



The Australian Alpine Valleys Agribusiness Forum

November 2004

AlpValleys Role

- To provide a voice for the North East Victorian Agribusiness Community
- To help develop regional agribusiness capability
- To promote investment opportunities in North East Victoria

Vision

Customers will prefer products and services from the Alp Valleys Region

Mission

- To ensure products and services from the Alp Valleys Region are better marketed than those of their competitors
- To assist producers develop organisations and systems to profitably market their products and services

Green Tea comes to the Alpine Valleys

State and Regional Development Minister John Brumby, opening Australia's first green tea processing plant in Wangaratta 2 weeks ago, said that Japanese company Ito En's \$15.5 million investment in the Australian Green tea industry signalled growing investment confidence in Victoria. He said the combination of good soils, climate and a skilled workforce had helped attract the company to north-east Victoria, and re affirmed that it was a "great place to live, work and invest".

Minister Brumby said 11 Victorian farmers were growing green tea, and the industry was on the verge of undertaking its first commercial harvest. He said crops were expected to yield just 5 tonnes in 2004. But, he said, Australia could be exporting 1000t of semi-processed tea to Japan by 2008.

Ito En president and CEO, Mr Hachiro Honjo, said there was demand for 110,000 tonnes of green tea in Japan each year. He said 90,000 tonnes were produced domestically and the remaining 20,000 tonne were currently sourced in China. But, Mr Honjo said, Green Tea grown in Australia had proven to be of a much higher quality than Chinese tea, paving the way for Australia to enter the market.

Japanese Green Tea consumption is expected to increase by 50 per cent over the next decade and new markets are also developing in Australia, the United States and Europe. Mr Honjo said this meant there would be more opportunities for Victorian farmers to get involved in the industry.



The AlpValleys Forum has selected the Australian Green Tea Growers Association as one of the groups to receive business planning & marketing assistance under the umbrella of one of the projects being funded by the Victorian Agribusiness Network (VAN).

Minister Brumby officiates at the opening of Australia's first green tea processing plant in Wangaratta. For more photos and information visit our website www.alpvalleys.com.au

VAN Project – Marketing Assistance to Regional Groups

AlpValleys have chosen Dennis E Toohey & Associates, Agribusiness Consultants based in Albury, to provide seven regional agribusiness groups with Business Planning and Marketing Strategy Assistance over the next five months.

Dennis is an agribusiness consultant with over thirty years involvement with agriculture and regional development. His areas of expertise encompass catchment management, natural resource management, natural resource economics, regional development, temperate crops, extension program planning, property management planning, resource use planning and water use policy. In this project for AlpValleys, Dennis will be working with his associate Stephen Chaffey, who has conducted research on a range of rural industries for the Victorian Department of Primary Industries and the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation on impediments to industry growth.

The groups who have been selected to receive assistance under this project are:

*Alpine Valleys Vignerons
Glenrowan Vignerons Association
Upper Murray Farming Systems
Snowy Mountains Essential Oils
Alpine Shire Food & Wine Group
Australian Green Tea Growers' Association
FFORNE Hardwood Co-operative*

As well as providing these groups with business & marketing strategy plans, the project will identify impediments to growth for regional agribusiness and strategies to overcome barriers, improve the ability of agribusinesses to recognise and respond to changing market signals, and identify further funding opportunities and project ideas for the groups and the individual businesses they represent.

SPECIAL EVENTS IN NOVEMBER

Wednesday 10th November 2004: 10.00am-12.30pm
2004 Alpine Valleys Agri Future Forum, La Trobe at Beechworth. Guest speaker Neil Barr "Future Agricultural Landscapes". Also findings from the 2004 AlpValleys Regional Agribusiness Profile Project. For further information visit our website www.alpvalleys.com.au

Wednesday 17th & Wednesday 24th November 2004:
8.30am-4.30pm. Business Planning Workshop at DPI offices, Ford St, Wangaratta.

Monday 29th November 2004, Rutherglen Research Institute. Commencing at 6.30, AlpValleys A.G.M. will be followed by guest speakers:

David Ch'ng from Melbourne University will speak on the topic of Globalisation and Doing Business in Asia.

David Shearer from the DPI will focus on "Amazing Australia" – exporting to Asia.

For more information on this event, and a C.V. on David Ch'ng, visit our website www.alpvalleys.com.au

Under New Management Program Business Planning Workshop

Strategic Business Planning for Agribusiness – that is the objective of this program initiated by the Victorian Government.

Workshops will be hosted by the AlpValleys Agribusiness Forum, to help people in regional agribusinesses make informed decisions on strategic planning.

For the attractive and affordable price of \$200 (\$150 for AlpValleys members) two participants of a business will receive:

- 16 hours of group work with experienced consultant Julie Guest
- 5 hours of individual participant work at own workplace
- workbook with strategic business planning tools and useful contacts
- access to online information and publications

For more information and a registration form, visit www.alpvalleys.com.au

AlpValleys Contacts

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Membership Renewals now due

AlpValleys members should have received a renewal form by now, and are reminded that their subscriptions are now due. New members are invited to apply – subscriptions are a bargain at \$50 plus GST. To download an application form go to www.alpvalleys.com.au