



### **WAOC President's Report 2019.**

With us starting a new Board structure in 2019, we reviewed all of our practices and activities in an effort to identify real goals and future directions for our members and the industry. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will be with us throughout this coming year but should offer us with greater opportunities to engage across the industry via social media and digital information. These have been slow to build in 2019 as we have been bringing the new Board into operation.

We continue to review our Constitution in order that we keep current as an industry body representing WA olive growers and producers as well as businesses involved in the olive industry. Please note the directions we see Olives WA moving and will value your feedback on the Constitution.

We revised our fee structure as we felt that it would best suit the range of our membership with a single structure that combines our members into an industry. We believe that we can cater to the needs of big producers as well as the smaller, hobby growers. Although this has done nothing for gaining members, it seems to have raised the awareness of value for money paid in these fees. This coming year will need a stronger focus on both of these aspects and welcome your input.

The 2019, the WA EVOO Competition ran well and was well patronised by growers across Australia and the local industry. There were some big extra virgin olive oils presented and awarded high points. The Board accessed some very innovative sponsorship deals which we will pursue again in the 2020 competition. A noteworthy sponsorship deal was brokered that would offer Best of Show prize winners of commercial volume with access to a large retail chain.

Unfortunately, Mark Westera could no longer manage the challenges of competing time demands in his very busy, and getting busier, life. We are looking for a replacement on the Board. To date no one has offered a nomination and we are still inviting nominations. The Board will welcome anyone interested to attend our quarterly Board meetings as a guest, see the work we do and identify aspects in which they can contribute to the building of our industry and its wide range of growers.

Our financial status is solid. We can't afford an Executive Officer until our membership stabilises. This is a Catch 22 situation as the Executive Officer was also our primary information and communications person. Taryn Port has accepted the role of Secretary to the Board and this may well become an aspect of her involvement.

We are rebuilding close ties with DPIRD as they undergo the structural changes of incorporating DAFWA into their organisation. We welcome Alec McCarthy as an ex officio member of the Board and a link between the state government and the state olive industry. We anticipate the links with our horticultural tertiary studies connections at Murdoch University and our growers along with DPIRD will become another feature of Olives WA.

We are building a sense of the markets open to the WA olive industry – the Asian market allows us to establish higher prices to offset the higher costs and this is being investigated by the Board.

We are still seeing a lot of change as growers retire and we see new faces entering the industry. We have a great future and really do want these new growers to engage with current growers in order for transfer of the values that have been established of healthfulness, effective practices, continued high quality products and growth. We need your input to ensure Olives WA is relevant and effective.

Steve Milton