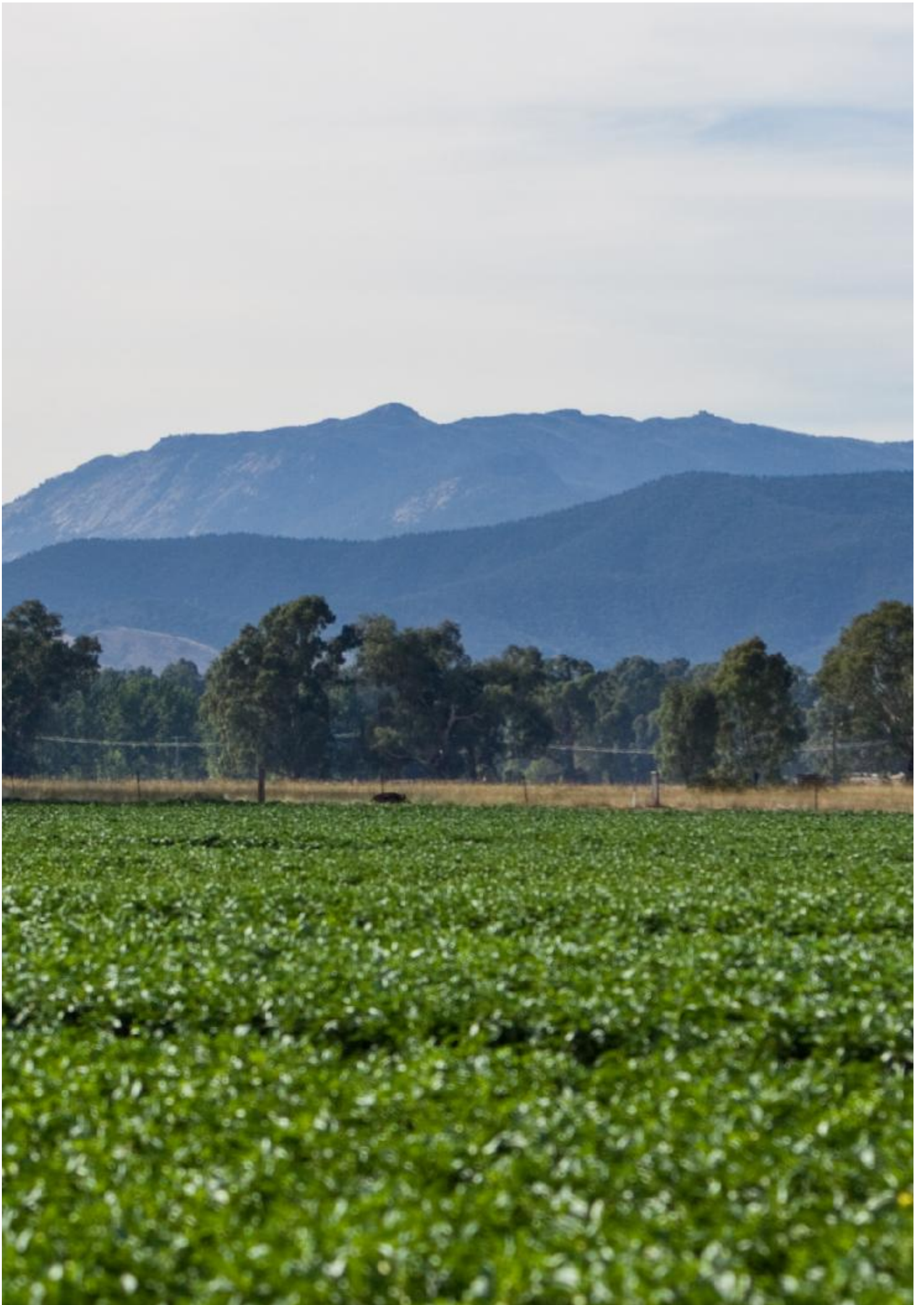




ALPINE  
VALLEYS  
AGRIFOOD

growing at a higher level



# Rural City of Wangaratta & Alpine Shire

Agrifood Prospectus



## Our Mayors understand agribusiness



Cr Anthony Griffiths  
Mayor  
Rural City of Wangaratta

*Our municipality prides itself on achieving a balance between agriculture, the environment and urban living. Here each of these aspects are interdependent as our city residents provide a stable workforce for agricultural enterprises but cherish the fact they can enjoy the natural beauty that we have preserved in the region during leisure time.*

*With a family history in the agricultural sector I know how important that planning balance is to business confidence. Our council welcomes agricultural investment in the Alpine Valleys and will do all we can to help you plan for a long and successful future here.*



Cr Nino Mautone  
Mayor  
Alpine Shire

*Having been a tobacco grower who has transitioned into other crops, I understand the horticultural capabilities in these valleys. However, the potential of our soils is minor compared to the potential of our people.*

*Our growers have faced the challenges of a changing market place with a 'can do' attitude. Adaptable and resilient, this talented horticultural community never says 'no' to mastering a new crop, be it green tea, capsicums or new emerging grape varieties. We welcome you to our shire and challenge you to find something we cannot grow at a higher level!*



## Disclaimer

The Rural City of Wangaratta and Alpine Shire (the Company) has made every effort to ensure the reliability of the views and recommendations expressed in this report, which are based on the appointed consultant's research and information obtained and collated by the consultant from a variety of resources including electronic information. The Company believes the information to be accurate and reliable at the time of the publication of this report.

However, markets change with economic conditions and for this reason no warranty is given that the information or advice contained within this report is appropriate in a particular user environment. The Company, to the extent

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# Introducing Alpine Valleys agrifood

## About the Alpine Valleys Agrifood Group

Alpine Valleys Agrifood is a collective of agrifood growers, processors, marketers and associated service providers located within the fertile valleys of the Ovens and King Rivers.

Facilitated by The Rural City of Wangaratta and Alpine Shire, the group's aims are:

- To profile the proficiency and professionalism of the region's agrifood operators.
- To highlight the many advantages that the region has to offer other agrifood businesses.
- To encourage agrifood investment in the region.
- To preserve our culture of excellence in agrifood production.



## Growing at a higher level

It is not just the **altitude** that makes the produce from this region superior, it is also our **aptitude**.

The combination of alpine microclimates and generations of agricultural know-how are what distinguishes this region as an agrifood centre of excellence. Growers here aim high and maintain great pride in the fact that they carry generations of knowledge in intensive horticulture and livestock industries. When high rainfall and an abundance of excess water is factored into the equation it makes the Alpine Valleys one of Australia's safest bets for agrifood investment.

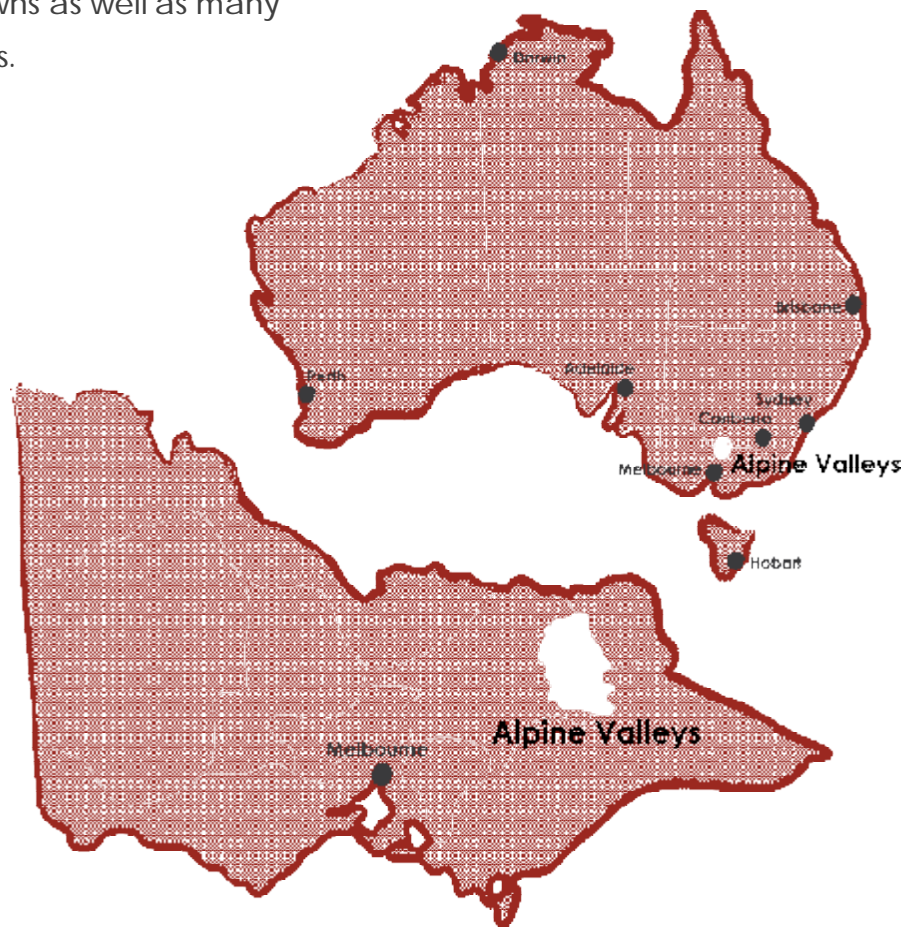
Whether you are looking to relocate your business here or source product from the region, this prospectus will outline all the benefits to you of *'growing at a higher level'*.



## Our location

Located in North Eastern Victoria, the Alpine Valleys region consists of the fertile farm lands fringing the Ovens and King River valleys.

The region spans 2 local government areas and hosts over 20 towns as well as many distinct microclimates.



# 10 good reasons to do business in the Alpine Valleys



Growing at a higher level is not just about the altitude,  
. . . . there is a sound business case.



## 10 good reasons to do business in The Alpine Valleys

1. Production capacity
2. Reliable, secure, clean, accessible, low-cost water
3. Microclimates that provide diversity and mitigate risk
4. Accessibility to key markets
5. Established agricultural expertise within a co operational framework
6. Strong network of agrifood service providers
7. Exceptional livability
8. Skilled and reliable workforce
9. Cost-efficient, flexible freight and logistics services
10. Business friendly community and local government

## Fact

Approximately 5,000 hectares of land is suited to high value intensive production

# 1. Production capacity

The region is one of the most valuable and versatile agricultural growing areas of Australia with reliable rainfall, fertile soil and pristine air. It could be argued that it is one of agrifood's best kept secrets.

At a time when other prominent production regions are being constrained by urban sprawl, negative climate impacts and water reliability,

the Alpine Valleys area has excess capacity, partly due to the restructure of the tobacco industry, but also due to the Lower Ovens Aquifer water resources. In many instances the irrigation infrastructure is already in place – a legacy of the tobacco and hops industries.



## Fact

20,000 mg of water remains available in the region.

## 2. Reliable, clean, secure, accessible low cost water

The region has a reliable source of quality, low cost water. This water can be purchased for use within the region, is secure and readily accessible.

The Ovens and King Rivers' irrigation system was rated by Goulburn Murray Water as providing 99% reliability. This statistic has been proven over a long

time frame, even through one of the most unforgiving droughts in Victoria's history. The recent investigation of additional subterranean water resources is not confirmed but indicators are extremely positive, making some areas in the Alpine Valleys potentially even more attractive for permanent horticulture.



## Fact

A new network of weather stations have recently been installed across the region which will provide extremely accurate monitoring of weather data.

### 3. Microclimates that provide diversity and mitigate risk

The region is home to numerous, diverse microclimates. Often an individual property will enjoy a range of climate zones that enables the farmer to extend the cropping season across that one farm alone. Microclimate variation across the Alpine Valleys means that the region can produce a diversity of crops and mitigate risk from weather events.

These microclimates have proven to be ideal for crops with specific temperature requirements such as green tea, blueberries and particular wine varieties. In the context of global warming, the region offers reliability for production of cool climate crops.



## 4. Accessibility to key markets

Being located close to the Hume Freeway, the Alpine Valleys region has overnight access into the two biggest domestic markets in Australia, Sydney and Melbourne. The region enjoys efficient transport links into freight hubs for export crops.

As a major tourist cruising route, The Great Alpine Road and other key roads, draws strong cellar door and farm gate sales traffic into the region. Servicing that tourist market creates some demand for back loading.



## 5. Established agricultural expertise within a cooperative framework

The area's history as Australia's predominant tobacco and hops production region has produced enviable horticultural know-how that has been handed down through generations of growers. A tradition of producing row crops and temperate tree crops ensures both the horticultural capability and much of the irrigation infrastructure are in place.

Ex-tobacco growers have a culture of working collaboratively in a cooperative framework as a legacy of the tobacco industry. The TAFCO cooperative is a unique regional resource with a membership of over 500 growers.

Growing at a higher levels is a way of life

in the Alpine Valleys. Because tobacco was so difficult to grow well, these producers have the skill to turn their hands to any challenging crop.

Considerable expertise in livestock industries also resides in the Alpine Valleys. Dairying holds much potential for a revival here in the face of water issues in Victoria's irrigated dairy districts. The Alpine Valleys region is within easy reach of milk processors at Murray Goulburn and Cobram facilities which are seeking additional volumes to supply an anticipated rebound in global dairy demand.

## 6. Strong network of agrifood service providers

The Rural City of Wangaratta together with the 20 or so town centres in the region are well established with service providers required by agrifood operations. Agronomy, hydrology, animal husbandry - virtually any service can be sourced in the area including input supplies. These include:

Plant and equipment

Dairy specialists

Chemical and fertiliser suppliers

Stock and station agent services

Finance and banking

Repairs and maintenance

Laboratory and diagnostic services

Contract labour and employment services

Established co op structures in place which could provide coordination/aggregation of product.

Broadband communications infrastructures/access.



## 7. Exceptional liveability

The region is one of the most livable in the world, by virtue of:

A delightful climate with contrasting seasons providing a changing array of 'picture perfect' scenery.

Affordable housing

Highly livable towns with inclusive communities.

Excellent education options

Access to high-level professional and

health services

Proximity to a wide range of gourmet food and wine outlets.

Road/rail and air access to capital cities.

Tourism infrastructure providing a range of entertainment and outdoor activities including the renowned Murray to Mountains rail trail and Alpine ski fields.



## 8. Skilled and reliable workforce

One of the additional benefits of the region is the ability to attract and retain skilled and motivated staff.

The region has a strong track record in terms of labour availability. Its appeal as a tourism destination means that it is easier to attract seasonal labour such as backpackers and travelling retirees.

The Alpine Valleys region is well serviced by the TAFE system which works closely with industry to develop the skills most required by agrifood businesses.



## 9. Cost efficient, flexible freight and logistics services

The Alpine Valleys region is extremely well serviced for transport and logistics. There are a number of local specialised, interstate trucking companies with daily services to all key markets for chilled, frozen and ambient products.

The region is within an hour of Woolworth's distribution centre at

Barnawartha which provides access to a major supermarket supply chain.

An intermodal rail facility at Ettamogah is also accessible. A new freight consolidation centre planned for Springhurst.



## 10. Business friendly community and local government

The various communities of the Alpine Valleys are extremely pro-agribusiness. The two local government authorities covering the Valleys are acutely aware of the contribution that agrifood has made to the region in terms of economic and lifestyle benefits. Agrifood largely underpins the economy, supporting employment and in turn a vibrant retail and hospitality sector. The Rural City of Wangaratta and Alpine

Shire have an extremely positive attitude toward supporting businesses planning to relocate here.

Planning regulations clearly recognise agrifood as a vital industry sector, indeed, many of the councilors are farmers themselves.

