



AUSTRALIAN  
ALPINE  
VALLEYS  
AGRIBUSINESS  
FORUM



[www.alpvalleys.com.au](http://www.alpvalleys.com.au)

# Alpine Valleys

agribusiness forum

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

Issue 7# | July 2010

**2010 AAVAF**  
**Agribusiness**  
**INNOVATION AND**  
**ENTREPRENEURSHIP**  
*Awards*  
*Showcase and*  
*AGM*

Wednesday October 23, 2010

3pm – 10pm

Waddington's at Kergunyah

- Is your business growing through innovation?
- Have you successfully identified and grown new niche markets for your product?
- Is your business production and methodology changing to adapt to outside challenges?

If you answered yes to any of these questions, enter your business in the 2010 AAVAF Agribusiness Innovation and Entrepreneur Awards.

You will also receive a cash prize of \$1,000 per category, that can help you to further develop your business.

As a winner, your business will receive recognition of your agribusiness achievements through publicity and promotion in the AAVAF newsletters, Awards Alumni and local media. You will also receive a cash prize that can help you to further develop your business.

Visit: [www.alpvalleys.com.au](http://www.alpvalleys.com.au) to download your entry form or call Rod Grant on 03 5721 7594 to have your entry pack sent to you.



## CHAIRMAN'S *welcome*

Welcome to this winter edition of the Australian Alpine Valleys Agribusiness Forum (AAVAF) newsletter.

This newsletter reviews our activities that provide new opportunities for both AAVAF members and the agribusiness sector of the alpine valleys, consistent with our mission to support sustainable agribusiness.

A key underlying feature of our success this year has been the collaboration with a wide range of partners. Whether it has been improving the understanding of local dairy options, access to competitive freight services, a better understanding of local weather variation or building community capacity through leadership training and development, our partnerships have been critical in delivery of our high quality credible outcomes.

We have also witnessed the end of a very important partnership. June 30 marks the end of a very successful partnership with the North East Catchment Management Authority, a partnership that we have very much valued and appreciated.

The amalgamation of the catchment management authorities presents some major challenges for catchment managers and landholders alike. We look forward to working with the Catchment Management Authority to ensure that the proposed realignment of catchment responsibilities does not reduce opportunities to agribusiness and that the AAVAF and CMA continues to develop the strong understanding and relationships established in the last five years.

**It would be remiss of me not to highlight the Agribusiness Entrepreneur Awards and commend them to you as a mechanism for advancing your business. We are excited about recognising excellence in agribusiness. We look forward to seeing your business in our awards. All the details are in this newsletter and on our website [www.alpvalleys.com.au](http://www.alpvalleys.com.au) so give it a go.**

**Dr Tim Clune**  
**AAVAF Chair**

TAFCO sourced the funding and commissioned the development of a network of six localised weather stations that provides updated data every 15 minutes on local temperature, humidity, wind speed, rainfall and Delta-T readings to a central open access website.

## Local Weather Stations

### HELP FARMERS IN THE NORTH EAST

More than 500 growers in the districts of Myrtleford, Beechworth, Whorouly, Coral Bank, King Valley and Porepunkah now have access to a state of the art web-based environmental monitoring network that compliments existing Bureau of Meteorology data.

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TAFCO Chairman, Mr Allan McGuffie said, "Growers will no longer have to rely solely on reading from the nearest BOM station at Wagaratta, which is over 50km's away from Myrtleford and doesn't provide accurate localised data to growers. A broad range of crops including grades, berries, green tea, apples and vegetables are being grown within a fairly confirmed area around Myrtleford, with each having their own special requirements.

Log onto the TAFCO website [www.tafco.com.au](http://www.tafco.com.au) to access your local weather station data.



## NORTH EAST Dairy Industry PLANNING FOR CHANGE

**The Australian Alpine Valleys Agribusiness Forum in conjunction with The Rural City of Wangaratta and the Shires of Alpine, Towong and Indigo have been successful in securing \$20,000 from the State Government to investigate the viability of further expanding the dairy industry production in Upper North East Victoria and develop plans to stabilise and expand the industry based on a viability assessment.**

The project will be undertaken in two parts with both including the involvement of local dairy producers and a major manufacture.

Part one of the project will involve the investigation and preparation of a social,

environmental and economic evaluation on the viability of the dairy industry spreading its foot print to incorporate to the upper catchments of North East Victoria, to provide a state-wide industry development opportunity and spreading the environmental risk of locating the industry in a larger area of the region. This evaluation would use current income and expenditure figures to determine whether the upper catchments of North East Victoria are both suitable and competitive for accelerated growth.

Part two of the project will be to write up a number of case studies on Dairying in North East Victoria looking at the social, economic and environmental benefits of dairying in the region and how it can complement the state wide dairy industry. These would then form part of the Dairy Australia information and marketing package for dairy investors considering the region. The marketing and communications of the findings would be the important final step in the project.

**The full report can be viewed or downloaded from [www.alpvalleys.com.au](http://www.alpvalleys.com.au)**

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proudly sponsored by ...



*The rich soils, reliable rainfall and secure irrigation resources of the Ovens and King (Alpine Valleys) regions have been identified as sustainable and competitive locations for the production of high value agricultural products.*

# Climate Champions

## PROGRAM

Thirty farmers across Australia, including AAVAF Board Member Greg Hayes, have been chosen to participate in the Climate Champions Program which aims to improve communication with farmers and researchers about climate variability and climate change.

Three Research and Development organisations including Meat and Livestock Australia and Grains Research and Development Corporation have joined forces to run the three year program, Managing Climate Variability (MCV).

The group will provide researchers with feedback about what farmers need to better understand climate variability and climate change.

Greg, a beef farmer at Talgarno in North East Victoria is particularly interested in getting information which fills the gap that now exists between the seven day weather forecasts from Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) and the three month season forecasts.

AAVAF members interested in accessing a whole range of weather and climate related information should log onto the MCV's website [www.climatekelpie.com.au](http://www.climatekelpie.com.au) which 'rounds up' all the various sources of information likely to be of interest.

**Further information will be available to AAVAF members as soon as it is available. Interested in further information? Contact Greg Hayes direct at: [ggbh Hayes@gmail.com](mailto:ggbh Hayes@gmail.com)**

# MOMENTUM BUILDING 'Food Bowl' concept

Initiated by the Rural City of Wangaratta, with strong endorsement from Wangaratta Unlimited, the concept of an Alpine Valleys Food Bowl Concept – Agrifood "Growing at a Higher Level" launched on February 25 this year is building momentum.

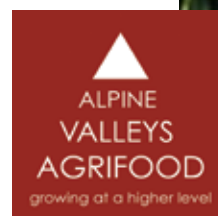
The project is supported by the Alpine Shire, TAFCO and Australian Alpine Valleys Agribusiness to ensure the concept is well founded in its approach.

The rich soils, reliable rainfall and secure irrigation resources of the Ovens and King (Alpine Valleys) regions have been identified as sustainable and competitive locations for the production of high value agricultural products.

Food is king and food security is now top of mind with the public, both domestically and increasingly for export markets. With a number of the traditional horticultural regions no longer sustainable, growers will need to consider alternative locations such as the Ovens and King Valley's as viable options.

Whilst marketing and investment attraction are pivotal elements in progressing the initiative, the business development role of working with existing supply chain operators and local farmers is of critical importance.

**Read and download the full Agrifood report on the AAVAF website: [www.alpvalleys.com.au](http://www.alpvalleys.com.au)**





**EverGraze**  
More livestock from perennials

## THE FINAL REPORT

**Pasture measurements have now been completed after the autumn breaks of 2008, 2009 and 2010 and at the end of winter in 2008 and 2009 at the seven supporting sites in the NE CMA.**

New pastures were sown at four sites in May 2008, and the establishment success of these sowings of tall fescue, cocksfoot and phalaris were strongly contingent on good soil fertility levels, a factor that can be influenced by land managers, unlike the effects of variable seasonable conditions.

Over 2009 and first four months of 2010, these new pastures ran 130% more stock on average (12,600 DSE grazing days/ha) than their mostly native control pastures (5,500 DSE grazing days/ha).

The change from set stocking to rotational grazing of existing perennial pastures saw only small changes in the proportions of perennials, provided their initial densities were high (>40%),

but in one pasture with a low initial density (<10%), the perennial component declined significantly over the two years of monitoring.

The removal of all grazing pressure from native pastures when the perennial grasses were flowering increased their persistence. The rest periods were from three to six months long, starting in late-spring and finishing in late summer or autumn. A 20% increase in ground cover at the autumn break was a key benefit from this practice but at the cost of the control native pastures running on average 54% more stock because they were grazed all year round. Ground covers on the set-stocked native pastures did not change over the two years of monitoring.

The sites at Stuart and Janet Morant's property in the Tallangatta Valley, and Chris and Judy Griffiths at Bowman's Forest will continue for another two years with Caring for Our Country funding.

*PICTURED ABOVE : Griffith's Evergraze Field Day late last spring: R-L Kate Sargeant (DPI Seymour), Judy Griffith, Jeff Hirth and Denise Rae.*

### FOR INFORMATION AND MEMBERSHIP DETAILS CONTACT:

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BECOME A MEMBER- visit:

[www.alpvalleys.com.au](http://www.alpvalleys.com.au)

### VISION

The North East of Victoria be widely recognised for its attractiveness to agribusiness, and there be growth in the economic value and sustainability of agribusinesses.

The contributing role of the Agribusiness Forum to making this vision a reality is widely recognised.

### MISSION

*The role of the Forum is to:*

- foster and stimulate the development of viable and sustainable agribusiness in the North East
- create the right climate in which agribusiness can successfully operate.

## AAVAF Funding Success

### GROUP MARKETING PROGRAM

\$11,000 from Regional Development Victoria will enable the AAVAF to offer ten local agribusinesses the opportunity to join the Group Marketing Program which will include regional case studies, highlighting the key issues of market segmentation, target markets, positioning and distribution of product, pricing for profitability

### FASTWAYS FREIGHT DEAL FOR WINERIES

The Australian Alpine Valleys Agribusiness Forum and some leading local wine companies have worked together to secure competitive freight rates with Fastways Couriers, working as a collective across North East Victoria. The recent agreement collected approximately 100,000 cases to achieve the competitive rates with Fastways.

All AAVAF members who produce wine and

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haven't received information on the Fastway's agreement should contact Lachlan Campbell on 0419 243 225 for more details on how to participate.

### RURAL WOMEN'S GOVERNANCE AND LEADERSHIP

The AAVAF will receive \$50,000 from the State Government to provide a Rural Women's Governance & Leadership Workshop Series between April 2010 and May 2011. Three to four candidates from regional industry, agribusiness, tourism and rural community groups will be invited to participate in the program which aims to increase the governance skills of rural women and use the knowledge, skills, networking and mentoring to encourage local women to take on key roles in organisations and contribute to industry decision making by increasing their representation on industry boards.