

Chairman's Message



Dr. Dwight E. Robinson

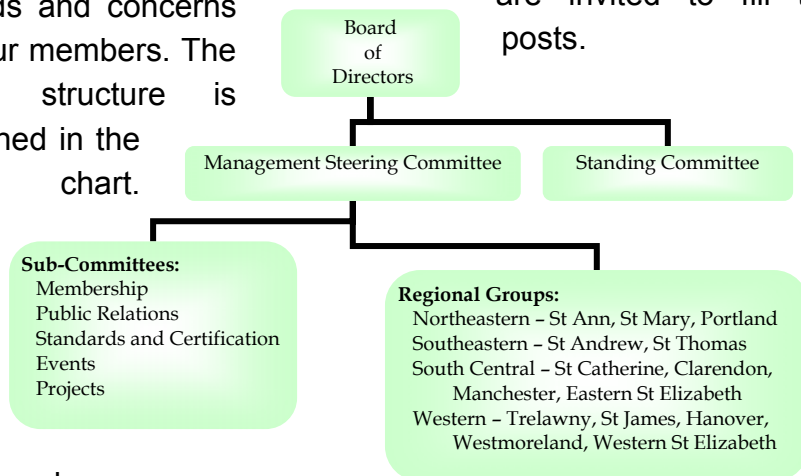
The year 2003 may be described as a year of changes for the movement with several worthwhile achievements. These included the restructuring of the organisation, the completion of the local organic standards and a relatively successful membership drive. While the achievements may be considered small, they were a first for JOAM and they proved to us that we have the capacity to achieve the goals of the organisation. There can be no doubt that JOAM has ended the year a much stronger organisation.

While we made some strides in 2003, there remains a lot more to accomplish before we can achieve our ultimate goal of developing a quality organic industry in Jamaica. We need your support. I implore every member of JOAM to assist us to in our drive to increase

membership and to volunteer your services to help in the building of the movement. We can achieve great things but not without your help. I wish you all a healthy and prosperous 2004 and I look forward to facing the challenges that will face the movement with the knowledge that I have the full support of all our members.

JOAM's New Structure

A new structure for JOAM was approved at the AGM, held October 30, 2003. The new structure is intended to foster greater member involvement in the movement, and increase the ability of the executive to respond to the needs and concerns of our members. The new structure is outlined in the flow chart.



Regional groups are autonomous

and each member of JOAM is assigned to a regional group. Special committees have also been established that have specific functions. The Chairpersons of the regional groups and the sub-committees all sit on the Management Steering Committee, which is responsible for the regular management of the affairs of JOAM. This committee reports to the Board of Directors. There is also a standing committee, which consist of individuals that may not be members of JOAM but possess special skills needed by the organisation.

Several posts in the new organisational structure remain vacant. Nominations are invited to fill these posts.

Annual General Meeting

The second annual general meeting of JOAM was held on October 30, 2003 at the Girls Guide Headquarters at 2 Waterloo Road in Kingston. The new executive of JOAM presented reports for the 2003-2003 administrative year, as well as the proposed work-plan and budget for 2003-2004.

Members used the opportunity to make their input and after some discussion and amendments both the work-plan and budget were approved.

National Organic Symposium

JOAM in collaboration with CPEC (Caribbean Programme for Economic Competitiveness) will be hosting a national organic symposium during the first quarter of 2004. This symposium is expected to highlight the achievements of the JOAM/CPEC project and will seek to inform members and the general public of recent developments in the local organic sector. Members will be informed as soon as a date and venue are confirmed.

Local Certification Programme Ready

After almost two years in the making, JOAM is now ready to launch its local organic certification programme. Our ability to launch this programme was facilitated by the production of local standards and the training of local organic inspectors as part of the JOAM/CPEC project.

The certification programme will be carried out by the Standards and Certification Committee of JOAM, which is chaired by Dr Kathy Dalip. Pre-inspection and inspection questionnaires have been developed and the organic inspectors have organized themselves into an independent body, the Jamaica Independent Organic Inspectors Association (JIOIA) to ensure the integrity of the process. The JIOIA is being chaired by Dr Hugh Lambert.

Persons interested in having their farms certified are



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invited to obtain and complete a pre-inspection questionnaire and return to JOAM. The cost of the programme is being finalized and will be released soon.

Organic Standards and Handbook

As a part of the JOAM/CPEC project JOAM has published a *Handbook of Organic Agriculture and the JOAM Organic Standards*. These documents are available to the public at a cost of \$1,500 and \$1000, respectively. JOAM members will receive a 20% discount on these documents.

Membership Drive

During the 2002-2003 administrative year, JOAM conducted a membership drive, waiving membership fees to encourage membership. We would like to remind those who joined in 2003 that membership fees for 2004 are now due. Members are being encouraged to contribute to the sustainability of the movement by recruiting new members. The fee for regular membership is \$500/annum.