



# Alpine Valleys

## agribusiness forum

*'Australian Alpine Valleys - Where the Best Grows to Perfection'*

## Chair Report 2011

Dear members,

This year's AGM is bittersweet for the board as we have recommended to members that the Forum be wound up.

Since July 2010 the organisation has operated without an Executive Officer and over the course of the past fifteen months the board has discussed and debated the organisation's future role, eventually agreeing that the Forum has achieved many of its goals and ambitions since its establishment in 1997 and that after fourteen years of operation it has reached the end of its useful life.

Since its creation, past and present board members have committed to growing sustainable agribusiness in our region. Working together with our many members we have showcased and celebrated best practice and fostered the growth of successful agribusiness locally.

Undeniably the Forum has played a key role in agribusiness development throughout our region. It has championed communication, worked collaboratively with strategic partners to achieve its goals, built relationships and developed leadership in the sector. Through its many projects it has also networked, mentored and worked to showcase best practice in the sector.

The Forum has achieved many of its goals and delivered numerous projects that have made a tangible difference to agribusiness in our region. Recently this includes our Rural Womens Governance Workshop Series, Evergraze, projects identifying the strong future of our local dairy industry, various wine marketing initiatives including the Fastways project and our coarse our annual awards.

The board recognises that leadership at a grass roots level is crucial to the future of our farming communities and agribusinesses throughout the Northeast. That is why we have contributed towards the Alpine Valleys Community Leadership Program who, with our assistance, will now be able to provide scholarships for primary producers and agribusiness professionals to undertake leadership training and ultimately embark on greater roles in their industry and community. With the Forum's assistance Goulburn Ovens Institute of TAFE will expose high school children to the benefits of a career in agriculture. We have also been able to assist TAFCO to continue its good work supporting ex-tobacco growers and primary producers in the Alpine Valleys.

On behalf of the board I thank you all for your membership and support of the Forum. I also extend my gratitude to past and present Chairs and board members who have each contributed and assisted this small organisation to effectively punch above its weight in delivering real outcomes for local agribusinesses for so long.

Finally I thank those many small and large agribusiness entities that have worked in partnership with us over the years. Notably, Murray Goulburn and TAFCO, our one-time partner North East Catchment Management Authority, local government authorities including Alpine, Benalla, Indigo, Towong, Wangaratta and Wodonga along with those Victorian and Commonwealth government departments, including Regional Development Victoria, the Department of Primary Industries and the Commonwealth's Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

Tammy Atkins  
Chair

12 October 2011