

**Market Gardeners Limited**

**2020**

# **DIRECTOR ELECTION**

Included in this booklet are the profiles of the five people standing for election together with the MG Board Capability Framework, which candidates have been asked to assess themselves against and comment on the skills that they will bring to the MG Board table.



# Contents

Election Information 3

MG Board Capability Framework 4

## Candidate Profiles

Diana Baird 6-7

Dylan Barrett 8-9

Frans de Jong 10-11

Robin Oakley 12-13

Mark O'Connor 14-15

*Disclaimer: The following profile statements were supplied by the candidates. Market Gardeners Limited and the Returning Officer accept no responsibility for the content or accuracy contained therein.*

## About this election

Market Gardeners Limited (MG) has engaged electionz.com, an independent election management company, to manage the electronic voting for the 2020 Annual Meeting.

Only Shareholders who are Current Producers are eligible to vote at the 2020 Annual Meeting and Election of Directors.

No voting paper will be posted to you, unless you request a printed copy.

## How to vote

Shareholders who are Current Producers are able to vote online prior to the 2020 Annual Meeting on 24 November 2020 to be held at the Napier Conference Centre, 48 Marine Parade, Napier.

Shareholders can vote for one or two candidates to be a Director on the MG Marketing Board. Voting is optional, but voting Shareholders are required to vote for either one or two candidates.

## Election voting Period

Voting must be completed 48 hours before the start of the 2020 Annual Meeting.

Voting Opens: Friday, 16 October 2020 at 12.01am

Voting Closes: Sunday, 22 November 2020 at 5:00pm

## Online Voting

1. Using your internet browser, navigate to the electionz.com voting website: [www.electionz.com/MGM2020](http://www.electionz.com/MGM2020).
2. Enter your PIN number and PASSWORD to log in to the voting portal. This was sent in a separate letter.
3. Follow the instructions provided to vote for either one or two candidates you wish to be elected.

For assistance with logging into the site or if you wish to receive printed a postal vote form, please call the free phone election helpline on 0800 666 040.

## Candidates

Five nominees have put themselves forward for two vacant positions. Take the time to read the profiles which have been provided by each candidate.

## Market Gardeners Limited trading as MG Marketing (MG)

### Capability framework

MG is a grower co-operative and as such it is primarily governed by grower directors who are appointed by the shareholders. Special Directors are also able to be appointed by the Board.

Under MG's constitution there are a number of requirements around the appointment of a Director which, amongst other things, primarily relate to the Director being a Current Producer. In addition, Shareholder appointed Directors must retire by rotation every three years and a majority must be Current Producers.

The Board acknowledges and confirms the Shareholders rights to appoint the Directors in accordance with the constitution. In doing so it is understood that such appointees will come to MG with a background in growing, running such businesses and other skills / abilities.

Whilst recognising the individual skills, strengths and weaknesses of those appointed as Directors, the Company and Board as a whole has a desire that there is a wide range of capabilities, competency, diversity and skills around the Board table to meet the company's needs.

Diversity can be achieved by a number of means and covers many elements - MG is looking to achieve a diversity of thought, experience and an appropriate skill base / capabilities around the board table in the context of those that the shareholders elect to the Board.

As such the Board has not set prescriptive rules for matters such as product knowledge, geography, cooperative knowledge, tenure, gender, ethnicity or other diversities but is working within the generic principle - that in order to optimise the Board capabilities, gaps will be filled through the appointment of special directors and through tailored training and development of all directors.

The desired core capabilities for the MG Board are as detailed in the table below which will be considered in the context of the Institute of Directors "Four Pillars of Governance Best Practice – key competencies for non-executive directors".

This framework forms part of and is to be read in conjunction with the Board Charter (which can be found on MG's website [www.mgmarketing.co.nz](http://www.mgmarketing.co.nz)).

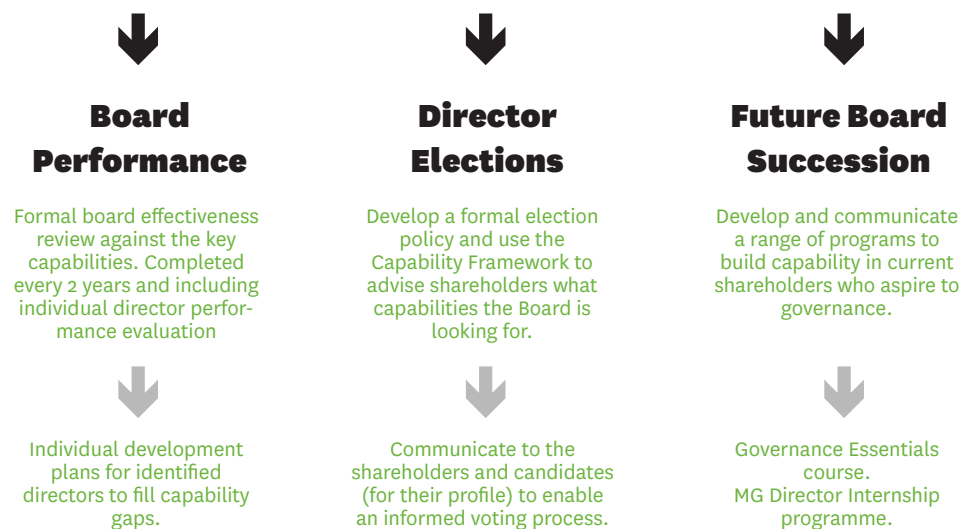
Capability Area	Capability Definition
Governance Experience	Experience and knowledge in governing a significant commercial entity. Including an understanding of key aspects of the governance processes, boardroom dynamics, decision-making, liability and shareholder representation.
Governance Aptitude	Potential for operating as an effective director including logical thought processes / reasoning, a decision making approach, interpersonal skills and an ability to deal with a range of communication styles, personality traits, and relevant business expertise in order to contribute to board discussions, give direction to and mentor management.
Business Strategy and Transformation	The development, planning and execution of a wide range of strategies to meet specific organisational objectives. Includes the development of a long-term strategy framework and business transformation including people and culture change.

Finance/Commercial	An organisation's processes, procedures, controls, and records for the conduct and management of all aspects of financial transactions, events, and situations. This may include financial planning and analysis, risk, audit, tax, accounts payable, accounts receivable, general ledger and accounting. Involves direct professional applications of knowledge of regulations, related principles and tactics to the conduct of the organisation's commercial affairs. This may include compliance, contracts, legal counselling, insurance / risk management and / or real estate / property transactions.
Grower Operations	Experience in horticultural farm systems and management, farm ownership (from hands on hard work to strong leadership skills), managing financial and physical short and long-term farm performance, maximising sustainable productivity and profitability.  Expertise in shaping profitable and sustainable agricultural economics including global and local markets, drivers of supply and demand, and commodity prices. Knowledge and appreciation of the economics of various agri business models including cooperatives.
Sales and Trading (domestic and international)	This area involves driving successful sales and trading both on a domestic and an international basis - sales capability development, sales analytics and delivering customer solutions. It involves developing, maintaining, and exploiting relationships with prospective and existing buyers and users to stimulate and control demand and terms of sale for products or services of the organization.
Customer and Consumer Insight	Involves processes and procedures for fulfilling customer needs related to the purchase of goods and services, from placement of order through to delivery and / or after sale usage. Understanding of links between customer service, sales, supply chain / logistics, and processing.
Supply Chain	Involves understanding the dynamics of supply chain management with an emphasis on consumer products including perishables and the cool chain.
Supplier and Shareholder Relations	Expertise in protecting, maintaining, and enhancing an organisation's reputation and interests amongst shareholders and suppliers by communication and by providing an interface for the organisation with various individuals and relevant industry / governmental bodies.

*In addition to the above, the Board will, from time to time on an as required basis, look for other skills such as: technology, Government / Industry relationships, Mergers and Acquisitions etc.*

## MG Board Capability Framework

Key capabilities which are essential for best practice governance on the board of MG



# Diana E Baird BCom MBA MInstD

[www.dianasfruit.co.nz](http://www.dianasfruit.co.nz) <https://nz.linkedin.com/pub/diana-baird/13/541/864>

*Passionate about MG's community: caring for all it represents,  
and its opportunities for growth.*

**It would be an honour to serve you as a director.**



## Capability Definition

### Governance Experience

- A current Member of the Institute of Directors
- Convened financial management governance for the Presbyterian Church of Aotearoa NZ (PCANZ): as a trustee governing a multi-billion dollar “not for profit”
- Board member of the government funded Ruapehu Rural Educations Access Programme (for learners who have slipped through the cracks), past deputy chair
- Previously PressGo/Presbyterian Foundation board: funding/mentoring diverse growth projects
- Wools of NZ grower advisor
- Treasurer (and preaching elder) of my local church

The rhythm of governance routines might be similar, but dynamics/tikanga and stakeholders vary!

### Governance Aptitude

I just love working with teams to build and execute great strategy, both with my family and in governance. The process of writing (and reviewing others'!) board papers, and then seeing my skills and contributions acknowledged, honed and expanded upon at meetings is enormously satisfying.

A plethora of community committee work led me to the Horticultural Industry Leadership programme. German skills have been useful with international staff.

Living so far from other growers means I don't have a “local” grower associations but strive to build great networks at conferences and Summergreen. Huge respect for the margin trader.

I have strong, longstanding and respectful relationships across the MG's executive team.

Governance experience has provided valuable experience evaluating and managing risk, unravelling complex audit requirements and dealing with sticky agency issues. Not afraid to ask tough questions.

### Business Strategy and Transformation

My “Diana's Fruit” internationally branded Peacharines created a PLU category across both supermarkets.

Over the last 30 years we have developed a diverse integrated agri-business company from a series of intergenerational family partnerships, to integrate orcharding, field crops, sheep and beef, and forestry.

Robust, analytical reasoning from wide ranging, evidence-based perspectives underpins my decision making. I retain links to the IT industry: AI, data availability, and cyber-security need active governance too, and be regarded as assets not expenses. Social media also.

**Finance/Commercial**

Otago University Bachelor of Commerce (IT), Massey University Master of Business Administration.

Further post-graduate study of Cooperatives include evaluating international outcomes of evolving legal and financial structures on governance: highly relevant to MG's own capital structure review.

Early in my career I was involved in financial planning with global computer giant IBM (NZ) Ltd.

PCANZ governance duties included presentation, analysis and signoff of budgets and audited PBE accounts. I chaired the team implementing their Statement of Investment Policies and Objectives, including evaluating financial institution attributes. The same sub-committee responded to a major overhaul of accounting standards and their application by the Charities Commission's which led to ongoing consolidation of 400+ entities. Some experience in a contentious urban property transaction.

**Grower Operations Experience**

We grew our horticulture enterprise from a bare paddock packing out of a double garage. As community demographics morphed I adapted people processes which grew to employing 50+ annually.

Rigorous science has been key: I have initiated and participated in numerous on-farm Sustainable Farming Fund research programmes including brassicas and legumes. Our own current "regenerative" and soil microbiology technology trials show promising results. We continue to invest in emerging robot-ready plantings of MG's IP varieties.

Fairview has won multiple Ballance Farm Environment awards for orchard cropping, innovation, water use and nutrient management. Early adopters of domestic NZGAP and Farm Environment plans, we all have concerns about the current direction of associated regulation.

I have enjoyed time at MG's Cairns banana production and visited UFG auctions.

**Sales and Trading**

Direct involvement in building in-market export relationships for wool, regrettably only resulted in a short export experience! Divesting is a difficult experiential lesson. Niche fruit exporting has been sporadic.

Strong professional MGs partnerships have led to annual in-market retail customer visits.

**Customer and Consumer Insight**

Intrinsic to my Massey role is interface with the NZ primary industry's diverse economic and supply chain challenges: keeps me up to date on local and international food consumption and marketing trends too.

To better understand customers and gain marketing insights into adding value, I travelled China extensively on study tours with the MBA program and the Food & Agribusiness Marketing Experience.

**Supply Chain**

I lecture this undergraduate paper part-time at Massey University in addition to my own value/supply (and cool) chain experiences with fresh produce. As a Wools of NZ grower advisor, NZ attempts to influence "ticket clipping" are frustrating, illustrating the need for strong alliances and robust contracts.

**Supplier and Shareholder Relations**

It has been a privilege meeting so many fruit and field crop growers in the last few years on their properties and at MG meetings throughout New Zealand. Some good relationships in Wellington.



# Dylan Barrett

FOCUSED & DRIVEN WITH AN AIM  
OF DELIVERING OUTSTANDING RESULTS

## Contact Me

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✉ [dylan.barrett@prpnz.nz](mailto:dylan.barrett@prpnz.nz)

## Key Attributes & Experience

- Commercial and financial acumen
- Good listener, and a strong communicator
- Enthusiastic, with high energy
- Strong leadership attributes
- Property acquisition and divestment experience
- Co-operative governance experience
- Capital restructuring experience

## Qualifications / Governance Training

- Bachelor of Business Studies (VPM)
- Member of the Institute of Directors
- Member of the Property Institute of New Zealand
- Associate Member of the New Zealand Institute of Valuers
- Kellogg's Rural Leadership Programme
- IOD Courses:
  - Governance Essentials
  - Strategy Essentials
  - Finance Essentials
  - Risk Essentials
  - Not-For Profit Governance Essentials
  - Rural Governance Essentials
  - Chairing the Board

I am a grower based in Te Puke, Bay of Plenty growing Gold3 and Hayward Green kiwifruit. I am a current grower shareholder and Director of EastPack Limited. EastPack supplies substantial volumes of kiwifruit to MG Marketing.

My involvement with the New Zealand Kiwifruit industry initially began with private orchard ownership, and then extended to further investment into larger orchards with other shareholders, most of which are situated in the Bay of Plenty region. Under Ceres Kiwifruit Management, I am heavily involved in the day to day management of orchards, all of which my wife and I have a direct ownership stake in. I hold various Directorships across a number of kiwifruit related investment entities, and I focus heavily on protecting shareholder interests and driving continued growth in a sustainable and risk averse manner.

I currently serve as a Director of EastPack Limited. EastPack is the largest Kiwifruit and Avocado post-harvest facility in New Zealand and is a co-operative business model owned by its growers. "Growers at heart" is a strong guiding principle that forms the fundamental basis of all decision making at EastPack. This guiding principle aligns closely to the underlying "Together. Stronger." philosophy at MG Marketing. I continue to be a strong supporter of a grower owned, grower controlled, and grower supplied co-operative business model.

I am currently a Director and Shareholder of PRP International Property Consultants in both Tauranga and Auckland. I continue to work as a Registered Valuer specialising in valuing income producing assets including Kiwifruit & Avocado orchards, as well as large commercial and industrial assets including Post Harvest Facilities. I have more than 10 years of professional experience across New Zealand and Australia which has equipped me with a strong skillset in financial literacy, assessing risk and exercising sound judgement. I am heavily involved in the people side of our business and lead the company's recruitment strategy as well as the personal development of our staff.

I care about my community and am actively involved in charity work. I am currently the Deputy Chairperson for Tauranga Community Housing Trust which is a large charitable organisation providing housing to people with disabilities and those in need of affordable housing.

Effective governance requires diverse thinking and skillsets, and for this reason I am confident of adding value as a Director of MG Marketing. My professional experience offers valuable expertise particularly around any future acquisition or divestment strategies for the company. I am also of a younger generation in comparison to my counterparts offering long-term board succession. A strong focus on people along with my commercial experience in other businesses and governance roles across different commercial and community sectors, provides me with the skill and experience required to serve as a Director of MG Marketing.

If I am elected to the MG Marketing board, I offer a commitment to shareholders that I will bring a high level of energy and enthusiasm, fresh and diligent thinking and a willingness to listen and understand what is important to shareholders. It is on this basis that I ask for your support at the upcoming election.

Kind Regards,

Dylan Barrett



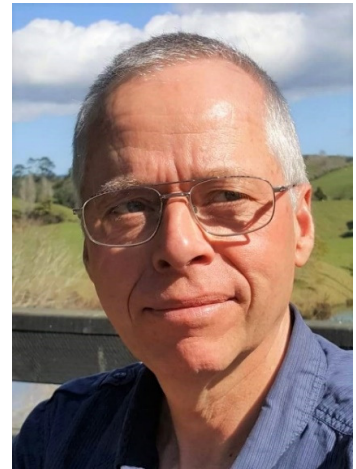
Provided below is a full and frank assessment of myself against the MG Marketing board capability requirements.

CAPABILITY AREA	CAPABILITY ASSESSMENT
<b>Governance Experience</b>	Experienced in governing a wide range of commercial entities across various sectors with a particular focus on horticulture. Recently concluded a full capital restructure of EastPack Limited alongside fellow Directors. Strong skillset in understanding shareholder expectations and protecting shareholder interests. An in-depth understanding of governance best practice and fiduciary responsibility of Directors. An active member of the Institute of Directors.
<b>Governance Aptitude</b>	Valuation experience has equipped me with a strong skillset in risk-based decision making. My entire career has essentially been focused on assessing the relative risk associated with income earning assets including various horticultural assets. Experienced in managing a wide range of client types from corporate fund managers to small and large family run growing entities. Professional experience has provided me with an ability to work constructively with a high-performance management team.
<b>Business Strategy and Transformation</b>	Have successfully established and lead company strategies to meet specific organisational objectives on behalf of shareholders. Experienced in establishing and maintaining a company culture with an understanding that company culture is lead from the top. Limited experience in Business Transformation.
<b>Finance / Commercial</b>	Strong commercial background and a high level of financial literacy. My various roles provide me with an in-depth understanding of what is required to operate a large business within an ever-increasing regulatory environment. Real estate / property transactions is a strong skillset and I believe this can add value to the MG board for any future acquisition or divestment strategies.
<b>Grower Operations</b>	Experienced in horticultural management and hands on operations. Get my hands dirty whenever possible. Under Ceres Kiwifruit Management, we consistently achieve kiwifruit production in the top quartile of industry by adopting data driven real time decision making. Our horticultural operations are heavily focused on financial metrics. In depth understanding and a strong supporter of co-operative business models. Limited horticultural growing experience outside of the kiwifruit industry.
<b>Sales and Trading</b>	Strong skillset in relationship management. Limited experience in Sales and Trading outside of my involvement with Zespri. An understanding of Zespri's global marketing strategy and what drives value back to New Zealand growers.
<b>Customer and Consumer Insight</b>	An in-depth understanding of the importance around understanding your consumer. Experienced in service delivery and ensuring customer satisfaction that drives repeat purchasing.
<b>Supply Chain</b>	A basic understanding of supply chain management as well as cool chain experience with EastPack.
<b>Supplier and Shareholder Relations</b>	Good listener; and a strong communicator. An absolute willingness to listen and understand what is important to shareholders. Highly focused on protecting shareholder interests.

## My name is Frans de Jong.

I grew up on the family dairy farm in Friesland, in the North of the Netherlands. Although I was very interested in Farming, I also had a keen interest in chemistry and biology, so was encouraged by my parents to study Analytical Chemistry. I had a fantastic career in that field, working alongside the agricultural sector, being involved in soil and plant nutrient testing for over 26 years. At the top of that career, after making my own agricultural laboratory business a success, I got the urge to get involved with farming again in the early 2000's. After quite a search, we discovered an opportunity to operate a Horticulture business in New Zealand.

Our family moved from the Netherlands to Matamata in 2003 where we purchased Southern Belle Orchard. Since then we have turned this operation into a sustainable and profitable business, partnering with MG Marketing for the local sale of our produce. We produce around 80 tons of Capsicums and Chillies in our Greenhouses and have 3000 Feijoa trees in our Orchard producing 40-60 tons for local and export markets. Our son Talbert and his partner Emily joined my wife Tineke and I in 2013, at which point we created a succession plan for them to take over the business in the near future. In 2015 we were nominated by Hill Laboratories for the highly acclaimed 'Ballance Farm environment award'. We were humbled by winning this award for the Waikato, but proud that our innovative thinking was recognised as leading the horticulture industry. Our story was picked up by 'Country Calendar' as well as 'Rural Delivery' and other media.



As the day to day running of the business falls more and more under the responsibility of the next generation, I feel it is time to contribute to the wider Horticultural Industry. From growing up in the Netherlands I believe the cooperative model for selling our products is the best and most sustainable one, as MG has proven since 1923. This is why I have put myself forward for the election of Director. During my 17 years in NZ I have worked with, and built relationships with many different industry leaders and growers. I have been involved in strategic development, industry development and governance through; the NZ Feijoa Growers Association (NZFGA), the Zeijoa Marketing company and the Waikato Farmers Market Trust. I'm passionate about bringing together growers to get the best future for the industry with fair treatment and sustainable prices for all serious growers small or large. For more details of my skills and background I refer to the CV below or: Google "Frans de Jong New Zealand"

### A: Work and achievements in New Zealand (most recent first)

- 1) **Shareholder/Director of the Zeijoa Feijoa Marketing company, Te Puke, Bay of Plenty, 2014 to Current**
  - a) Build and strengthen productive and valuable industry partnerships to drive collaboration, engagement and revenue stream development across the Feijoa Industry.
  - b) Focus the Zeijoa team on developing innovative and cutting-edge approaches at all levels with effective resource allocation (marketing and branding) and strategic planning for export markets.
  - c) Developed product quality specifications exceeding the Feijoa industry fruit quality standards.
- 2) **Member of the board of the NZ Feijoa Growers Association in 2004, with the role of President from 2014 until 2018.**
  - a) Cultivated a sustainable and collaborative oriented business culture
  - b) To lead the Feijoa Industry in orchard innovation and push progress in quality and production quantity
  - c) Lead Science projects for disease and pest prevention and shelf life with focus on extending the export reach.
- 3) **Waikato Farmers Market Board**
  - a) Involved in establishing the Waikato Farmers markets from 2006 as a participant, trustee and trust chairman
  - b) Increased (young) grower base and customer numbers over the years.
- 4) **Owner/Director Southern Belle Orchard, Hinuera, Waikato, 2003 to Current**
  - a) Focus on optimal soil and Greenhouse NFT nutrition, constantly finding and implementing latest innovations & techniques to improve quality production levels.
  - b) To stay current with market trends for optimal pricing and to capitalize on emerging opportunities focussed on export.
  - c) Followed target market research to scope out industry competition and identify advantageous trends.
  - d) Developed internal efficiency policies for quality demands (recently achieved Global GAP certification).

- e) Built and strengthened productive and valuable industry partnerships to drive collaboration, engagement and revenue stream development (Zeijoa grower/marketing collective, see first item).

## **B: Work and achievements in the Netherlands (most recent first)**

### **1) Co-Owner/Director, Agrarisch Laboratorium Noord-Nederland/ALNN B.V. – Ferwert, 1996 to 2003**

- a) Founded and established our own Agricultural Laboratory in Friesland, targeting the Northern half of the Netherlands.
- b) Established and optimized business policies to maintain consistency and high-quality standards (EN ISO/IEC 17025).
- c) Developed our very own unique and efficient LIMS ('Laboratory Information and Management System' software)
- d) Devised, deployed and monitored processes to boost long-term business success and increase quality and profit levels by implementing latest laboratory testing equipment.
- e) Recruited, hired and trained staff, worked to establish key internal functions to create a smooth operating system.
- f) Maintain tight cost controls and maximize business operational efficiency.
- g) Developed key innovation initiatives to drive and maintain substantial business growth.

### **2) General Laboratory Manager, BLGG (AgroXpertus B.V.) – Wageningen, 1990 to 1996**

- a) Leading the Laboratory of the Leeuwarden Branch.
- b) Created innovative solutions in several analysis techniques.
- c) Set up a quality assurance program including on site evaluations, internal and preparation for external audits.
- d) Was involved in a 'computer and software development committee' implementing the latest software for the BLGG laboratories in Leeuwarden and Oosterbeek (currently Wageningen).

### **3) Assistant Laboratory Manager, Bedrijfs Laboratorium Voor De Landbouw In Noord Nederland – Leeuwarden, Friesland, 07/1979 to 12/1990**

- a) Responsible for the daily operations
- b) Validation of the analysis results.
- c) Involved in the innovation of the technological and IT development in the Laboratory.

## **C: Education**

- **Bachelor of Science:** Analytical Chemistry, 1974-1977, **Laboratorium Opleiding Friesland** – Leeuwarden
- **Bachelor of Science:** Process Technology in Chemical Engineering, 1994, **Royal PBNA** – Arnhem
- Several Horticultural Industry courses and seminars in New Zealand.

<b>Capability Area</b>	<b>Capabilities (details above in work and achievements)</b>
Governance Experience	From 1996 onwards I have been running my own successful businesses, first in the Netherlands and from 2003 also in New Zealand (see above)
Governance Aptitude	Leadership comes to me naturally. I find it important to look at the bigger picture of an issue and listen to all voices in the board before forming an opinion.
Business Strategy and Transformation	Motivate the team, work hard, be a good example. Think outside the box, to be ahead of the competition. Transform into a profitable and sustainable operation while keeping a keen eye on the equity in a company.
Finance/Commercial	I have a good understanding of the importance of a healthy balance sheet, and have developed good commercial skills over the many years in business.
Grower Operations	Innovation is key to a profitable (horticultural) business. One can never rest on one's laurels. Important to have a solid succession plan for the next generation
Sales and Trading (domestic and international)	I have experienced how the domestic market works, and conclude it to be too dispersed. A strong cooperative like MG will help to lift the price point for produce in general. Internationally I have 17 years' experience with different markets and their challenges. Also, here I have made myself strong for marketing cooperation between growers.
Customer and Consumer Insight	During 15 years involvement with the Waikato Farmers Markets, I have learned a great deal about the difference between what wholesale dictates and consumers want.
Supply Chain	I find a good supply chain essential, with traceability key as part of good working quality system. Our company has recently upgraded from NZGAP to GLOBALGAP
Supplier and Shareholder Relations	I have developed a good network throughout different product groups, research facilities and individual growers. I find gaining trust through good communication essential.



## MG Director Application: Robin Oakley

With the experience of a grower and the mind of a businessman, I can help us be stronger, together.

**Contact me:**

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0272263777

[www.oakleys.co.nz](http://www.oakleys.co.nz)

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### About me

I am a fifth-generation vegetable grower in Canterbury. I am married to Shirleen and have two grown-up daughters, one of which currently works in my business. I am passionate about growing and the role we play in the nation's health. When I'm not on the farm, you could find me biking up a hill, jet-skiing around the country or jet boating up a river.

### Governance Experience

I have previously been a Director on the United Fresh and Potatoes New Zealand boards. I have successfully operated my own business for 35 years and hold the position of Managing Director for Oakley's Premium Fresh Vegetables Ltd, a company I founded in 2002.

### Governance Aptitude

In growing the business, I have developed competency in the areas of logical thought processes, decision-making, interpersonal effectiveness and an ability to manage a range of communication styles and personality traits. The expertise I have acquired through growing and operating my business means I am no stranger to contributing to a discussion, providing direction and mentoring my management team. For example, each week I run a managers meeting in which I must manage, lead and develop my people so that we can create successful outcomes in the face of market and environmental influences.

I am committed to personal development and seek external training in order to upskill with industry leaders:

- Completed the Executive Development Primary Producers Program run in conjunction with Queensland University and Rabobank
- Completed the Horticulture Executive Program run in conjunction with Monash University in Victoria
- Attended the Future Leaders in Produce Program at Deakin University
- Completed the Horticulture New Zealand Leadership Program
- Completed a Directors training program with Potatoes New Zealand
- Worked with professional business coaches for over 14 years to hone in on and develop my strategic, managerial and leadership skills

### Business Strategy & Transformation

I have demonstrated through growing my business from a one-man-band to an enterprise, which employs 45 people and operates on 450 hectares of land, the ability to develop and execute successful strategies. These have ranged from business, to sales, to people and culture.

At the strategic level, I have focused on innovation and environmental sustainability. This has been a priority for many years and most recently recognised at the 2020 Ballance Farm Environment Awards where my business picked up the Massey University Innovation Award, the Hill Laboratories Agri-Nutrients Award and the Balance Agri-Nutrients Soil Management Award.

### Finance/Commercial

I am also the CFO of Oakley's Premium Fresh Vegetables and manage all financial aspects of the business. This includes the monthly financial reporting, budget forecasting, end of year financials and tax positioning. I have developed and implemented my own financial accounting system to provide better information in order to know how each part of the business is performing. In my role, risk management is reviewed on regularly and influences the company's strategy.

I have project managed all environmental and building developments in the business. This has required extensive involvement with the regional and local council to acquire consents and comply with local authorities. I have a strong understanding of legal processes and implications, having been involved with the legal matters of the business. This includes damages and claims against other companies, short and long term leases, buying and selling of land as well as intellectual property trademarking acquisition. For example, we have had a successful outcome for a significant damages claim against a major New Zealand chemical company. Additionally, external parties have recognised the business for its commercial and financial success. For example, I am a previous winner of the Selwyn District Business of the Year

Award.

### **Grower Operations**

We work to production targets for all of our crops each season. We have a number of different growing systems by crop and select KPIs to measure and monitor performance in all key areas. I currently grow potatoes, beetroot, pumpkin, broccoli and a selection of arable break crops. I have committed time and resource into travelling around the world, building a growers network and investigating new and improved systems and grower technologies. This has involved attending events such as the Hong Kong Fruit Logistica, the Produce Marketing Association Trade Show in America and the Global Fresh Conference in the Netherlands. This has meant I can adapt and change my operation to create more sustainable environmental and financial outcomes.

I have spearheaded the company's commitment to being early adopters of new and innovative technologies, where we see a real benefit. The successful management and resulting profitability of the business has allowed me to innovate and bring in new technology. For example, we have been using GPS in tractors for over 15 years and a number of other GPS related technologies, such as yield monitoring. Additionally, I have been running moisture probes in the crops for ten years.

External parties have recognised our successful growing operations. I have been a Tasman district winner of the FMG Rural Excellence Award and a Runner up for the Lincoln University Foundation Horticulturalist of the year Award.

### **Sales & Trading**

In my company, we supply both our own brand and house brands 52 weeks of the year. This means we take ownership of having a consistent supply of product. During my time as Managing Director, I have developed a strong understanding of market expectations and created effective systems to deliver robust product forecasting information. This allows us to maximise sales opportunities with our customers.

In the domestic market, I have first-hand experience with sales as my company has supplied directly to Food Stuffs for over ten years. I have worked with them directly to set up sales programs for our potatoes and grow this category. Internationally, I have developed a new trading partnership with a company in Taiwan and exported potatoes to them. This is a tough market to break, particularly when it comes to compliance.

### **Customer & Consumer Insights**

Being a supplier of a main supermarket chain, with product that is expected to be on the shelf 52 weeks of the year, I have developed an understanding of how to meet order expectations and manage logistical requirements. Further, I have come to understand the needs of the customer, consumer and retailer alike. For example, I have developed a stringent QC process to avoid rejections from our customers.

I have internally created packaging and new branded products for market. The resulting growth and success of this brand was due to the attention to customer and consumer needs through market testing and observation. I am experienced in customer service as my business interfaces with our consumers directly when there are complaints. I have created a system, which allows us to process feedback, engage with the consumer and resolve any supply chain issues.

### **Supply chain**

As a potato category direct supplier to Foodstuffs, my business takes ownership of meeting our customers daily supply requirements through product management and logistics.

### **Supplier & Shareholder relations**

I have held roles that required me to protect, maintain and enhance an organisation's reputation and interests. This includes being a Director for United Fresh and Potatoes New Zealand for several years. I currently hold the role of Chairman of the Horticulture Canterbury Group. This has involved working directly with the Ministry for Primary Industries, of Social Development and of Business, Innovation & Employment to work on solutions to the industry's labour shortages. My business is a Recognised Seasonal Employer, meaning I have worked with Immigration New Zealand extensively and understand how to interface with them.

Further, I have been directly involved in regional resource consent hearings specific to my business, as well as obtaining numerous consents. From this, I have developed a strong understanding of how local and regional councils operate. I have also been involved with the media many times and am able to be a spokesperson for both my business and the industry. This includes working with journalists, cameramen and photographers from One News, Stuff and Business Rural.

**With the endorsement from John Clarke, former MG Board Director, I offer myself for the position of Board Director for MG so that I can represent you, the grower and shareholder, for a successful future.**

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# Mark O'Connor

Director Candidate | Market Gardeners Ltd – trading as MG Marketing  
Phone: 021 241 2361



## Personal statement

I have been a Director of MG Marketing since 2014 and am asking for your support for re-election this year.

I believe that I have the experience and commitment to take MG Marketing into the future in an everchanging, challenging industry.

With the changes around the Board table in the last few years, I bring relevant experience and skills as a 'hands on' grower, business owner and director.

I live in the Tasman District of the South Island where I was born and raised, and I am married with 4 adult children.

Alongside two of my brothers and my two sons I am actively involved in the daily management of our family owned Market Gardening business, growing produce on 180 hectares of land, part of which has been in the family for 5 generations. We employ a core team of around 50 staff which increases to over 100 in the summer season.

## Governance experience

- Managing Director - Appleby Fresh Limited – 1998 to current
- Director - Vegetables New Zealand – 2011 to current
- Director - MG Marketing – 2014 to current
- Director – Waimea Irrigators Limited - 2016 to current
- Member of the Institute of Directors
- Attended a 5-day Institute of Directors course

I am an experienced director and understand the responsibilities and processes associated with good governance.

## Governance aptitude

I have a wealth of relevant experience in being a successful and effective director, business owner/manager and Market Gardener.

I am practical, forward thinking, innovative and communicate directly - with clarity and concision.

## Business Strategy and Transformation

I have a proven track record of a high level of business strategic thinking and understand the risks of creating a profitable business. This includes strategic planning for the long-term future of my family business, stability for future generations and the success of horticulture in New Zealand.



### **Finance/Commercial**

During my time operating a successful business I have developed a good understanding of financial planning, accounting practices, compliance, and overall financial management and cashflow.

### **Grower operations**

In my 20+ years of growing fresh produce, I have taken a small business to be one of MG's larger suppliers. I work actively in the business as a Managing Director which involves day to day business financial management and operational management of health and safety, quality control, compliance, sales, employees, purchasing and much more.

### **Sales and Trading**

Over the many years managing and expanding our family business, I have developed strong sales acumen and continue to refine these skills by staying up to date with national industry and marketing trends.

### **Customer and Consumer Insights**

I believe growers and shareholders should be consistently and actively seeking to satisfy existing consumer needs while also researching new and potential niche markets, by analysing consumer data. Also improving effectiveness on customer communication to increase sales volumes.

### **Supply Chain**

I have a comprehensive understanding of supply chain management from a grower and directors' perspective.

### **Supplier and Shareholder Relations**

I feel that in the time I have been on the MG's board I have put forward a view from an active grower perspective and driven the board to be more transparent and inclusive of its growers/shareholders. If re-elected this year, I will continue to vigorously drive grower views and needs and ensure that all growers are looked after – big or small, while continuing to grow the wealth and reputation of the co-op.

Thank you for your time, please call me on 021 241 2361 for further discussion.

**Together.  
Stronger.**

[mgmarketing.co.nz](http://mgmarketing.co.nz)

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