



## Launch of new Industry Advisory Council

It has been an exciting couple of weeks for the member services team of Australian Organic with endorsement by members of its new structure on November 17. Currently, the group is putting the finishing touches to a newly constituted Organic Member Advisory Council (OMAC), a council recommended in the recently received report on how the industry can best move forward to harmonise as one voice to government.

“At present, we don’t represent the whole of industry and we recognise that this is a process that will require the correct structure and stakeholder support to happen”, said Ms. Emily Arnold, General Manager of Australian Organic.

OMAC will help assist AOL in providing consultation and review on important issues affecting organic businesses in the months and years ahead. Initially, the council will review and address two major challenges that need strategic clarity which has been raised by industry stakeholders. The first will focus on the review of Australian Organic’s policies now that a restructure is taking place and how this will help position AOL to effectively service and support the industry as a whole.

The second will be a review of regulations and export orders that are in place for the organic industry. Currently, there is a risk these may be fully removed and not replaced before 2020. The industry has expressed their need for one standard and to be unified during the Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) process to ensure best legislative outcomes. AOL currently engages in lobbying for domestic legislation and ACCC action, but this will become a key focus for the group. “Ultimately, our goal is to work towards a harmonised voice from industry to government for all matters of concern to the industry”, said Ms Arnold.

This member council will commence meetings in the coming months, complimenting Roadshows that will roll out through 2018, enabling industry members to feed into policies and programs of interest to them, and to ensure Australian Organic remains aligned with, and representing the broad views of the organic industry.

Australian Organic is keen to continue its work to support and harmonise the industry on the backend of work already done by OISCC. The organic industry is diverse and each sector faces its own challenges, and the best way to overcome these challenges is through unification and harmonisation. Australian Organic has been a strong, long-standing supporter of National Standard Certified Products and this new structure will position them to better service and legislate the certified product market.

Regards,

Emily Arnold

General Manager, Australian Organic Ltd