

News Leaf Report 2009 AGM.

The Financial year of 2008 saw a healthier outcome for *News Leaf*, but it still realised a small loss when all expenses were taken into account. Membership of the organisation at the end of December was still sitting at approximately the same level with figures indicating a drop off of existing membership of around 393 had been balanced by new members coming in. The split of Farm and Garden membership had remained somewhat the same. The number of *News Leafs* going out therefore remained static.

While gardeners are enthused by *News Leaf* content, I feel there could be more to address the farming sector and those areas further afield than the Eastern states. Keeping this balance of content is an important aspect of the continuing success of *News Leaf*.

It is also important to have a diverse range of voices as part of *News Leaf* content. To this end I am now working on and have approached other writers to contribute to aspects of *News Leaf* on a regular basis. I hope to have some of these writers on board for the Spring 2009 edition. To supplement this it is always good to get the personal accounts of individual farmers and gardeners. These personal accounts are instrumental in helping others with their understanding of Biodynamics, help to encourage those starting out and also help create a dialogue between members. This dialogue is important in assessing the needs of members and the direction of content for *News Leaf*.

As part of the expansion of *News Leaf* and the need to move into a healthier economic situation we are also looking at the possibility of re-formatting *News Leaf* into a standard A4 size to facilitate a wider distribution through retail outlets. As part of the development of *News Leaf* whilst I have been editor I have worked on bring the content into a form which would be more appropriate for this purpose. I have tried to introduce a more accountable content by requiring basic guidelines found in any publication be also adhered to in *News Leaf*. These are basic premises of publication and include; acknowledgement of source materials, acknowledgement of images and requirements that those submitting articles acquire permission to reprint images etc. that they may include in their articles. By adhering to these basic premises of publication we are able to raise the standard of content and gain trust and respect. This is particularly important if we wish to move into a more commercial distribution at some time in the future. A wider distribution base may also help to draw in a wider base of advertisers to help further boost the income of *News Leaf*.

I would like to acknowledge the work of the *News Leaf* reference group, Margaret Bruvel, Anton Van Klopper and Maaike Steiner, for their contributions and assessment of *News Leaf* content and look forward to my role in the continuing development of a journal which serves the needs of our membership and expands the knowledge of Biodynamics into the wide community. As part of this I would once again like to encourage contributions from the membership in the way of letters, articles or any other snippets of information that other readers may find helpful to facilitate a diverse range of material in the journal.

Anne Tillett, *News Leaf* Editor.