

# Alpine Valleys

agribusiness forum

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

## Project Report

### Environmental Services Seminar 2008

**Total Project Cost**  
**\$7,850**

Australian Alpine Valleys Agribusiness Forum developed and conducted a seminar on environmental service for farmers and landholders.

The purpose of the seminar was to ensure land holders are aware of the current and future direction of Government and the private sector in relation to offering landholders contracts to provide environmental services.

The proposal was based around the current political climate on the topic of climate change and carbon off sets. There was a heightened expectation that Australia would see a carbon trading system implemented which will see the top 500 companies/emitters be regulated to address their carbon footprint. As a result of this there would be a gold rush of prospectors trying to contract farmers to provide offsets. It was believed there will be a whole range of entrepreneurs trying to offer services with no doubt a range of less scruples and ethics. AlpValleys believed that we needed to provide information about what was happening and how land holders might be able to benefit from this change. There were also a number of other opportunities for land holders to provide environmental services such as stewardship opportunities and plantation timber through MIS schemes. There would be a real opening for landholders who were well informed to better manage climate change risk by locking part of their properties into arrangements where they would receive payments for offering services.

124 people attended the seminar on 17 September 2008, and eleven speakers provided insight into the main issues, including a defining of environmental services, what's available to farmers, the issue of payment, the risks involved, global drivers, assessing the value of services and carbon trading and capture.

There is a whole new way for farmers to manage their business with the public concern for the environment and climate. Landholders will be offered inducements to be responsible for some of these responses. Landholders need to be informed of opportunities so decisions are not made in isolation. There are global case studies and work undertaken in Australia on this topic which we need to be aware of and provide that information to the greater public. This seminar helped to address these issues.

Sponsorship was provided by DPI, North East Water and Plantations North East. The balance of funding was from registration fees.