arie Kamsteeg
 Members: Tony Henderson
 Peter Brake
 Grant Fallon

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to RICHARD AND BARBARA WARD, new members

Richard Ward has been practising farm forestry in Honeymoon Valley since 1971 but the recent acquisition of relatively flat land adjacent to their steep forestry blocks, posed the problem of a crop that could be managed from Hamilton. They chose macadamias and established a 1500 tree orchard and attendant processing plant. Also a yen ben lemon orchard and bananas. Limes, cherimoya and naranjilla take minor places.

The orchard always befitted from passing comment from the friendly guru Terry Higginson, but one of these included, "You seem to be employing organic practices on your block, you'd should register."

Infrequent trips from Hamilton seemingly didn't allow for weed control without the use of chemicals but when Richard took early retirement from his university position and wife Barbara was offered a teaching position in Kerikeri, they moved north. Richard now spends two or three days a week in the orchard and is pleased to adopt organic methods and hopes to become an active attendant at FNOG field days. They market their products under the 'Honeymoon Valley Orchards' brand.

TIPS, TRICKS, QUESTIONS AND I AM

This is our new column for members to ask questions and share organic wisdom, items, etc

QUESTIONS

How do you deal with shield bugs, those hard backed green beetles that such the heck out of the tomatoes, beans and anything else they can get their suckers into? I understand ducks love them. Mostly I just try to squash as many as possible!

Answers to Jesse jessejsummers@hotmail.com
 For publication in the next networker!

BUY SELL AND EXCHANGE

I AM ...LOOKING FOR... I HAVE SURPLUS... I WANT TO SWAP...etc

I am looking for a decent second hand root ripper. Or I would like to borrow/rent one for a couple of days

each year to rip the roots of the wind breakers around my orchard.
 Contact: Jan Arie in Pamapurua /Kaitaia phone 09 4084212

Certified organic strawberry plants for sale. New runners 10 for \$5, 1 and 2 year old plants 10 for \$10 minimum. "bare -rooted", not potted up. I have around 2,000 plants for sale. Courier delivery extra. Feed and water them regularly for large, sweet, juicy fruit.
 Contact: Helen Guthrie 09 405 9927

I am Looking For a Dehydrator.
 either to buy, trade or part own.
 I have lots of horse manure, free for the taking.
 TO RENT I have 2 rooms to Let in Large Historic Home on 3 1/2 organic acres. Would consider part rent in return for help around property. Short term OK. See Trademe for details and photo's.
 Cotact: Sue Jones 09 405 9923 Waimate North
bellaitalia05@hotmail.com

For sale David Brown 885 Tractor with forklift. Good condition \$2500.

60" slasher - rebuilt HD steel frame Good condition \$1500

Assorted irrigation PVC hose from 16mm to 50mm sizes. We've got lots of this - about 5000 metres - Prices for small or larger lots. just ask us.

200 litre sprayer unit with extendable spray booms - needs repair - offers over \$ 500

30 galvanised steel half round plastic house roof struts. 8 metre horizontal span. \$120.00 each or 6 for \$500. You can build a couple of palstic houses with these.

5 lane fruit grader c/w feeder chute and scales. Good condition \$1400.

200 litre plastic barrels \$25 each or 5 for \$100.
 lots of plants for sale. Exotic fruit trees including pomegranate, tropical guava, catley guava, Surinam Cherry, cherimoyas, bromeliads, banana pups, edible canna lily, longan, cei apple, turmeric, non edible canna lilies, variegated agaves. priced from \$7 to 20 bucks. Also got lots of other plants too - just ask if you're looking for something interesting. Will also take orders or grow on stocks of some plants too.
 Contact: Denise or Tony Cox tel 09 407 4180

OANZ NEWSLETTERS

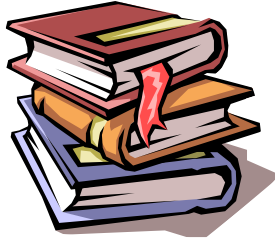
These are sent out every two weeks. It contains the latest news and information about what is happening in the organics sector in NZ and overseas.
 You can subscribe free on-line by contacting gavin.middleton@oanz.org.nz .

LIBRARY

We have a small but good library. These books are available at any time, or at field days. Please contact Jan Arie on (09) 408 0448 if you would like to borrow any of the following books.

LIBRARY BOOKS

- Organic Gardening, A guide by Organic NZ
- Resource Guide S & H Assn
- Wetland Restoration, A beginner's guide NRC
- Trees For the Land, Trees for Northland NRC
- Plastics are Fantastic, Using Plastic bottles for a Greenhouse, Sustainable Communities Initiative Scotland
- Seed to Seed, Suzanne Ashworth
- Organic Avocado
- Organic Pastoral
- Organic Citrus
- Organic Summerfruit
- Animal Health
- The Environment
- Natural Farming
- Practical Organic for NZ farms
- Organic Futures



We are also purchasing Tina Verkade's book on Homeopathic treatment of Animals, and Bio Dynamic perspectives NZ Bodynamic Society.

Library rules:

Books can be collected and returned on Field-days or the AGM.

Books can be sent after payment for the cost of mailing.

Books have to be returned within 6 months, either at a field-day or by mail to the FNOG postal address.

In case of loss the borrower will either replace the book or pay the FNOG for the book.

Jan Arie

SEED BANK



Discussion re our seed bank and the continuing existence of quality and heritage seeds is an on-going topic at field days. Many thanks to Peter Harrison who has been the curator of the seed bank for some time and has

handed it over to Michelle Mitcalfe. There will be a variety of seeds available on the field day. But they will stay viable only if we continue to plant and re-seed them. Even if you don't want the produce from these seeds, would you be prepared to set aside a small plot (free from contamination of other like species) to germinate some of what we have and let it go to seed again? Maybe you might like a small plot that would cross contaminate with any of your species to produce a new stronger seed for yourself?

WAI WURRI ORGANICS UPDATE

Having had a superb garlic season I have had to stop selling the red garlic, despite all the demand for it. It is hard sometimes especially when folk want it for planting, but we must retain our own seed stock. This last season I have informed so many folk about how to grow it themselves.

The pumpkins, grapes and butternuts did well & have been selling well along with the persimmons and feijoas. Due to the long dry spell, a lot of the persimmon trees dropped their fruit, but what we have spare will be dehydrated along with the feijoas, for our winter dried fruit supply.

As the property is no longer being ripped apart by wild pigs, we don't have to worry about that any more, having a couple of hunters who have 'kiwi aversion trained' their dogs and get on to any pigs pronto if they stray through.

Hopefully, the Kiwi population will again pick up after being annihilated by unwanted hunter's dogs.

The woodshed is full of wood again, mostly kanuka and gum and we have a new concrete tank for a gravity flow of water to the house, so power cuts won't affect the water supply.

The house garden is full of self sown veg. and the geese are providing plenty of manure for throwing around the fruit trees.

With the Kahikateas in berry the birds are entertaining us with their competitive behaviour, the lawns are being mowed by the geese & the ducks are taking care of the bugs, so all's in balance.

One thing I'd like to grow well is capsicums, another long term desire.

I figure that the number of traps we have around the production areas is why we don't lose crops to pests, apart from the odd rat that can't see the traps for the macadamias!!

Pests as such seem to come and go, as with the Bronze Beetles that used to decimate the persimmon trees, now the warblers fly in and it's hard to find a beetle nowadays. Perhaps the trees have strengthened against the attacks, and having healthy soil is a bonus.

We'll have another field-day here one day so that some of the original members can see the difference a few years makes.

Happy organic gardening everyone.

Kris Khaine

WWOOF contact from Malcolm

W.H.O.O.P.S (Working Holidays On Organic

PropertyS) The Kiway Whoops Project

We have been wwoof hosts for many years as well as being wwoofers in the UK and around New Zealand. We have now finally settled on our property just outside Whangarei where we practice organic gardening in the French Intensive/Biodynamic method.

Many of our young wwoofers have expressed the need to find paid work in New Zealand to pay for their travel costs and for spending money on tourist attractions and adventures. They now have working permits that allow this to happen.

It seems that the grapevine gossip among young, international

back-packers is that it is best to use the wwoof system as a friendly base from which to start, but then to seek paid work (such as fruit picking) and move into back-packer or other accommodation.

Like most other wwoof hosts, we cannot afford to pay for labour and support the wwoof system just for the happy association with young people from overseas and the help that they provide over time.

It is our hope that we can find a way to get the best of both worlds by finding a way to offer paid work to these young people; to still get wwoof style labour in exchange for board and lodging, and to promote the organic gardening methods that we all feel are so important for today's health conscious society.

We have identified a niche market where this could happen if we can organize it on business-like lines. In many centres there are a growing number of older folk who live alone on small to medium size sections. These older folk still remember the taste of good home-grown vegetables but since their partner passed away they no longer have the energy or the need to maintain their gardens in a highly productive way that it used to be.

They still need their lawns to be mowed, their flower beds to be weeded and the section kept in a clean and tidy state. The old vegetable patch is grown over and, although highly fertile grows nothing but weeds. Yet this same land on which our New Zealand houses were built is often in the most fertile place. That is why they were built there so many years ago. Such garden work is eminently suitable to the young overseas visitor who not only has the energy to do the heavy digging and weeding work, but who can provide the older folk with an interesting and friendly experience. But they do need to have some training and supervision.

The Welfare State also provides many of these older folk with access to funding to pay for the care of the grounds, through a payment under a disability allowance in addition to their retirement benefit. It does not matter who does the work, so a

local organiser of such a workforce could satisfy the demand with two or three overseas visitors at a time.

With a network of local organizers, connected by a central agency, it should be possible to tap into this niche market. The overseas visitor would contract to work for the host organiser for a period of one month in each of six chosen localities in any one year. It would be the local

host job to organize the work, take the young person to the site or sites and pick them up again when the job was done. The host would

receive the full amount of the labour and materials cost at each job and would pay the young person a rate slightly above the minimum wage. Each job - (now referred to as a client) - would be for a minimum of two hours. Each overseas visitor - (now referred to as a Whoopie) - would be paid for those two hours but because they were being paid a wage, they would have to pay back to the organizing host, the cost of their board and lodging. A back-packers accommodation plus food would not be less than \$20 per day so while the Whoopie was being paid they would be charged \$20 per day which provides the host with some income in addition to the balance of the hourly charge-out rate that the Client pays.

If, because of poor weather, there was no paid work to do, then the Whoopie would revert to the standard wwoof system of work around the host's property in exchange for the food and accommodation.

The organizing host would have to have a suitable vehicle (a truck or van and trailer) with a couple of reliable lawnmowers, line trimmers and general garden tools. They would need accommodation for a couple of Whoopies and the ability to feed those Whoopies good organic food. The Host would be responsible for getting the Clients and organizing the work to be done. The host would have to take the Whoopie to the job and check that it was being done satisfactorily. Most Wwoof Hosts know how to supervise Wwoofers and experience will help over time. The host will collect the charged out rate for the job and from it pay the Whoopie at the end of each week.

The concept will be a little like the "Crew Cut" or "Greenacres" system but not a franchise operation with strings attached. It will be more like a collective or a co-operative that seeks to promote organic gardening methods at the same time as making a living wage and encouraging overseas visitors into our various localities.

The web site is under construction <http://www.kiway.co.nz>. It will take a little while for us to develop it further but we should have a trial version in a few weeks. Have a look at the site - try the menu selection of local area hosts and look at Bay of Islands entry. You will see that that page (although only pretend) shows that the visitor can see what is

available in the Bay of Islands for adventure tourism. A boost to that area. Because the web site is dynamic, each host can update and amend their own page whenever they wish. Also the hosts can contribute tips and methods of organic gardening to the site after they have established themselves and become "authors". The Internet is with us to stay and young people now use it most often.

We have to support our Wwoofer friends in Germany, France, Canada, Italy and other countries who will help to promote the concept. Now all we need is the support of Organic Minded Hosts who would like to establish this business venture in their own locality. If you know of someone who may be interested or if you can see yourself fulfilling this role, then please get in touch and we can move forward together.

Malcolm Howard
Kiway Organics, Whangarei.
30 March 2009.

'**Garbage Warrior**' was presented by Transition Town Kaitaia on Friday 17th April at The Little Theatre, Kaitaia Community Centre. This interesting – and timely – documentary profiles unorthodox architect, eco-warrior and founder of Earthship Biotech, Michael Reynolds. Since the late 1970s, the wild-haired 60-year-old has been setting up communities of increasing size in remote New Mexico locations based on his experimental, self-sufficient houses. Unsurprisingly, his belief that there's 'no progress without mistakes' isn't shared by the state planning department, which can't see beyond the rule book and considers global warming 'a myth'. As it tracks Reynolds's one-man battle to make sustainable housing sites legal, this funny, multi-layered doc is testament to the inspirational proof an individual can (literally) make a difference to the planet and a delightful, mind-expanding antidote to those housing-market blues.

CERTIFICATION MANGER UPDATE

To the certificated producers who rely on their certification for a living & need their certificate current.

I would like to remind you that you have two months in which to complete your plan & acquire the necessary accompanying documentation.

it would help the process this end if you could keep within the timeframe so that I can process the documentation, get it to an auditor, organise the certification meeting to discuss your audit, then, send the details to national office with accompanying payment for your certificates. once I receive them + copies for myself and national office, I send them signed to you.

it is very difficult for me to keep your certification within the timeframe if I don't receive the docs in time to complete the process. I do try to send the pmp's out 3 mths prior to expiry.

Apart from that, keep up the wonderful production & see you at the FNOG field-days. Don't forget our field-day Trading Table.
Kris Khaine

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Kaitaia

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Mission statement of The Organics Networker :

To gather and seek information pertinent to the organics movement

To publish this information for the benefit of growers and producers of organic food and related products

To be a forum, a community and a marketplace for organic growers and producers and their supporters

To present this knowledge and information in a professional and impartial manner

The Organics Networker is usually published four times a year.

While every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of information, neither The *Organics Networker* nor the Far North Organic Growers and Producers Association accepts any responsibility for errors or omissions or for any consequences arising from reliance on information published. The opinions expressed in The Organics Networker are not necessarily the opinions of, or endorsed by, the editor or the publisher unless otherwise specified. The author(s) of articles hold the copyright for their articles and should be approached for any other intended publishing.



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