

Candidate information – Julia Speight

The organics industry in WA from my experience is vastly different to that of the rest of Australia. It is somewhat disjointed locally, the horticulture market dominated by a monopoly, and largely segregated from the eastern states. We are seeing commercially viable organic land being sold to commercial chemical enterprises as succession/intergenerational planning is not seen as a viable enterprise for some.

I am currently on the Certified Organic Biodynamic Committee of WA (COBWA) to hopefully help to curb this trend and provide support to those wanting to go into organics or who are already in organics. As well as putting a seat at the table with government which I think is starting to see the benefit of organics thanks to Alannah MacTiernan our Ag Minister; but still has a long way to go.

I previously had an organic retail business that focused on providing affordable and accessible organics to the consumer, but soon realised that the gap was not in the retail market but the wholesale market, which is why I sold my previous business and am now launching a new organic wholesale business here in WA www.fona.com.au in the hopes that it will remove the monopoly and give the farmers a say in regulating their own market.

Everyday I am getting a better picture on what the organics industry is like not only in WA, but Australia.

In terms of my credentials:

- Bachelor of Business (Marketing and International Business)
- Worked extensively in local government with a lot of my work focussed on lobbying the State Government for funding
- Project Manager for grant applications including Scarborough Beach (\$54M) and Scarborough Beach Pool (\$27M)
- Project Manager for Better Suburbs, a project to help fit an extra 40,000 people into less affluent suburbs and providing trees, roads, community and recreational facilities. A two-year project which went unopposed to council and the state
- Had an organic retail business for 5 years (www.thelittlebigstore.com.au) which I started from scratch. The current owner I often mentor and he has had good success
- Built the COBWA website www.cobwa.com.au
- Built the front end of the www.fona.com.au website with some great web developers who have built the back end for me

Much of what I would bring to the role would be strategic, marketing based and a good knowledge of the organics industry in WA. I would also be able to convey what is happening through COBWA, with their full support for me to be on the board.