General Manager’s Update

Writing for these Newsletters is a bit like painting the Sydney Harbour Bridge: I seem to be just finishing one when I get tapped on the shoulder to start writing the next!!

Having said that, I do find it enjoyable to be keeping you all informed of all the good things that NASAA is now achieving. I am constantly amazed at the many opportunities that seem to exist in this wonderful industry of ours. We have recently appointed Peter Hastie to take over the NASAA Industry Liaison Officer’s role, vacated by Alex Mitchell last year, to start to roll many of these opportunities out. Over the next few months we will be undertaking a number of initiatives to grow the number of organic operators in all regions across Australia, so if you have a group of people who you think are interested in becoming certified organic, please contact us and we will be happy to arrange a workshop in your area to assist them in becoming certified.

Our historic agreement with Chinese-based CHC is now in full swing!! We now have one (and soon to be two) inspectors in the paddock undertaking inspections to Chinese Regulations. We also have an agreement with the Chinese Chamber of Commerce’s Organic Development Committee to provide guidance and assistance on product distribution in China. Soon, I will be announcing the third stage of this agreement; the provision of a fully certified freight service from Australia to anywhere in the world.

We also recently employed our first full time NASAA organic inspector in Shona Cameron. Shona came from Melbourne and has had considerable experience in sustainability and environmental projects. She will be trained to inspect to all Accreditations NCO currently holds. While on inspections, we recently conducted our Initial Inspector Training courses where we flew a number of people down from the Pacific Islands to be trained to NASAA and National Standards. From here, we will continue to train them to NOP, JAS etc so that they can undertake inspections for us throughout the Islands and South East Asia. This is a major advancement and will not only deliver significant cost savings to our operators in those regions but provide employment opportunities as well.

Early in October, NASAA Chairman, Jan Denham and I will be travelling to Istanbul, Turkey to attend the 18th IFOAM World Congress. NASAA has a long history with IFOAM and as many of you will know, NASAA was the equal first organisation in the World to sign the IFOAM Agreement and NASAA Certified winery, Settlers Ridge in the Margaret River region of WA, was the first operation to be certified to IFOAM in Australia which possibly makes it the first (or one of the first) operations in the world, to be certified to IFOAM.

While this financial year will predominately be about consolidation of the changes implemented last year, there will still be some exciting initiatives that we will be launching during the year. These will centre around our plans to help you grow your business, providing more efficient and effective inspection services and assisting you to grow the number of organic operators in your region to create economies of scale which will enable us to deliver inspection services in a more cost effective manner. NASAA is constantly reviewing the way in which we do business with you and I am very proud to say, that it is NASAA that is driving the innovation within the organic industry at present.

Finally, please mark 14th November 2014 down as a day to attend the 28th NASAA Annual General Meeting, to be held at the Lighthouse Resort, Bunbury, WA. A full agenda will be sent out shortly - the day will include a number of speakers, lunch, the NASAA AGM followed by a dinner. There is accommodation available at the resort. I hope to see as many of you as possible, including NASAA Members, NCO operators and non-certified operators should they wish to attend. Please also contact us if you would like to discuss sponsorship opportunities at the event.

General Manager, Ben Copeman
Initial Inspector Training

NASAA recently sponsored a group of organic inspectors from Fiji, the Solomon Islands and delegates from National Aboriginal Solutions, representing the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) and Arnhem Lands people, to obtain NASAA basic inspector training.

New NCO and NASAA staff, potential contractors, a current operator and business partners also attended to progress their understanding of NASAA inspection practices.

The training was designed to provide pacific and indigenous communities with locally-based inspectors, to help reduce the cost of certification and empower the local community to create sustainable, locally owned businesses and employment.

The training not only introduced participants to the world of organic inspection, but also to the rich diversity of cultures resulting in a strong international network of people with like passion and purpose.

I would like to thank Kathe Purvis and Darryl Lang for their great presentations and training and all the participants for their involvement and support.

Initial Inspector On-Site observation training was held over the two days following the Initial Inspector Training event. Our Fijian, Osea Rasea, and Solomon Island trainees, Wilson Kikolo, Shane Tatuia, and Moses Pelomo, were invited to attend on-site observation inspections to provide further training while in Australia. In addition our new full-time inspector, Shona Cameron, and our contract inspector for PNG, Gary Altman, also attended the two days.

To allow this training to be achieved, some of our operators kindly accommodated ‘mock’ inspections to be undertaken at their properties.

NASAA would like to thank David Bruer (Temple Bruer Wines), Diana Bickleigh (Bickleigh Vale Farm), Guilio Dimasi (d’Arenberg Pty Ltd) and Simon and Catherine Collins for their valuable time and generous assistance in providing this opportunity for training. We greatly appreciate the time that they have given to support this excellent opportunity for our budding Pacific Inspectors to see a range of Australian production systems while learning the finer details of inspecting.

These two days provided only a sample of what is involved to become an Organic Inspector. There is still much to learn. On-site observation and lead inspection training is currently continuing for all the attendees both in Australian and the Pacific Islands to provide the best inspection skills, achieve confidence and learn and obtain knowledge across the many and varied organic production systems they will inspect.

NASAA will be holding Advanced Inspector Training from 10 to 12 November 2014. This is held every 2 years to provide our Inspectors with the most recent updates to Certification Standards, knowledge consistency and networking to maintain and develop skills and professionalism for the NASAA Inspections both globally and throughout Australia. All NASAA Inspectors, NCO Certification and selected NASAA staff will be attending.

NASAA has invited Margaret Scoles, Executive Director of International Organic Inspectors Association (IFOAM), to facilitate one of the training days. Margaret has 24 years of organic inspection experience for numerous certifiers, mostly in the USA. She will be focusing on NOP and IFOAM updates and other inspection procedures. The day will provide a rare opportunity for our inspectors to spend valuable time with Margaret.

**Inspections Manager, Debbie Clarke**

**TOP: Training group at Hahndorf Mill**
**LEFT: Moses, Darryl, Shane, Wilson with Simon Collins inspecting his orchards in Forest Range.**
**RIGHT: Wilson, Shane, Moses and Di Bickford inspecting the seedlings at Bickleigh Vale Farm, McLaren Vale.**
**BOTTOM LEFT: Shona, Gary and Osea taking notes during their observation inspection at Temple Bruer, Angas Plains.**
New NASAA Staff

Shona Cameron

NASAA has always used freelance organic inspectors who are based around Australia and overseas, who can conduct organic inspections for operators ad hoc. Due to growing numbers of operators and a huge increase in interest in the last 12-18 months, NASAA has recently employed Shona Cameron as the first full time NCO Organic inspector.

Shona joins NASAA from Melbourne, relocating to the Adelaide Hills, in August 2014, with the Organic Inspectors Training course beginning on her very first day with NASAA.

Shona also runs her own business, Gourmet Cyclists, so as well as seeing her out and about running organic inspections, you may also see her cycling through the best parts of the Adelaide Hills to enjoy the best food and wine that SA has to offer. See www.gourmetcyclists.com.au for more information.

Peter Hastie

We have now employed Peter Hastie as NASAA Industry Liaison Officer. Peter also started in August with the Inspectors training course on day one, and has already attended the Winestate Wine of the Year Tasting and the Temple Bruer Winemakers dinner, along with a number of introductory meetings. As well as working to organise the NASAA AGM (in WA), Peter will also be organising a number of organic workshops in the dairy and beef sectors in the coming months.

Formerly managing livestock enterprises in NSW and working on a cattle station in the Northern Territory, he established and ran a small localised food hub out of New England and ran his own property valuation business. Today Peter is an organic beekeeper, slow food movement supporter and artisan produce enthusiast. “It was a natural step for me,” Peter said. “I was immediately hooked by NASAA’s big picture focus on growing the organic industry and building opportunities for local producers.

Please contact Peter about organising or attending workshops, or to discuss advertising or sponsorship opportunities with NASAA:

Peter.Hastie@nasaa.com.au

Temple Bruer Winemakers Dinner

On Tuesday 9th September I was proud to represent NASAA at the Temple Bruer Dinner at Agape organic restaurant in Sydney. It was a fantastic opportunity to meet Temple Bruer winemaker, Verity Stanistreet, and support a valued NASAA client.

The night was a great success. Distributor, Michael Ritano perfectly matched a great range of Temple Bruer wines to a diverse and sumptuous Organic feast, put together by their head chef Simon Dawson and enjoyed by about 20 diners of varying backgrounds.

Never have I enjoyed such a perfectly matched dinner with the quality of both Temple Bruer wines and the organic food at Agape demonstrated. It was a great opportunity to discuss organics, sustainable agricultural practice and given the location, the apparent and growing influence of superior quality produce now being delivered by the organic sector.

Representatives from Dan Murphys contributed some valuable insight into the growing demand for Certified Organic, preservative free and vegan friendly wines and how it has transpired into an increase in shelf space for their stores. We discussed the journey organic wine production has taken over the last 25 years, and the rewards that are now being afforded for the resilience and commitment of producers such as David Bruer for really developing successful and carbon neutral viticulture.

Lyn and her family from Agape hosted a great night, Michael Ritano evidently knew exactly what he was doing and Verity offered fantastic insight and background into the winery and the process of getting each and every wine to the table.

NASAA is proud to support the Organic Wine industry Nationwide. We look forward to supporting and developing programs helping to grow the industry.

Industry Liaison Officer, Peter Hastie
Organic growers, producers, and supporters met in Inverell, NSW last month as part of a NASAA effort to promote social and business networks between local and regional producers across the New England and North West areas.

NASAA invited key representatives from the Local Landcare group, rural financial counsellors, Primal foods, a company specialising in grain logistics, distribution and wholesale, grower/processors, and industry advocates. NASAA’s Industry Liaison Officer Peter Hastie dubbed the event an excellent opportunity on the way to achieving NASAA’s “big picture” plan to strengthen and stabilise the Australian organic industry as a whole.

The meeting identified a prevalent shift in social trends and consumer demand for organic produce, tipping the balance for suppliers. Consumers are demanding integrity and ethical, equitable access to sustainable food production and natural resource management, which Organic certification ensures. The road forward for local producers may still be long, but focusing on the big picture will ensure stable and positive growth for the future.

If we can strengthen productivity, particularly in the grain industry, the continuity of supply goes a long way in stimulating further participation from processors and wholesalers along the supply chain. By filling the demand for grains in particular, we will support other domestic livestock sectors who rely on supplementary feeding such as dairy, pork and bakeries.

NASAA will be working closely with regional producers and service providers to strengthen access to information, technical advice and mentoring services of Australia’s internationally acclaimed organic industry to potentially become a major player in state and national economies.

**Ukraine cashes in on GM Ban**

Since the GM crop ban in Ukraine, farmers are increasing the production of soybeans, to capitalise on the $70-80 per tonne prices now being paid by buyers in Western Europe.

Johny Boerjan, group management vice-president of global quality testing company SGS spoke at the Australian Grains Industry Conference in Melbourne recently, but cautioned that despite the GM ban, levels of contamination are still being detected in Ukrainian soybeans. He also noted that other countries such as Hungary and Romania are increasing soybean production to take advantage.

Ten years ago, Ukraine produced about 360,000 tonnes of soybeans. In 2014, SGS estimates that it will produce 3.3 million tonnes.

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**Royal Trophy for Garlic**

CONGRATULATIONS to Fred Koch and Neroli Hadfield, from NASAA Certified Organic Ontos Farm in East Gippsland, VIC for their Champion Garlic Trophy at the 2014 Royal Melbourne Fine Food Awards. Visit their website at: www.ontos-farm.com

**Wine of the Year 2015**

NASAA’s sponsorship of the Organic Wine of the Year in 2014 has been a roaring success, and appears to have generated some very solid interest in organic wine. In September, NASAA attended the Winestate Wine of the Year tasting, and was inundated by punters wanting to try the Pig in the House Cabernet Sauvignon, as well as other organic wines from NASAA clients like Temple Bruer, Paxton, Lark Hill and Findley Estate.

We will continue to support this interest, and to provide opportunities wherever possible. NASAA will be supporting the Organic Wine of the Year again in 2015 and encourage all NASAA Certified Organic Wineries to submit their wines for judging.
In March 2014, NASAA signed a world first initiative with Chinese organic certifier CHC allowing NASAA based, CHC trained and approved inspectors to certify Australian products to Chinese Organic Regulations for direct export to China. Since then, NASAA and CHC have been working together and a number of important documents have been translated from Chinese into English, including the CHC Initial Application Forms, and the Organic Management / Handling Plans for Producers, Processors, and Manufacturers. The English versions of these documents were translated and forwarded to more than 50 Certified Operators in Australia.

In August 2014, NASAA Certified Organic Inspector, Wenpeng You was approved to undertake organic inspections for China within Australia for all organic categories, covering Plant Production, Processing, Animal Breeding and Aquaculture. Wenpeng is one of only a handful of inspectors who are approved to inspect to all four organic categories.

NASAA Certified Operators can now have all their certifications including NASAA, NOP, JAS, Chinese and Korean completed in one annual inspection by one inspector, providing significant savings in time, logistics and expenses.

On Thursday 21 August, Wenpeng completed his first inspection of an Australian based, NASAA Certified Organic producer, Temple Bruer Winery at Milang in South Australia. The official certifications should be completed within 30 – 40 days of the inspection, so the first product should be eligible to be exported to China by mid to late October.

If the number of applications warrant, we will send further Australian based, NASAA employed inspectors to Beijing for comprehensive training to the Chinese Organic regulation.

In September, NASAA signed an agreement with global logistics company 20Cube Logistics, to provide total transparency for the organic supply chain. This is NASAA’s next step in boosting domestic and export opportunities for Australian organic produce, particularly in China.

The deal with 20cube Logistics means that NASAA now has the whole supply chain covered, to offer organic producers complete product integrity from the paddock to the retailer’s shelf.

NASAA can now offer distribution and outlets in China via our partnerships with CHC and the Chinese Chamber of International Commerce, and can also deliver real supply chain visibility with 20Cube Logistics, whose employees completed the same certification course as NASAA inspectors back in August 2014.

20Cube Logistics is a 21st Century, technology enabled logistics company with specific expertise in global biosecurity requirements and specialises in the most dynamic and challenging parts of the world being the emerging markets. It is headquartered in Singapore and works with some of the largest Companies in Australia, China, Asia, Brazil, Africa and the USA.

20cube Australia employs 52 staff and has offices in Brisbane, Sydney, Melbourne and Perth. Globally, the company employs 450 staff across 20 offices in the US, Asia, Europe, Africa, and Brazil with agents in more than 100 countries.
News from Nepal

NASAA has a large following in Nepal, with several certified organic operators. Maheswar Ghimire gives us the latest in an article translation...

Reporter: Rasriya Samachar Samiti-National News Committee

Organic Certification is implemented by NASAA and IMO through the inspection process at growers fields to determine whether production is free from chemical fertilisers and pesticides. The Himalayan Shangrila Tea Producer (HSTP) in Sakhejung Ilam and Gorkha Tea Estate in Suryodaya Municipality initiated their Organic Certification through the inspection of each individual plot of farmers.

The eastern part of Ilam is covered by Gorkha tea Estate and the Western part is under Himalayan Shangrila which is Certified Organic by NASAA Australia. Within the western part of Ilam Shantidanda, Tijure, Phakphok, Triyuga, Sakhejung, High hill, Green Hill, Hariyali Jaibik of mai Pokhari groups are under Organic Certification covering 492 farmer families.

HSTP noted that tea certified organic by NASAA can be exported to any country in the world without problem. After 2015, HSTP plans to process only organic tea, because certified organic tea is easier to sell in the global market.

Recently, inspections were completed by NASA Inspector, Maheswar Ghimire, in each cluster of grower groups where HSTP is collecting organic tea leaves. In addition, the inspector must inspect the processing unit and all details of records including the internal control system established by HSTP at the growers level.

Organic green leaf (tea) is purchased by HSTP at higher prices than conventional tea. The difference of price is about NRs 20/- Nepalese organic tea is being exported to Germany, Russia and Ukraine. It has been realised that Organic Tea Production is helpful for farmers as well Processor/Factory.

Farmers are interested to convert to organic gradually. Mr. Govinda Dahal, Chairperson, Central Tea Cooperative Union noted that “additional farmer groups may go organic in the days to come and seek certification from a body like NASAA.” Although organic production seems low, it is compensated for by price and health benefits to the farmer as well as soil and surrounding.

Organic Inspector, Nepal
Maheswar Ghimire

NASAA AGM in WA

The 2014 NASAA AGM will take place on Friday November 14th at the Lighthouse hotel in Bunbury, WA. We are excited to be reconnecting with as many WA operators and members as possible, and are planning a full day of speakers, lunch, the AGM itself and an optional dinner.

Some of the program on the day will be dedicated to organic management practices, and there will be a more detailed announcement soon.

We are looking for sponsors for the day with some excellent opportunities for exposure. Please contact Peter Hastie for more information. Following on from the AGM, NASAA will be starting to conduct some industry workshops in every state of Australia, starting in WA around organic management in broadacre cattle and grain farming.

OFA Spring Brunch

NASAA co-sponsored the Organic Federation of Australia’s “Slightly Sprung Business Brunch” on October 7th in Adelaide, as part of National Organic Week. Guest speaker at the Brunch event was Laura McBain, CEO of NASA client, Bellamy’s. The topic for discussion was: “Exporting for the highest return: why certified organic and non-GM is critical”.

Other speakers included OFA Chairman, Adam Willson, OFA board member, Simone Tully, NASAA General Manager, Ben Copeman and Cecile Plantade from CORE, who organise the National Organic Week every year.
FOR SALE

Two Dragons

278 Braeside Road Finniss, SA
Organic Vineyard and Farm - $698k

Contact owner Shirley Smith (0427 186593)

• 18.9ha [47 ac] fully NASAA certified
• Income producing 6.2ha vineyard and Dorper sheep
• Rotational grazing in 7 paddocks with water points; excellent yards and handling facilities
• New bore, 10ML Water License; river frontage and access
• North facing 3-4 bedroom custom designed house; modern kitchen; 3 metre verandahs all around
• Hybrid wind and solar energy system for house
• 16 years of revegation and conservation
• 15km from Beaches, Lakes and the Murray River
• 75 km from Adelaide
• Option to lease certified paddock in adjoining property
• Good schools and internet services

18th IFOAM Congress
13-15 October 2014, Istanbul, Turkey

The IFOAM Organic World Congress (OWC) occurs every three years. It is the largest and most important meeting of the organic sector. NASAA Chairman, Jan Denham, and General Manager, Ben Copeman will be attending. Visit the Congress website at:

www.owc2014.org

New Online Organic Store

Marqet is a dedicated online marketplace that allows you to buy directly from organic farmers, producers and brands in one convenient place.

Free for both buyers and sellers to use, Marqet is currently raising funds via crowdfunding to help achieve its first goal. Check out their pozible site at:

www.pozible.com/project/186432

Advertise with NASAA

NASAA is always looking for ways to help its operators and members to grow their businesses and brands, and to grow the NASAA brand with them through co-promotion and the prominence of the NASAA label.

Attached with this newsletter is a copy of the new NASAA Sponsors and Advertisers Kit, which outlines the advertising opportunities and rates for our publications, communications and events for 2015.

As well as providing affordable advertising options for our quarterly and annual publications, we can offer packages which include both online promotion and a presence at NASAA events throughout the year. Our rates start at just $250 - a great option if you are selling your property.

For more information, or to book your advertising package, contact Stuart Baulk - Stuart.Baulk@nasaa.com.au

For Sale

NASAA Gate Signs

We now have available some 600 X 600 mm gate signs for certified organic operators in both Domestic and Certified Organic Programs. If you already have one of the signs - please send us a picture so that we can share it!

For more information and to order the signs, please contact Sachin Ayachit:
08 8370 8455
Sachin.Ayachit@nasaa.com.au
Oak Valley

$440,000

360ha Country Weekender or Sustainable Farming

Just 30 minutes from Wagga Wagga, near schools and public transport, and in close proximity to the NSW ski fields, Oak Valley is truly a rare offering. Nestled in rolling hills, this property presents potential for a grazing outfit, an organic meat producer, a horse stud or a magnificent homestead to pass down to your children and grand children.

The options are only outweighed by its staggering beauty and sweeping vistas to the distant ranges. Currently there is secure stock water, a spring fed creek, yards, some shedding, and power through the property. You can protect key threatened species including critically endangered box gum grassy woodland and birds like the diamond firetail (pictured) and superb parrot. Oak Valley is also part of the Great Eastern Ranges Connectivity Corridor.

Contact: Adam Dawson
0448 801 391
adam@nct.org.au

Wamnawong Farm

$225,000

265ha Country escape near the Sapphire Coast

Wamnawong Farm combines the best of both worlds. Only 8kms to the local Wyndham village markets and café, and a little over 30 minutes from the picturesque sea side town of Merimbula, it is an easy drive to the pristine waters of the Sapphire Coast.

There is full frontage to a sealed council road with easy all weather 2WD access. There is potential to build two sustainable houses (STCA) off the grid owing to the size of the property. It will suit someone wanting to create a small sustainable farm in organics or permaculture.

Wamnawong Farm has natural ephemeral water courses that traverse the property. It provides habitat for Spotted-tailed Quoll, Yellow-bellied Glider, Greater Broad-nosed Bat, Eastern False Pipistrelle, Masked Owl, Sooty Owl and Gang-gang Cockatoo, and is home to the Koala and Scarlet Robin.

Contact: Adam Dawson
0448 801 391
adam@nct.org.au

The Nature Conservation Trust of NSW is a not-for-profit business committed to private land conservation. By combining the best science available and sound commercial skills we are protecting our special places, forever. All Nature Conservation Trust properties are sold with a conservation agreement in place.

1300 330 717 www.nct.org.au
What is CERTIFIED ORGANIC

Many products claim to be natural, organic or additive and pesticide free. What does it all really mean?

The only way to be 100% sure that products are organic, is to look for Certified Organic by an approved certifier like NASAA.

Certified Organic means that under the Australian Consumer and Competition Act, the product must be independently audited and verified by a third party certifier accredited by the Department of Agriculture, such as NASAA Certified Organic. These products must comply with strict organic standards.

Certified Organic producers are required to undergo a 3-year conversion process to ensure that non-organic, industrialised farming methods and inputs are phased out, and operation is managed in compliance with the standards on an ongoing basis.

Certified Organic products do not contain:
• GMOs - organic standards prohibit their use
• Hormonal growth promotants or synthetic additives
• Chemical herbicides, fungicides or insecticides
• Synthetic fertilisers.

Certified Organic production is also required to consider social justice and animal welfare issues, biodiversity and the revegetation of the land to ensure long term sustainability.

Certified Organic products carry a certification logo and certification number. This is your assurance that there is a third party certification of the integrity of every step of the production process, from paddock to plate.

Products may be fully imported but carry a label that implies they are an Australian certified organic product. These products are only packaged in Australia and the ingredients may not necessarily be certified to the Australian Standard. Please carefully read all labels. Products carrying the NASAA Certified Organic label are confusion free.

Know where your food comes from - ALWAYS READ THE LABEL CAREFULLY

NASAA is prepared to take legal action to protect its integrity, certification process and brand against any business falsely claiming to be certified organic.

Truth in Labelling brought to you by:

NASAA action against Kings Court Vineyards

Fraudulent conduct
1. In early 2014, NASAA was alerted by a number of organic wholesalers to the fact that there was a Victorian grower trading as Kings Court Vineyards claiming to be certified organic by NASAA.
2. NASAA had never certified Kings Court Vineyards.

Court proceedings
3. On 6 June 2014, NASAA commenced legal proceedings in the Federal Court of Australia against the operators of Kings Court Vineyards, Zeno Ayhan and Duran Ayhan.
4. By documents filed with the Federal Court of Australia, NASAA alleged that Kings Court Vineyards had breached the federal Australian Consumer and Competition Act, the product must be independently audited and verified by a third party certifier accredited by the Department of Agriculture, such as NASAA Certified Organic. These products must comply with strict organic standards.

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Truth in Labelling brought to you by:

NASAA Ltd
PO BOX 768, Stirling, SA 5152
Tel: +61 8 8370 8455
Fax: +61 8 8370 8381

www.nasaa.com.au

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