



# THE ORGANICS NETWORKER

*Far North Organic Growers & Producers Society (Inc)*

**Issue 67 – Summer 2019**

Details for the next FNOG Field Day - our 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and also **AGM** ...

**30**  
**YEARS**  
*Anniversary*

*There will be cake!*

***Sunday, 10th March 2019***

***Krissie Khaine and Terry Higginson's  
155 Wells Road***

***Please bring a chair and a shared lunch, your own cup, plate,  
knife and fork so we can have zero waste!***

***Also, something to donate for a raffle – let's make it special for  
our celebration!***

***e.g. produce, honey, preserves etc.***

***And of course, some loose coins 1 ticket \$2 or 3 tickets for \$5***



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How to get there ...

From the Mangamuka's S.H.1 - heading North to Kaitaia, turn in to Fairburn Road after passing Pamapurua School on your right. Wells Road is the second turn on your right. The first is Mangatoetoe Road.

From S.H.10 - we are about 23km from Taipa. Staying on the Oruru Road, pass the Bush Fairy Dairy and the Peria School, and staying on the Peria Road (don't go Honeymoon Valley) we are the next road on your left. (Fairburn Road becomes Peria Road from Wells Road.)

If you come from Kaitaia, head south on S.H.1 and turn in to Fairburn Road just past the sub-station on your left.

History: We bought 38ha of run-down farmland with some stock-damaged bush in 1987.

Nov. 1988, we put down a slab of concrete for the floor to a honey-house. Full time honey production became impossible with back problems, but the shed was converted into living quarters.

The Kiwi calls led us to monitor them every year, until recently.

We put a QE11 Open Space Covenant on 19 ha and proceeded to do some full-on protection, mainly with traps and the use of a well-trained dog. We have turned the other 19ha into a forest of timber trees and trees for the birds and bees. We used the driveway flats for gardening for the markets, corn, potatoes, garlic, whatever grew well and was marketable. Now that we are ancient, the marketing is reduced to whatever the fruit trees produce.

There are oodles of parking space, but car-pooling is always recommended, so bring a friend.

We look forward to celebrating 30 years with you.

Krissie



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**A little from our speaker John Haines** singer/songwriter, author, former radio host and columnist, health educator and librarian.

I lead a weekly tramping group that walks between Whangarei Heads and the Cape and between the Hokianga and the Bay of Islands. I'm the chair of Friends of Rangikapiti (a conservation group planting, trapping, improving tracks and working with children in our local DOC reserve in Coopers Beach) and I chair Far North REAP. Obviously, I'm a keen organic gardener.

See you at the AGM and pray and dance for rain.

Cheers, John



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## **Agenda for Field Day**

10 – 10.30am Committee Meeting (minutes of last meeting etc) members are more than welcome to attend.

10.30am – Raffle and cuppa

11 am Introductions (attendance book passed to sign)  
AGM meeting  
Raffle, tickets will still be available at lunch break

Speaker – John Haines about walking tracks in the Far North

12pm ish Shared lunch

1pm ish Draw raffles, Krissie and Terry to take us around their property

Come along to celebrate and have an inspiring day!



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## **Chairman's Report**

*Hello and warm seasons greetings to you all. I hope everyone's gardens are flourishing in these long balmy summer days. We have been enjoying swims at the beach when it's too hot to work, absolute bliss.*

*I'd like to thank Alan and Fiona Rockell for hosting our last field day and sharing what's going on at their patch. The Bio-char demo was great. Thanks Inge for your informative talk on carbon sequestering. We look forward to our next Field Day at Krissie and Terry's.*

*It is our AGM with the yearly election of committee members etc, and also a celebration of 30 years as an organisation. Do please make the effort to participate within the Group and join in these gatherings and help celebrate three decades of organic growers in the Far North.*

*This year we have directly invoiced members on our mailing list with the hope of encouraging those that have let slip their membership to renew and to remind those current that the fee is now due. FNOG is a great organisation with a large knowledge base. Please support this unique group.*

*Many thanks and best regards, Rich*



## Wai Wurri Update – Summer 2019

*Our last field day at Alan and Fi's 28<sup>th</sup> October 2018 was very successful with 17 folk present. As we were leaving Fi gave me some orchids, which lasted for weeks and weeks in the vase, longer than any other vase flowers I have ever had. What a treat.*

*One day my neighbour gave us eight bags of wood chips she had made out of the privet, which I spread thickly around the interior of my veggie garden fence. Another treat - they have suppressed the weeds and none of the bits sprouted. I actually thought they would give it a go, as the stuff is so hard to get rid of.*

*When it came to the slugs and snails harvesting the veges at night, I collected them and put them in the freezer to add to the next fire in the home wood burner. The ash was then mixed with sand and sprinkled around the outside of the garden (which is contained inside bird mesh.) Voila. Going by instinct as to the right time to do this, my follow-up night excursions into the garden proved peppering works on instinct!! Couldn't find any critters for quite some time after this exercise. As we no longer subscribe to the Biodynamic Soc. I didn't have a calendar to go by.*

*Our last year's garlic crop only just survived, being planted in the driveway garden area and not attended to (re ridding it of surrounding weeds.) I harvested it just in the nick of time before the slugs annihilated it altogether. Thank goodness we grow just for ourselves and whanau now - it isn't of the usual size unfortunately, but very delicious all the same.*

*Anyway, come and have a look at how the place has survived many, many floods - to the point where we had to remove a very high swing-bridge due to flood damage and how we no longer walk from the land into the river like we did 32 years ago. Also, how tons of kikuyu mulch have prevented the place from drying out completely during these long, dry spells - which we will no doubt see more of.*

*Krissie*



Bee time in the elderberry flowers



Fairy Bells, these were grown from seed given to us from Helen Guthrie



### **Happenings at NatureZone**

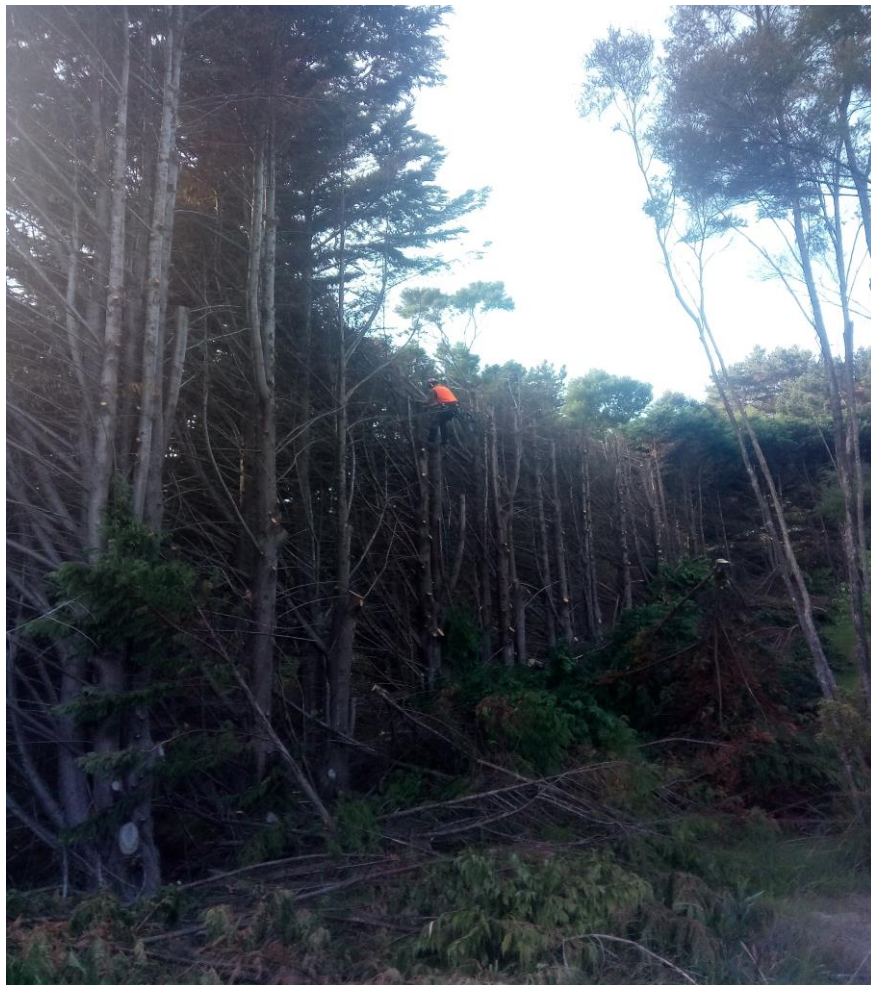
*Trying to get everything done on time was our biggest challenge as 2018 came to a close. We were still picking cherimoya when our garlic harvest started in early November!!! A whole month early. Looking back now it seems a blur! So, it was a relief that the kids took time off to help with the harvest.*

*We just got the cherimoya trees pruned and fertilised, garlic lifted and into the drying shed as the first of the pre-Christmas rain started. Perfect for planting out the kumara shoots, and a bonus for the butternuts, phew! There's also been lots of action in the kitchen with excess tomatoes and courgettes, nice relishes and sauces, great for when the days get shorter to dip into the cupboard or freezer for lovely summer produce.*



*Yellow kumara growing well in our drought! Also, the next generation of cherimoya trees.*

*30 years ago, we thought planting a shelter belt of Leyland Cypress was a good idea however without any form of management beside root pruning these trees have become huge and overshading a block of cherimoya. We had envisioned removing them altogether so it was handy to have our son Nathan (a professional arborist) say "I'll just whip up there and take a side off them and top them while I'm up there!" Okay we said and he did so well, what a transformation.*



*We are certainly dry up on the Aupouri Peninsula having only received 5ml of rain January/February, which is nothing too unusual for us at this time of year. It's heartening to see our property stand up to the dry harsh conditions being on a sandy hill doesn't help! Over the years though we have transformed our soil with the addition of lots of compost and seaweed. We are lucky indeed!*



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## **Life at Uenuku - Trish and Gijs**

As we all experienced, it has been very dry and only 8mls in January; 28 mls so far this month and it is amazing what difference that makes. Lawns are greening up, soil does not look so depressingly cracked and the worms are dancing. Although we have quite a few water tanks we are still very careful how much we use as you just don't know how long the dry spell will last.

We have been mulching heavily; we had 7 red robin trees cut down before Christmas as they were getting far too big – Trish was in heaven and I was not allowed to touch the mulch. That means I get the grass clippings! I would hate to think how our garden would be if we did not mulch.

We are enjoying our summer veges. The tomatoes have been great and full of flavour. The lettuces have been struggling with the heat but still give us plenty of meals. We have had great cabbages and made sauerkraut for the first time – I found the wooden mallets I make for my Maori carving are ideal to ram the cabbage down in a glass jar. The garlic was a disaster except for the elephant garlic I got through Rich and Jose – thanks again! The kale is very reliable and great to give to our friends. We have pumpkins which have self-sown through the compost from the worm bins – no idea what variety so we are looking forward to see how they taste. The malabar (summer spinach) comes up each year and is delicious – it grows up a trellis so takes up little room. The runner beans are doing well, and so are the beetroot. We need a forklift to lift them though!!! We have been enjoying our zucchinis and as well as stir frying, we make delicious fritters and quiches. We feel blessed with such an abundance of food.

The hens are delightful and despite the heat are still laying. We have 17 hens but half of them are over 7 years old and retired. After all the eggs they have produced over the years they deserve a life of leisure.

Amelie, our remaining duck, is now 10 and still finds places to build her magnificent nests. At least she makes it easy for us to locate her nests where we find 10 to 12 eggs each time. She is a treasure and lets us know when she wants feeding – her favourite at the moment are the baby tomatoes.

The quinces are doing well (you'll find attached the delicious quince jam recipe we make). The Louisa plums were picked at the beginning of their ripening as we learnt from last year's crop how much the birds love them. We have a large crop of figs but with little rain they are slow to plump up. We are looking forward to picking our persimmons again this year – they are always reliable. Our apples haven't produced this year; our feijoas look to be a no goer as well. We put it down to the lack of rain. Our blueberry crop is fantastic and we have been picking most days. As well as enjoying them fresh we have frozen many containers to enjoy over the winter months. We are enjoying the grapes – a great harvest this year and not a wasp in sight!!! Even the birds aren't attracted to them as much this year so we don't know ourselves without the competition!!

I have been enjoying my Maori carving and have lessons every Wednesday morning with Israe in Kerikeri. The attached photo is of a double spiral which I carved in memory of a very good friend who died in Holland mid last year. The double spiral in some cultures is a symbol of eternal life. The symbol spirals out infinitely, thus reinforcing the concept of life, death and rebirth.



Trish and I enjoy our lives here on this magical piece of paradise and feel very blessed to live here and look after the land and animals.



## **QUINCE JELLY**

### **Ingredients**

- 6-8 ripe quinces
- Water to cover
- Sugar

**Method:** Wash quinces and remove any decay spots from skin.

Chop fruit then place in a large heavy pan with the cores and pips.

Barely cover the chopped fruit with cold water. Bring fruit to the boil then reduce heat to a slow simmer.

If you cook the fruit too quickly it will "mush" and cloud the liquid.

Leave the lid on the pan at this stage.

Cook for an hour or until fruit is soft and has turned pink.

Drain fruit and all the cooking liquid through a flour bag, fine pillowcase or jelly bag suspended over a large bowl.

Measure the liquid once it has passed through the bag. For every cup of liquid allow 1 cup of sugar.

Bring the liquid to the boil in a clean pan then slowly add the sugar. Do not stir once the sugar has dissolved.

Boil gently, allowing the scum to drift to the sides of pan. Boil for 20 minutes or until a test sample sets on a cold plate.

Remove scum with a small sieve or a slotted spoon.

Fill jars then seal with cellophane covers.

Store in a cool, dark place.



The okra I put in this year for a bit of an experiment are producing well.

We lived in The Middle East for several years where okra was cheap and plentiful. This is one of my favourite curry recipes.

As it is a dry curry it often 'sticks' while cooking. Rather than adding more oil I put in a splash of boiling water to prevent it burning.

Best wishes,  
Carol

### **BHINDA BATATA (OKRA AND POTATOES)**

450 g (1 lb) okra  
225 g (8 oz) potatoes  
4 tablespoons oil  
1 teaspoon black mustard seeds  
1 medium onion, peeled and sliced lengthways  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 teaspoon turmeric  
1 teaspoon chilli powder  
1 tablespoon ground coriander  
2 tomatoes, chopped  
4 sprigs fresh coriander leaves, chopped, to garnish

**Preparation time: 25 minutes**

**Cooking time: 30–40 minutes**

1. Wipe the okra with a damp cloth, top and tail them and cut each one in half. Cut each half into 4 lengthways and reserve.
2. Peel and wash the potatoes, cut them into 2.5 cm (1 inch) cubes and reserve.
3. In a pan, heat the oil and fry the mustard seeds until they begin to pop. Then add the onion and fry quickly for 2–3 minutes.
4. Reduce the heat and carefully add the prepared vegetables. Add the salt, turmeric, chilli and ground coriander and toss the ingredients well.
5. Cover and cook for about 25 minutes, tossing the vegetables every few minutes.
6. Stir in the chopped tomatoes, toss well and open cook for a further 10–15 minutes. Serve sprinkled with chopped fresh coriander.



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## Carbon Neutral Trust

**Reminder: Have you used the Carbon Calculator?**

(<http://www.carbonneutraltrust.org.nz>) to find out your household's net carbon footprint as well as lots of ideas about reducing it. In case of any questions, contact Inge Bremer at <mailto:carbonneutraltrust@gmail.com>.

Cheers  
Rolf & Inge



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## **FREE Workshops at Te Hiku Hauora Maara Kai**

**Hands-on workshop series**

**Thursday 14 Feb - Planting from seed**

**Thursday 21 Feb - Compost and mulch**

**Thursday 28 Feb - Making a garden bed**

**Thursday 7 Mar - Harvest and cook**

**Call Jo on 0204 1020 333 Email:  
[whakahaumanu@protonmail.com](mailto:whakahaumanu@protonmail.com) or come in to The EcoCentre  
on Bank Street, Kaitaia to express your interest**



## MISSION STATEMENT OF FAR NORTH ORGANICS & PRODUCERS

- To gather and seek information pertinent to the organic's 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

## FNOG COMMITTEE 2018

### **Chairman**

Rich Van Alphen

### **Vice Chair**

Jan Arie Kamsteeg

### **Secretary**

Kris Khaine

### **Minutes Secretary**

Krissie

### **Treasurer**

Inge Bremer

### **Financial Auditor**

Michele Twigden

### **Networker Publisher**

Jose Van Alphen

### **Committee Members**

Rich, Jan Arie, Gijs Veling, Inge, Terry, Krissie, Jose Van Alphen, Alan Rockell, Carol Smylie

### **Certification Manager**

Jose

### **Certification Auditors**

Terry & Jan Arie & Rich

### **Certification Committee**

Jan Arie, Terry, Krissie, Rich