



# Update from WWOOF Headquarters

## WWOOF NZ Newsletter

October 2007

PO Box 1172  
Nelson  
New Zealand  
Phone 0064 3 5449890  
Fax 0064 3 5449890  
Email support@wwoof.co.nz  
Web Site www.wwoof.co.nz

### From the Coordinator's Desk

**New Book:** Thanks to all those hosts who replied in time for the printing of the new book in August. This were around 1000 hosts but this is rising steadily as the late replies come in. Those who have missed the printing will go in to the next edition due to be done around Feb 08. Don't panic if you've missed the book! WWOOFers will still be able to find you online.



**Website:** WWOOFers and Hosts should check that their Introductions/Descriptions are updated with current information. Hosts can look up a WWOOFer and read their "MyWWOOF" Introduction, WWOOFing History, Skills etc. This allows hosts to learn something about their WWOOFer before they arrive. The introduction is a personal statement from the WWOOFer including information such as why they want to go WWOOFing, what their interests are, their background, what they hope to learn and what they can bring to the exchange. We've had a few ideas come in for other MyWWOOF features - development and progress will happen as skills and abilities allow ;- )

**Printed vs Online:** More and more WWOOF countries are moving to an online WWOOF system. Only about 7 countries, including NZ, still print a WWOOF book. While printing has some negative ecological effects, the printed book is still favoured by hosts and WWOOFers. Often WWOOFers have difficulty getting to a computer while travelling and hosts either don't have a computer or may be reluctant to give free access to their computer because of privacy issues etc.

If you have any comments or feedback and any articles for the next newsletter we look forward to hearing from you.

- Andrew, Jane and the rest of the team at WWOOF.

### WWOOF WIKI

WWOOF is an open organisation that can mean different things to different people. There are fundamental concepts that must be protected but generally there are not many rules and arrangements can be flexible. When it comes to writing a description of what WWOOF is and writing advice on how to get the most out of WWOOF it seems that it is the members themselves that are the best people to do this.

A Wiki is a document that is written collaboratively online. Anyone can read the document, edit what is written and save the changes. The next reader can then make their own changes. Over time the document becomes a consensus (hopefully!) of everyone's view on what WWOOF is.

To get this started we have set up a basic document with the information that is currently used. Click on the link WWOOF Wiki and start reading. If there is anything to add, change or delete feel free to do so, changes can be undone if needed. Currently the information includes:

**How WWOOF Works, Aims and Goals, Hints and Suggestions, Obligations of Hosts/WWOOFers, Safety on the Farm and History of WWOOF**

At the website [www.wwoof.co.nz](http://www.wwoof.co.nz) click on the link "WWOOF Wiki". It will be great to have your input and we look forward to reading your ideas.

The two Japanese boys in the photo [below] are Ryo-guke Tsunozumi and Hoji Hasaba, and the Israeli girl on the potatoes is Yamit Harkari. While at Balmoral they dug potatoes, helped with the horses, the meals (making both Japanese and Israeli and kiwi dishes). Yamit began a lovely garden mural on our shed wall, and Hoji and Ryo planted a Japanese garden. The three also worked on a herb garden (with 80 different herbs along our driveway); and Yamit began a special Israeli garden with olives, lemons, and rosemary.



Yamit from Israel wrote:

*"I've joined the WWOOF, so i could learn to know NZ better, get to meet people for longer terms than usual, and get to stay in places for longer. i believe in long term relationship with people and landscapes... My interests includes tramping, art, singing and music, and many more. I've studied art and land of Israel studies. I lived most of my life in a kibbutz, and worked in gardening most of my time there. today I'm living in a socialist community in a town in Israel, which is a commune, with educational projects in town. "*

*The trio were a delight to have at Balmoral, and the gardens they created are all being enjoyed a year later.*

*Thank you,  
Barry*

Kia ora !

I have spent a wonderful time WWOOFing in New Zealand and now reviewing my pictures there is one I particularly like!  
Mary from France.



PS : The host on the picture is Irma from Pangototara, Motueka.

*"We have had many great experiences and meet some wonderful people over the last year. Its amazing how some of them find a new niche in life and love working with animals or digging in the garden".*

Jenny, New Plymouth host

### More on the "reviews" debate

Hi Andrew,

*One of the great things about the WWOOF system is that it is one of the few things in life still run on goodwill and trust. Our experience as hosts has been great, with only one WWOOFer we really HAD to move on. (We'd always let you know if there was really something dodgy about a WWOOFer.)*

*I know that WWOOFers are very hesitant to get in touch with you to report bad experiences, so if they knew that all WWOOFers were able to send in confidential assessments they would feel more confident about doing so. If we do go to having some formal assessment of hosts it could be limited to a form filled (on the net or paper) rather than just an opportunity for an emotional rant - good or bad! For instance:*

Was your accommodation (tick the appropriate boxes)

**brilliant very good OK poor**

Was the food

**excellent good OK poor**

Did you get enough to eat

**Yes / not really / no**

Was the work

**interesting varied OK boring too hard exploitative**

Were the hosts

**absolutely wonderful friendly and helpful OK horrible!**

Did you enjoy your stay

**just great! very much it was OK not much not at all**

*It might also be interesting to ask a few statistical questions such as how many days they stayed, and whether they have their own transport, use public transport, or hitch hike.*

*I think it should only be available to you at WWOOF Headquarters so that hosts and WWOOFers know their feedback is confidentially handled. This way a picture will be build up where you can see if there is consistently bad feedback about a host and deal with it. This would weed out the odd bit of vindictive feedback or misunderstanding. If you could find the time (!) from time to time you might like to send hosts an over-all idea of what their assessments have been like. Sorry this is SO LONG. Best wishes,  
Lesley Hill, South Claragh, Taupo countryside*

-Thanks for the feedback Lesley. I think most members appreciate the fact that the organisation works primarily on goodwill and trust. Encouraging constructive feedback seems very sensible and it would be worthwhile setting up a system to make this happen. Does anyone have other suggestions?  
- Andrew

### Appeal For Funds

GE Free Northland has driven the campaign in Northland peninsula to get our local authorities to act to protect ratepayers and the environment from GMO land use and to keep our food GE free. We ask for your support so that we can continue to do the work we do, particularly supporting truly sustainable organic primary production. We have incurred significant legal costs to date, and we are seeking donations. Thank you for your support.



Cheques made out to: GE FREE  
NORTHALND

Postal address: Secretary, GE FREE NORTHLAND, PO Box 1439, Whangarei, Northland

Website: [www.gefreenorthland.org.nz](http://www.gefreenorthland.org.nz)

More information: Zelka Grammer

email: [zlg@xnet.co.nz](mailto:zlg@xnet.co.nz)

Tel (Whangarei) 09 432 2155

or Martin Robinson Tel. (Kerikeri) 09 407 8650

**WWOOF New Zealand is making a donation to support this organisation that does this work on our behalf.**



Diana and Diane and Kim trimming the goat's hooves at Andi and Kim's place in the Waikato