

From the chief executive officer

Thanks Andy: we're in good shape for the challenges ahead

This issue of *Australian Organic Journal* bids a very fond farewell to the legendary Dr Andrew Monk. During his tenure as chief executive of BFA, Andy has made a truly superb contribution.

Under Andrew's leadership, BFA has risen to become the leading industry organisation in Australia and the value and integrity of the 'bud logo' are stronger than ever. He has built up an industry-leading team of skilled and dedicated staff and through wise and well-executed strategy has ideally positioned BFA for future success.

By any measure, Andrew's contribution and achievements have been outstanding.

On behalf of everyone at BFA and ACO we thank you Andy for your wonderful service, leadership and dedication. We wish you and your family all the best for future endeavours and look forward to your continuing contribution as chair of the organic standards committee.

I look forward to working diligently and smartly with my colleagues at BFA and ACO to continue Andy's commitment and service to members and clients. I trust my experiences in senior management in conventional agribusiness will stand me in good stead. Indeed, many of the issues raised in this edition of the journal were also issues of prominent concern in my immediately previous role as manager of the Peanut Company of Australia's international business and it is interesting the varied debate they are creating.

Our main theme in this edition on developments in the retail sector is a case in point. In a global context, the retail sector of the agri-food market is of growing influence on all components of the production/supply chain. I witnessed the critical role that retail markets played on competition dynamics in agri-food sales in the EU and had to personally manage challenges and opportunities arising from the dominant influence supermarkets extended to prices paid to Australian primary producers. Competition among retail chains is extremely intense in the EU and, although to date in

Australia we have arguably had a more duopolistic scenario, there is evidence that this might be changing.

So it is indeed interesting to hear of the plans of Macro Wholefoods and to consider the rising challenges and opportunities for the Australian organic industry. It's also interesting to be involved in the debate related to the introduction of a 'chain' of organic retail outlets and to see advocates of traditional organic philosophy grapple with the predicaments of a changing industry.

Whatever your side of the debate is and whatever part of the production/supply chain you participate in, I'm sure you will find the content of this edition of *Australian Organic Journal* both contemporary and informative.

Enjoy! ■



About the author

Paul Dargush, the recently appointed chief executive officer of Biological Farmers of Australia, comes from a farming background.

Before joining BFA Paul was manager of the Peanut Company of Australia's international business. He previously worked for Japanese trading giant Itochu Corporation and has extensive knowledge of international regulations as they pertain to organic and quality foods. He also has significant experience in people and financial management.

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