

# Alpine Valleys

agribusiness forum

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

## media release & photo opportunity

December 13, 2007

### **Japanese Buyers search for North East Gourmet Produce**

A contingent of buyers from MQ Foods (pronounced Mac Foods) Tokyo, Japan will be embarking on an in-bound mission to meet North East Victorian producers of premium quality or unique gourmet products destined for the tables of over 300 Tokyo hotels and restaurants early next year.

The meet and greet visit, arranged by the Australian Alpine Valleys Agribusiness Forum and supported by Regional Development Victoria and DPI, will see the buyers visit four farms in the region to meet the producers, taste product and view production facilities. Producers will also have two more opportunities to showcase their products at a central location.

Brian and Jane Casey of Australian Gourmet Chestnuts have been supplying chestnut product to MQ Foods for seven years working through MQ Food's Sydney-based buyer. MQ Foods have indicated that they are currently looking for unique and/or premium quality gourmet products to compliment their current range.

"Japanese customers are very fussy and expect the highest standards of their suppliers, said Lachlan Campbell, Sustainability Manager for AAVAF. "Meeting customer specifications is of the utmost importance for any business thinking of entering the Japanese market, but if you can do this, they will be very loyal and supportive."

"The State Government is very keen to promote regional product to export markets, with the Japanese very much at the high end of the gourmet market, said Mr Campbell. "The Japanese have been attracted to North East Victoria through the promotion of our clean, green gourmet products."

Regional Development Victoria are providing funding to AAVAF to assist with visit costs and a scheduled dinner to further showcase regional gourmet products.

The Australian Alpine Valleys Agribusiness Forum urges producers of high quality gourmet value add product in the region to contact Lachlan Campbell on (03) 5721 6088 to express their interest in participating in the Japanese in-bound mission before Christmas. It is anticipated the MQ Foods buyers will select a short list from the products on offer in January 2008 with their visit scheduled for February.

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For further information contact Lachlan Campbell, Sustainability Manager, AAVAF  
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