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The tasty brown stuff

What better way to unite the New Zealand coffee community than over a cup of the beverage that brought us all together?

Ideally, this month's article would have featured the winner of the Meadow Fresh New Zealand Barista Championship 2020. Or maybe a few words on the Wellington Coffee in Good Spirits Throwdown. However, as with all the best laid plans for 2020, COVID-19 threw a spanner in the works, and with heavy hearts, the NZSCA had to cancel these events.

We would like to take the time to thank our amazing coffee community, particularly our sponsors. The planning since March 2019 has been a roller coaster learning journey.

We are thankful for the inspiring messages of support, the baristas who said "keep our entry fee, we'll be back next year", and the judges and volunteers who had rearranged their schedules, flights and accommodation twice.

Earlier this year in consultation with the NZSCA Board, the decision was made to cease the NZ Coffee Guild and continue its work under the banner of Community and Events. It was a big change but ultimately, we wanted to make our events more inclusive and community-focused for all. Our events are dependent on which level of restriction we are operating at, and instead of waiting, we decided to prepare for when we can meet safely and drink coffee together.

A small committee within the Board has been tasked with getting the ball rolling on our community events and we have two that will be ongoing: the 'Tasters Series' and 'It's a Throwdown'. We will also be bringing back the end of year 'Sausage Fest' and supporting a next level 'Milk Wizard'.

Covering all event bases, the 'Another Tasty Brown Stuff Event' banner was born.



Several ideas were brainstormed and we are excited to share the fun community-based events that we've created.

In the past, our blind cuppings have been incredibly popular. In an effort to make them more approachable, and reduce the barrier of investing in hardware for roasters, the creation of the official NZSCA Tasters Series was born, in which four identical kits could be sent around the country.

The kits contain 24 Acme spoons with the specialised engraving of "It's a spoon", 36 Acme Taster cups, six two-litre vacuum flasks, Cafetto cleaner, watch glasses, and 100 filters, with cleaning instructions included.

The next step of the process has been to

chat with green bean suppliers/sponsors to curate a selection based on a tasty theme. The beans are then sent to an independent roaster who roasts to specification and then to the event hosts with the kit.

The design of the collateral for each event is fun and fresh.

Our member company hosts are encouraged to safely host an event, supply a pour-over brewer with 1.9-litre capacity, and repackage up all the equipment cleanly to send to the next event.

The beauty of the "Another Tasty Brown Stuff Event" is that we are looking to lock in some roasted coffee events for upcoming series with themes such as 'Honey and Pulped Naturals', 'High Altitude Grown Coffee', and 'Asia-Pacific Grown Coffee'. We will be looking to host between four and eight events for each theme over a two-week period to ensure that the coffees are tasted while they're at their best.

The magic of "It's a Throwdown" shows that, like the industry and the world, our concepts are evolving. Watch this space and our platforms. 'What is a throwdown' you ask? It's a challenge. It may involve coffee with some kind of milk, or it could be a coffee Olympics-type event with puck and cupping spoon races, dump tube discus, coffee sack races et cetera.

With several member companies already putting up their hands to host, and level one hopefully announced in late September, we are looking forward to sharing coffee with our community soon. ☑



For more information on the New Zealand Specialty Coffee Association, or to join, visit www.nzscsca.org