

## **Exec Report to HGANZ AGM 18 June 2025**

Good evening everyone. My name is Christine Robinson and I was hired two years ago to work part-time with the HGANZ Committee. I have an old PhD in Plant Pathology, which is considered obsolete in scientific circles, but science is my first love, and I take great pleasure in digging into the research.

As Executive to the HGANZ, I have two main functions, administrative and scientific/technical.

In the last year I have done all the basic functions of administration, organising meetings, taking Minutes and preparing them. I helped organise the Field Days in Alexandra and Cromwell under Rose McDermott's guiding hand.

I have produced three Newsletters, and the fourth will go out after this AGM.

One of my projects was to produce a Newsletter Index. I was tired of having to look through every Newsletter, so I set about cataloging all Newsletters, by type of entry, which makes searching for information much easier. This will be on the Website which I will talk about later.

Recently I completed the email-check for members. While some members chose to retire from the HGANZ, we did find one member who had our emails going to junkmail, one member updated their email address and seven needed extra attention to activate their account.

On the technical side, I undertook the Harvest Survey 2024. This involved creating the survey questions and canvassing members for their priorities for research that will improve their orchards. The results are summarised and ready to be sent out to members. It is clear that the yield from Whiteheart remains disappointing.

The search was on for grant money to fund yield improvement research. This was the focus for collating information on the various funding bodies and understanding the aims and criteria of each funding source. The Government changed the goal posts part way through and there is now a large reduction to the amount of funding available to the industry. Smaller amounts are available from various organisations, such as the MG Charitable Trust, NZTCA and Horticulture. It is a matter of choosing the project to fit the goal of the institution.

Scholarships and grants to support a potential student (who would study under Dr Clive Kaiser at Lincoln University) were also investigated. There are many uncertainties at this point, but we can apply for small amounts to support him and his research.

I have created a framework for the Website Refresh planned for the HGANZ website. The new Website has two aims:

1. A public page, designed to extoll and promote the virtues of hazelnuts to members of the public, with an emphasis on health aspects. Walnuts have it, and we want it too [good press about their health benefits].

2. A members-only page, with an improved layout. This is where the Newsletter Index will be, so if one wants to view any or all Field Days reports, or items that were advertised for sale, this is all in one place.

I created an Industry Fact Sheet, containing all the basic information we have on the industry in New Zealand, with graphs of exports and imports. The key sticking point is estimating what tonnage of hazelnuts New Zealand produces each year, what it is worth, and what it could be worth, particularly with some good research into improving yields in the Whiteheart cultivar.

As usual there are more irons in the fire, such as the search for more resources for members, getting the Facebook site up and running again, and seeking out practical experiments for pruning and other yield-enhancing trials.

I welcome any comments, suggestions and advice.

Thank you.

**Documents:**

Industry Fact Sheet (draft)

Harvest Survey 2024 - appears separately in Newsletter

Newsletter Index

Website Framework (draft)

Grant Information