



**Workshop notes on  
National Organic Standards  
August 14<sup>th</sup>, 2018, Wellington**

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## INTRODUCTION

The day started with a presentation from OANZ Chair Doug Voss on the progress to date with Regulations and National Standards and present the opportunity at hand. Doug outlined the role of OANZ as the national voice and lead organisation and explained that as an open and inclusive organisation it had prepared this National Workshop to ensure all members and interested parties had the opportunity to participate and contribute. As a voluntary organisation OANZ relies on the support from its members and supporting sponsors<sup>1</sup>. This was duly acknowledged.

Doug then discussed the Government's announcement the previous day (13 August) where Minister of Agriculture and Food Safety Minister Damien O'Connor made public that majority of public submissions support the Government's preferred approach of a single set of rules for organic production.

The Minister made it clear that, "New Zealand is out of step with many other countries that have a national standard for organic production, which gives their consumers' confidence they're paying premiums for genuine organic products and potentially boosts their market access.

"Over the past few months, 85 per cent of 208 people who responded to a consultation told us they support a change in the way organics is regulated, with 76 per cent supporting our preferred option of a single set of rules for organic production.

"The Government is committed to partnering with the primary sector to work smarter not harder and extract more value from what we do now," Damien O'Connor said.

OANZ's Vice Chair and OANZ SWG & Technical Team Leader Donald Nordeng then provided an overview of the four point strategy formed in 2016. He outlined that we were now in Phase II of its development moving from national agreement to a single National Standard whereby we adopt MPI's Technical Rules as the basis for the work to coming to common agreement on how it will be administered and a business case analysis. The point of the Workshop was to start to explore this.

Donald then presented a model of how the current system operates (Figure 1) and a conceptual model of how it might be administered (Figure 2).

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<sup>1</sup> Sponsors for the OANZ Workshop were:

Foodstuffs NZ  
Bostock Organics  
Bob Crowder

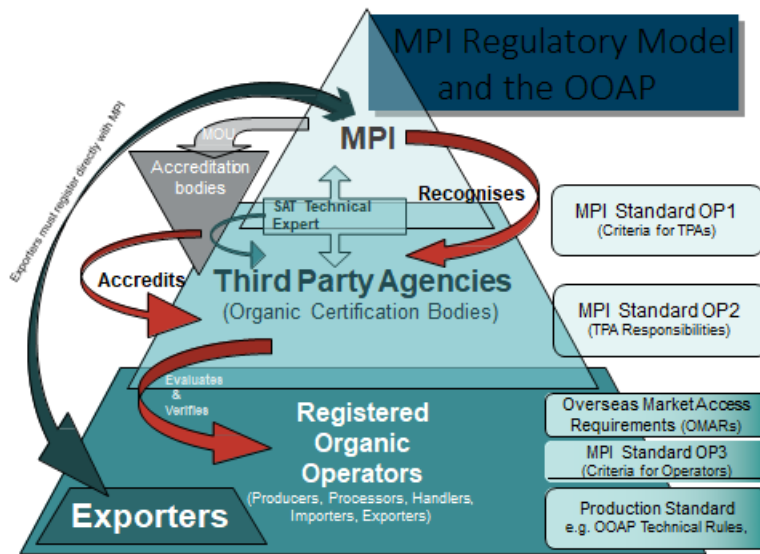


Figure 1: Current Operating System

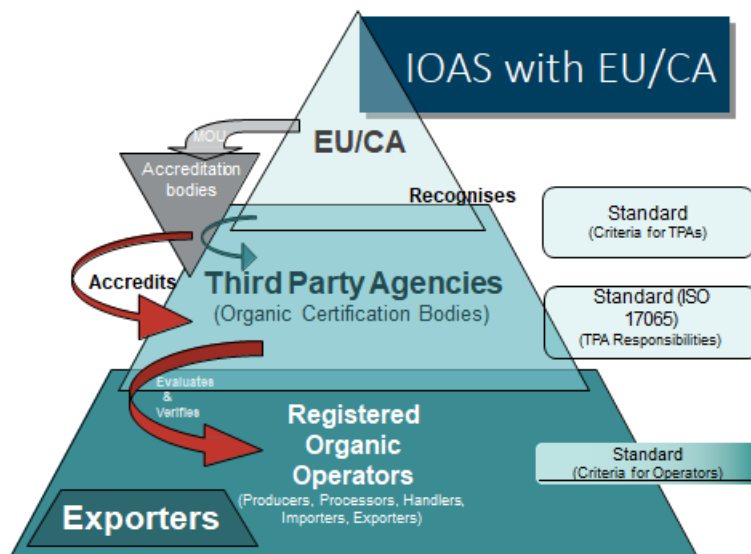


Figure 2: Conceptual model of how the new system may be operated.

It was thought the biggest changes to the current system would be:

- How to recognise non-MPI systems i.e. OFNZ, Biodynamics, BioGro Standards, AsureQuality Standards – will these be sold as organic?
- How to manage imports – imports will need to meet NZ Organic Standards
- How to manage the standard – MPI advisory panel for standards and export promotion (OANZ SWG reps on this panel)
- How to manage Authorities and Individuals – Proposed changes to OOAP

- How to work together to promote the sector – events such as Organic Week, Organic Wine Week, IFOAM Conference, etc.

The introduction from Doug and Donald then moved to a panel discussion. Jeff Gordon from AsureQuality and Brendan Hoare from OANZ joined the panel. Questions from the floor asked of the panel. These included questions around operational matters, what ISO 17065 and 17020 would mean, the affect the new standard would have on BioGro and AsureQuality's private standards, the inclusion of the current PGS Organic Farm NZ system, a national mark and IFOAM accreditation.

## WORKSHOP

The workshop then moved into small groups to discuss and provide feedback on four questions. Results of this small group work are below.

### 1. What are the 3 key opportunities of adopting this system?

#### Group 1:

1. Simpler system than we have now under one National Standard
2. Increasing consumer confidence
3. Eliminating bogus organic claims and create level playing field

#### Group 2

1. Market Growth
2. Consumer Confidence
3. Element of Control and management leadership

#### Group 3

1. NZ Yardstick
2. Protects the work of Organic
3. Same level playing field for everyone
4. Position for negotiating equivalence in international markets
5. Industry lead, not government led
6. Bigger than 1 sector-uniform voice, coherency
7. Defining "organic" in a regulatory/court level to ensure reasonable expectations interpretable by a judge
8. OANZ only group at the table with government. Unique opportunity

#### Group 4

#### Group 5

1. Unifies the organics sector
  - Trading with each other
  - Potential to grow supply
  - Shared knowledge
  - Same goal
  - Sector manages the sector
2. International recognition

- Allows government to government equivalency
- Support trading relationships
- 3. Consumer confidence
  - Opportunity to educate
  - Transparency
  - Trust the word/brand “Organic” removes “green washing”

#### Table 5 Group 6

1. One Standard for all producers
2. Simplifies market access
3. Consumer Confidence

Core themes to emerge from this questions are:

1. Simplification of the system with a single standard
2. Increased consumer confidence (nationally and for equivalence)
3. Sector develops control
4. Protection of the term organic

## 2. What are the issues that we need to spend more time on?

### Group 1:

- Guardianship of National Standards
- Need firm negotiations about
  - Who is on Management Board-Pro Organic
  - How are decisions made to truly reflect consumers?
  - If Minister manages, then nominations made by OANZ organic sector
- Board is a statutory Board
  - Technical committee advises management Board
- Organics OANZ sector nominates 66% Board, Government nominates 33%
- Separate Technical Committee that advises on inputs, testing, standards, and changes to standards
- OANZ appointee's confidence of organics sector
- Government funds management Board
- Organics Act needs organic principles imbedded to guide Management Board to maintain organic integrity and protect consumer interests.
- Training manual for new inspectors/auditors and adequate number of auditors
- Resourcing the inspectors and training affordable

### Group 2

- What will happen to OANZ
- Business Model?
- How do we elect this Board?
- Who is controlling` this Board?
- Who is the Board accountable to?
- What works well in other countries?

- Professional development/training-HR
- Collaboration, organic producers are individualists

### Group 3

- Right representation on OANZ-restructure? Integrating all non-food organics
- Integrating diverse groups in industry
- What are consumers looking for?
- Ensure that Organics don't reduce their market through new farming methods which address consumers' needs in a better way.
- More discussion around verification of Standards

### Group 4

- How to deal with or what is the process, give recognition to imported products?
- What are the arrangements for those currently importing that will not meet the new National Standard

### Group 5

- Strong presence through the parliamentary process+=organized national campaign
- Industry alignment through education and communication, whole sector support
- Ensure the transition process is for currently certified product is clearly defined and communicated
  - Long shelf life product
  - Packaging
  - Inputs
- Who the Advisory Committee is made up of?
  - Appointed process?

### Table 5 Group 6

- How is it going to be levied? Are we going to increase our costs over transition period?
- Spend more time on how transition would be funded. (How do we get funds from OAP directed into the National Standard?)
- How do we integrate OANZ and Biodynamics without doubling up costs for those organization?
- How will the Standard be enforced in NZ?
- Education-consumer: How is it going to be achieved?
- 15% of submissions against, why?

Core themes to emerge from this questions are:

1. Control of the system needs to be better understood.
2. Who would look after the standards and how

### 3. How do you see OANZ Standard Working Group functioning?

#### Group 1

- Assume this is the Technical management Group?

### Group 2

- Representation: MPI, MFAT, MBIE, FOMA, Hort NZ,
- Pip fruit, consumer, retail, pastoral, beef and lamb, dairy, wine, kiwifruit, vegetable, mixed fruit, exports, small/boutique growers. Certifiers

### Group 3

- OANZ putting its affairs in order
- OANZ representation
  - Visible spokesperson
  - Drives organics more vocally
  - OANZ holds a National Reg of anyone using the work organic
  - Multi-sector representation
  - Take the regulatory voice between government /industry

### Group 4

- Representation from Key Stakeholder and therefor we need to discuss who. Growers? People who contribute funding? Needs money
- Coming up with a clear vision, set up by the wider organic community

### Group 5

- Develop the National Standard with sector/stakeholder involvement. Fit for purpose for NZ
- Opportunity for standardized

### Table 5

- OANZ Standards Working Group with enough representation from members with vested interest in certification
- One idea that did emerge was that the model could be one that is a Statutory Board elected by the Minister and from a body recommended by OANZ.

Core themes to emerge from this questions are the need for:

1. Representation of the organic sector nationally
2. Clear purpose
3. A vision the whole sector agrees to and can get behind

### 4. Are there any obstacles that need to be addressed to ensure success?

### Group 1

- Mechanism to include Demeter and OFNZ organic products
- Organics to adopt and mitigate climate change, particularly around soil building and tree planting-Need Carbon Credit Programme

### Group 2

- Us

### Group 3

- Communicate broadly to meet various aspirations/motivations, consumer choice not regulatory choice
- Marketing/education about organics

### Group 4

- Obstacles: Clarify relationship between OANZ Working Group and MPI. How do we get them involved and their buy-in.
- Working with Maori and other cross cultural
- Way to bring in

### Group 5

- Buy in by all sectors (+locations)
- Integration of small settlements with larger commercially driven schemes
- Funding
- Ensure future protection of the standard from corruption/dilution

### Table 5

#### Core themes to emerge from this question are:

1. Relationships with OANZ, MPI and other key stakeholders e.g. Maori
2. Ensuring inclusion (Demeter and OFNZ) and protection
3. The sector should not let itself down (be its own worst enemy)

### CONCLUSION

The meeting concluded with wider discussion and support for ongoing work of OANZ. There was recognition and appreciation that OANZ has got us where we are and a reemphasis placed on the importance of ongoing cohesion within the sector.

The meeting concluded at 3.30pm.