



THE ORGANICS NETWORKER

Far North Organic Growers & Producers Society (Inc)

Issue 59 – Autumn 2016

Details for the next FNOG:

Sunday, 29th May 2016

At Mahinga Oranga

Rob Downing and Pamela Baker

68 Whakataha Road,

Waimate North, Kerikeri

We welcome members and interested folk to attend our FNOG Field day at our property to hear from the committee of FNOG society and the host regarding successes, failures and challenges that are everyday issues from the experienced growers and land users in our group.

Distance and direction to Mahinga Oranga (Rob Downing's place.)
Coming from Hwy 1 South or North, the turnoff to Waimate is approx. 4 kms north of Ohaeawai or approx 10 kms south of Okaihau. Follow the signpost to Waimate North Mission/Church and our road is just before the church. Drivers turn left into Whakataha Road and we are 1 km down this unsealed road. Property is clearly signposted. Coming from Hwy 10 Puketona Junction (which is the turnoff to Paihia) the drivers will also see signposts to Waimate North Mission and Kaikohe. Travel approx 4 kms and then turn right heading towards Waimate North Mission and Church. Once at the Church, next right is Whakataha Rd.

A short history blurb of the Host property

The Mahinga Oranga name was gifted to us by local Maori elders shortly after we arrived in Waimate North January 2002. They saw and heard about what we were trying to achieve and the Organic approach we chose to go with. It was the basis for the gifted name.

For those that don't know much about our area Waimate North, it was the first inland farm in New Zealand by the early settlers. With the first flourmill, mission house, church and even the first A& P show in NZ. History tells us that the early settlers were fed and assisted by our local Maori people, as they were the food providers for quite a big Hapu in this area.

This 5 acre piece of land we occupy was part of the original gardens which fed those settlers so for me in respect to those and future folk we continue to caretake this earth.

The soil is a rich black volcanic type and so that has been a great part of our success. The challenge however was, the speed that type of soil dries out in summer months and the speed nutrient flushes out in strong rains. I can now say we have implemented ways to overcome those challenges.

Due to a couple of past personal health issues I have had to decommission most of the growing areas however are now beginning to grow more and more market bound produce. My plans for 2016/17 are looking good and with continued recovery progress I will be able to make a small return on my investment of energy and time.

So welcome Far North members and friends, see on May 29th Waimate North Mahinga Oranga 68 Whakataha Rd at 9.30 10am. If it is raining? I have a large man cave (shed) with ample room for hosting this event and if it's sunny we shall use our outdoor entertainment area, which will be equally suitable. We look forward to welcoming and meeting you all.

Pamela & Rob



Agenda for AGM

10:30 Cuppa

11am Meeting and possibly a speaker

11:30 Chance for members to interact and have a Q & A

12-noon approx Shared lunch

1pm Intro from Rob Downing about his property and a wander around.



Wai Wurri Update – May 2016

Despite the rain, our last field day/AGM was really great, enjoyed by all. We have really enjoyed visiting such inspiring properties throughout our 27 years of organics in the Far North.

A couple of days later we watched a helicopter, incensed with spraying dye and herbicide all over our Swan Plants, but, on hindsight, they decided to do just that at a neighbours place, fixated on spraying their dahlias!!! The following week a friend told me they arrived in force to bust them for Swan Plants!!!
So, if you desire the quiet life, don't grow Swan Plants or Dahlias!!

February 3rd at 10pm I heard seven Kiwi calls, all in a row, and close. Terry was so fast asleep and I had to keep the good news until morning. Kiwi monitoring is 25 May – 12 June, long after ours have finished their calling.

And more good news. Our grapes were amazing this year, in fact, yesterday, my granddaughter and I picked the last of them, stuffing our faces with their deliciousness. Little Miss “Nearly Nine” is a right little fruit bat. Our friend picked out the last of the grapes to turn into wine, and he's generous with the outcome, bless his heart.

The last flood wrecked the road and upset the new neighbours who freaked out about how high it was. And we have been watching all of this since 1987! I say, be thankful it wasn't worse.

The released pigs still cause damage of course – the last one was about 120lb. We were gifted half of it by the hunter. This pig-hunting thing still makes me uncomfortable, barbaric, but I try to enjoy the gifts of meat, because, after all, they have been eating our place!

We had our timber trees assessed, and the only ones ready are the huge redwoods on the riverbank. In the meantime they create a glorious environment throughout their maturity.

Shades of yellow, orange, red and gold decorate so many trees, the temperature is now bearable for working longer hours outdoors and we have already enjoyed a fire. Lots to be thankful for.

Krissie



A WORD FROM THE CHAIR

Hello all.

My favourite time of year, days getting shorter and cooler however all them must do job's in front of all those need to do job's but behind our paying job's, a busy time for all yet somehow through the chaos everything fits into it's place, not necessarily where we thought it should be or happen ahhh the joys of working with mother nature.

So let's all think of some ways (old and new) to introduce more people to what we do or don't do at FNOG. (one idea expected next meeting from each of you please.)

Help Days

Are there members who need a little help sometimes, to get on top of those tasks, maybe a working bee, which also builds relationships and a chance to introduce new people and learn new ideas? This could be done between our 3 or 4 meetings making it a bit more social and use of knowledge.

Fund raising

Fund raising do we need to do this and for what outcome? Usually gets left to 1or 2 members but all enjoy the rewards, ideas required. (One idea expected next meeting from each of you please).

Well that should be enough to focus on, I look forward to catching up with all at next meeting.

Cheers Alan.



YoiFest 2017

I am using my off year from YoiFest, our multilingual storytellers festival, to bring in other cultural elements. But I can already tell you something about it.

YoiFest 2017 is planned for the 18th of February at Te Ahu, Kaitaia. Again inside and outside venues will be crowded with visitors, performers and helping hands. But this time visitors are invited to actively experience cultural expressions.

Again there will be storytelling (Werner was one of the storytellers in 2015) and music during the afternoon, with a Ceili band and dancing for everyone early in the evening at the Main Hall.



New during the afternoon will be traditional games, this time led by Wiremu Sarich. Wiremu has taken part in the Indigenous Games in Brazil and engages teenagers and grown ups all over New Zealand in Maori games. He uses natural, self-made materials.



Also new to the festival is singing easy songs in different languages, led by Lucy Houtas. Lucy and her Kaitaia choir still have enough time to think about their programme and to practice some songs. Lucy is English herself, but is fluent in French and some Spanish. Her husband is Greek.

With Celtic dancing happening in the evening, there is Indian dance during the afternoon.

At both YoiFest 2014 and 2015 Anu Paulose has been telling stories in Malayalam, which is spoken in Kerala. This year she plans to do a Spring Dance together with her lady friends, who are also from India.

Beside the Spring Dance she invites visitors to learn some elements of Indian dance.

Bruce Gregory used to open the festival, sharing his deep universal wisdom with everyone present. Alas he is not with us anymore.



An environmental improvement is the use of old-fashioned cups and plates, for which we ask a deposit. I aim at zero refuse at the end of the festival.

The cups and plates are of course for drinks or finger food, which should bring in some extra money to keep YoiFest going. Although I am applying for financial support from Council and Creative Communities, Yoifest is expected to do its bit.

I am still looking for more storytellers who would like to tell a traditional story from their cultural background, spoken in their mother tongue.

Musicians and singers who play music or sing songs from their country of birth are also very welcome to do so during the afternoon.

The audiences at YoiFest are small, so this could be a start for someone who'd still be a bit shy to perform.

If you are interested or know someone who would like to take part in YoiFest, please contact me via:

Email: inekepost@xtra.co.nz

Phone: 09 408 0448



Ineke



Whangarei Greens

Press release

6 May 2016

Save the bees roadshow comes North

A roadshow through the North this month will promote a Bill to ban bee-killing neonicotinoids and the use of Round Up in public parks.

Green MP Steffan Browning will speak in four Northland centres to promote his Bill to get glyphosate-based herbicides such as Roundup out of parks.

“There are many toxic effects and yet glyphosate is still used in streets, schools and parks where our children play,” he says.

He said bee populations have been hit hard by a variety of threats, including varroa mite and neonicotinoid poisons.

“Neonicotinoids should be taken off our shelves and out of our environment to help bee populations recover.”

The tour begins in Kaitia on May 17 at Te Ahu Centre at 7pm, then on May 18 in Kerikeri at 7pm at Kingston House, Hone Heke Rd.

He will speak in Whangarei on May 19 at 12 noon at 116 Bank St, and in Dargaville the same day at

7.00 pm at the Wesley Methodist Church, Cnr Normanby/Awakino Road.

There are petitions on the subject on the Green Party website: <http://action.greens.org.nz/bees> and <http://action.greens.org.nz/sprayfree>.

For more information on the public meeting, contact timothy.onnes@parliament.govt.nz ,
04 817 6717

Authorised by Gwen Shaw, 17 Garrett St, Wellington.



WANTED!

I'm hoping for preserving jars like vacola ...or even large glass jars please.

THANKS,

Regards, Alex

alharbuz@yahoo.co.nz



MISSION STATEMENT OF FAR NORTH ORGANICS & PRODUCERS

- 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

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