



## ***From the Demeter New Zealand Group***

### **Licences**

In 2019, three licensees did not renew their Demeter Certification. The reasons are not all known. In 2020 to date, one new licensee and one new processing certificate has been issued, bringing the total of Demeter Certifications to 14.

### **Alignment with Biogro – First round of Aligned Audits**

The current Demeter Production Standards for Biodynamic Agriculture require all Demeter licensees to have and maintain an approved organic certification to an acceptable organic standard. Currently this means that a licensee will need to be organically certified with either Organic Certifying body Organic Farm NZ or BioGro.

During the 2019 certification round, the first group of four licensees to have their Demeter inspection undertaken by BioGro at the same time as their BioGro audit went through this new process. Overall the licensees found the process to be an improvement, however there is still some tweaking to do of the information being gathered and ways to streamline this process for the licensee.

A recent meeting with Demeter NZ and Biogro to review how well the internal processes were between the two parties for the audit process. Overall, the Biogro Auditors felt it went well, however there is room for improvement and streamlining of the internal processes, that continue to be worked on. The process still needs to be finalised with Organic Farm NZ.

However, in moving to this new process there were some licensees who decided not to continue with Demeter certification for various reasons. This was understandable but it does highlight the need to promote Demeter as a viable certification system so it can become visible once again to consumers.

### **Biodynamic Federation International**

Another major change that has happened with Demeter and biodynamics internationally is the founding of a new organisation called the Biodynamic Federation Demeter International. This is a merging of Demeter International and the International Biodynamic Association. The aim is to have a common international umbrella organisation for all associations in all the countries. It brings together groups that support the biodynamic impulse and the Demeter associations into one entity. As a member of Demeter International, Demeter New Zealand automatically becomes a member of this new Federation.

In partnering with Organic Farm NZ and BioGro, Demeter New Zealand has positioned itself well for the introduction of the Organic Products Bill. The Bill places a requirement on anyone claiming to be organic to be able to substantiate those claims. The regulations and legislation around this and organic certification have become complex over the years and by ensuring licensees have an organic certification, allows Demeter New Zealand to focus on what it knows best – biodynamics.

There is still work to do on ensuring all licensees transition smoothly to the new system.





## **Marketing**

Earlier this year, Demeter New Zealand received the full Demeter Communication campaign material. This is a high-level and aspiring marketing campaign. A Demeter New Zealand social media page (Instagram) has been created using this high-level material, with the hopes to roll this campaign out so it can be of benefit in the coming year. It is perceived that this campaign will have a high impact in New Zealand by not only giving presence to Demeter in the consumer market place and its value, but also making it aspirational for uncertified farms to align with Demeter and become certified. Our gratitude to Demeter International for the high-level resources that we in no way could muster on our own.

## **Change in personal**

Finally, our Demeter NZ Secretary Joanne Turner announced she would not be renewing her contractual services for the role of Secretary to the Association and Demeter NZ. Her focus was returning to increasing the production of their Demeter Certified horticulture company, along with her partner. Joanne served 3 years in this role. Her analytical approach, good report and more than generous commitment to serving the work of Demeter was valued by all, especially the Demeter team. We wish her all the best.

A new Secretary, Josie Rainer, has been recruited for and is undergoing full training, with the support of Joanne, Council and Demeter Team.

Ian Henderson

Demeter New Zealand