



2023 Year in Review

A Zoom and In-Person Year

Board of Directors

▶ Elected 2023 to serve until 2025:

1. Karin Westdyk (re-elected)
2. Darcy Regalato (subsequently resigned; replaced by Dee Dee Muqtasid)
3. Jane Pinckney (subsequently resigned; replaced by Michael Richardson)
4. Marie Lou Rancharan

▶ Elected 2022 to serve until 2024:

1. Mary Loan
2. Dottie Feucht
3. John Briggs (resigned)
4. Beth Roberson (resigned)

▶ Officers

Chair: Mary Loan

Vice-Chair: Jane Pinckney (vacant after resignation)

Secretary: Dottie Feucht

Treasurer: Karin Westdyk (with assistance from Ginny Hill)



Membership

Individual - 22 paid members @ \$25

Student - 3 paid members @ \$5

Business - 2 paid members @ \$100

Honorary - 25 (past speakers)



Sponsorship

Category approved at AGM 2020

Level **Gold** = \$600

Level **Silver** = \$400

Level **Bronze** = \$200



POB Sponsors

▶ Bronze



The Belize Ag Report

(in kind ad)

▶ Bronze



(in kind hosting)



Committees

- ▶ Marketing - Karin Wesdyk
 1. Facebook page; Facebook group
 2. Membership subcommittee - **Need chair**
 3. Web Site: info on POB and resources, links
 - ▶ Speakers' Recordings
 - ▶ Tropical Garden Guide - plant per month
 - ▶ Canning Instructions - one per month



Speakers

First Saturday of each month -
3:00 - 4:30

Recorded, stored on web site

- ▶ **Jan** - John Arana, on *the retrieval of smallholder farms and home gardens*
- ▶ **Feb** - Dawn Dean, on *gardening in Belize and research on growing vanilla in PG*



Speakers (Cont'd)

- ▶ **Mar** - Philip Mai, on seed saving and homemade fertilizers
- ▶ **Apr** - Stephen Hochstetler, on organic farming and gardening
- ▶ **May** - Oscar Moralez and Yanis Murcia, on coconuts

No more speakers were scheduled after May



Committees (cont'd)

▶ Tropical Garden Grow Guide - On web site

- January: Cabbage
- February: Cherry tomatoes
- March: Cocoyams
- April: Basil
- May: Cassava
- June: Red kidney beans
- July: Purslane
- Aug: Hibiscus
- Sept: Lentils
- Oct: Chives
- Nov: Lettuce
- Dec: Plantains



Committees (cont'd)

▶ **Canning Instructions** - Stored on web site

- January: Carrots
- February: Celery
- March: Beets
- April: Corn - cold or raw pack
- May: Corn - hot pack
- June: Mangoes
- July: Tomato juice
- Aug: Grapefruit juice
- Sept: Gumbo limbo tea
- Oct: Blackberry syrup
- Nov: Blackberry jam
- Dec: Canning without a canner - Mayan style



Committees (cont'd)

► Farm Relations and Certification -
Michael Richardson (Sparkle) et al:

Farms visited/certified as pesticide-free:

1. Upe Nai, San Antonio, Cayo
2. CC Farm, near Spanish Lookout
3. Pacbitun Farm, San Antonio, Cayo
4. Oxmul Farm, San Antonio, Cayo
5. Bonanza Farm, Pooks Hill
6. Ta'Nah Farmers, San Antonio



Committees (cont'd)

- ▶ Consumer Group - Karin Westdyk
 1. List of pesticide-free produce sent out weekly
 2. Over 200 on list of consumers
 3. Consumers order from and pay farmer directly
 4. Orders picked up - Hode's and Belmopan
 5. Delivery charges



Notable Highlights

- ▶ **Activities and useful information from discussions at monthly board/member meetings:**
 - ▶ Company Register filing renewed
 - ▶ Bylaws amended to change meeting quorum from 50%+1 to 30%+1 (Article 4.4)
 - ▶ Dues can now be paid on line at Pro-OrganicBelize.org
 - ▶ Ginny Hill now a permanent resident; so she can serve in official POB capacities; she is the POB Zoom hostess
 - ▶ Monthly board meetings now scheduled as “in person” with Zoom option for those who cannot attend in person
 - ▶ Letters sent to the Ministry of Health regarding (1) the adverse effects of wearing masks and (2) the adverse effects of toxic ag chemicals, especially glyphosate, on health, especially diabetes which is on the rise in Belize.
 - ▶ Letter sent to the Ministry of Agriculture regarding the adverse effects of glyphosate on the soil and environment



Notable Highlights (cont'd)

- ▶ Letter sent to the editor of *The Amandala* commending the launch of a national nutritional policy and mentioning the correlation between pesticides and disease and the lack of pesticide residue testing in Belize
- ▶ Letters distributed to stores in Santa Elena, San Ignacio and Bullet Tree and posted on the website suggesting consideration of a special section for selling organic produce
- ▶ Event held: *Growing, Sourcing and Eating Healthy Foods* on 2 September at Central Farm:
 - 10:00: Welcome & introductions
 - 10:10: Nana Mensah: *How to plan and cultivate a simple garden; how and when to plant and grow hardy native crops*
 - 10:50: Michael (Sparkle) Richardson: *Greens - growing, recipes, health benefits*
 - 11:00: Dee Dee Muqtasid: *Beans - growing, recipes, health benefits*
 - 11:10: Mary Loan: *Underground crops - recipes, health benefits*
 - 11:20: Marie Lou Rancharan: *Above ground crops - growing, recipes, health benefits*
 - 11:30: Mary Loan: *Grains and fruit - recipes and cooking*
 - 11:50: Q & A
 - 12:00: Lunch – sample plate including greens, beans, roots w/ “cheese” sauce, dessert



Notable Highlights (cont'd)

- ▶ Booth at Farmers/Artisans Market at Trey's Barn and Grill in December; sold seedlings, plants, seeds, books, soap nuts.
- ▶ Christmas Party at The Bluffs with guest speaker, Laurie Skinner, from MO: *Stand Up and Grow* - using modified roof gutters hanging from railings, etc.



Thank You

Questions?