



# World Congress of Agricultural Journalists in Interlaken 2024



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## DEAR JOURNALISTS



Welcome to this year's International Federation of Agricultural Journalists Congress, nestled at the foot of the majestic Bernese Alps! Over the next four days you will have the opportunity to discover Swiss agriculture in all its diversity.

Despite its modest size, Switzerland is home to almost every type of agriculture – from large-scale farming on the plains to grain and vegetable

growing and livestock rearing. Swiss agriculture encompasses mountain farming, family-run farms and traditions that coexist with new technologies, and that also benefits from cutting-edge agricultural research.

Swiss agriculture has proven to be particularly resilient, continually adapting and taking up new challenges, just like the mountaineers who forged a path to the magnificent peaks that surround us. And now as our farmers face higher expectations from society, we must work to keep pace with market developments.

Switzerland's agricultural policy in the coming years must therefore provide our farmers with the tools that will enable them to maintain sustainable production while facing the unique challenges of our time – particularly those linked to climate change. It is vitally important that all stakeholders work together if this policy is to succeed.

I hope you enjoy your time here in Switzerland, and I encourage you to ask questions of the experts you will have the opportunity to meet during the congress.

**I'M SURE YOU'LL BE SURPRISED BY THE MANY FACETS OF AGRICULTURE IN SWITZERLAND.**

Yours sincerely

Guy Parmelin  
*Federal Councillor, Minister of Agriculture*

## WELCOME TO THE IFAJ CONGRESS 2024



We are happy to welcome you to our beautiful country! During your visit to Switzerland, you will get an impression of Swiss agriculture, learn a lot about production, markets, agricultural policy and our connections with Europe and the world. And, of course, you can enjoy the company of your colleagues. It's great to have agricultural journalists from all over the planet in Switzerland and to exchange ideas with them.

On the one hand, our motto, «High Elevations, High Expectations», addresses the topographical conditions that characterize Swiss agriculture. Interlaken, where our congress is based, is surrounded by hills and mountains where grassland and livestock farming dominate. On the other hand, it addresses society's expectations of agriculture. These relate to climate, biodiversity, animal welfare and traceability. Swiss farmers and their upstream and downstream business partners are trying to meet these expectations under difficult conditions today and in the future.

Among these business partners are Switzerland-based but internationally active companies like Nestlé, Syngenta and Emmi. Their top managers will discuss how to solve the overriding and world-wide dilemma of increasing food production while at the same time conserving natural resources.

**SO BE PREPARED FOR A FEW DAYS FULL OF IMPRESSIONS, INFORMATION, AND EMOTIONS!**

Roland Wyss-Aerni  
*President of the Organizing Committee*

## SMALL FARMS, BIG IMPACT



I have visited Switzerland several times and have had the opportunity to study its very interesting agriculture. World famous for its cheese and chocolate, but there are a lot more agricultural products to experience, like first class wines, charcuterie, fruit and vegetables.

It is also very interesting to see how Switzerland manages to keep a reasonably prosperous agriculture with many small scale farmers despite (or maybe

because) of it being independent and neutral. Like a small island surrounded by the European Union.

At my first Swiss IFAJ Congress, in Thun 2005, I was amazed at how the minister of agriculture praised the importance of agriculture. Not at all what I was used to hearing from politicians in my home country Sweden. The minister said that Swiss agriculture was important, not only for the food supply but also for civil defense. The minister added that a small neutral country needs to have people living even in the outback, and not leave any part of the country deserted.

Today politicians in many of other industrialised countries have realized the same. But for many, including in my country, it took a pandemic and a war in Ukraine before they realized it.

I look forward to once again being able to enjoy the beautiful nature and the clean and well organized cities. The theme of this year's congress is high elevations, high expectations.

**WE ALL HAVE HIGH EXPECTATIONS FOR THE CONGRESS IN THIS ALPINE COUNTRY IN THE MIDDLE OF EUROPE. I'M SURE THE SWISS ORGANIZERS WILL LIVE UP TO THEM.**

Lena Johansson,  
*IFAJ President*

## NOTHING CAN REPLACE FACE-TO-FACE ENCOUNTERS



I am delighted to welcome you all to the 68th IFAJ Congress, the 4th congress in Switzerland in the history of the IFAJ since 1956. After Canada 2023 and before Kenya 2025, we see ourselves as a bridge congress: within three years there will be the opportunity to get to know very diverse types of agriculture in different continents – what an opportunity and widening of horizons!

IFAJ congresses offer a great opportunity to get to know a country's agriculture and food industry 1:1 with all your senses. On this scale, they significantly complement the numerous press trips that are increasingly being offered. For the expansion and strengthening of global networks, such world congresses are a unique opportunity to meet colleagues, but also many exponents from the agricultural sector of a country and continent.

At this year's congress, we have a group of young students from the University of Illinois, USA, with us for the first time; they will meet with students from Switzerland and the IFAJ Young Leaders on the opening day of the congress. What an important task for the IFAJ - to network and promote young agricultural journalists. For a global industry that is challenged by digitalization, fake news and AI, personal contacts - and friendships within the IFAJ across all borders - are invaluable.

We present Switzerland to you from different perspectives in very various regions. Everywhere you go, you will see the important role that women play in agriculture.

I would like to thank all partners and sponsors for their support and especially my colleagues in the Organizing Committee for preparing the congress.

**NETWORK, ENJOY THE DAYS IN SWITZERLAND. FINALLY, IT'S CONGRESS TIME AGAIN!**

Kirsten Müller,  
*President Swiss Guild of Agricultural Journalists (SAJ)*



# Syngenta welcomes you to the IFAJ Congress 2024 in Switzerland



**Jeff Rowe** is Chief Executive Officer of Syngenta Group, which is headquartered in Basel, Switzerland.

Dear participant, dear colleague,

A warm welcome to Switzerland, the home of Syngenta!

We are delighted to see you attend this year's IFAJ Congress.

Our industry is facing two major challenges: food security and climate change, and there is no industry — no livelihood — that has a bigger role to play than agriculture.

The IFAJ is an umbrella organization of guilds, associations of agricultural journalists, and communicators. It is an open platform that together with its members, plays a critical role in ensuring farmers receive the respect they need to carry out their work and deliver on their mission to feed the world with healthy, affordable, and nutritious food.



At Syngenta, we are committed to playing our part in this effort. We have strong Swiss roots and are an innovation powerhouse with more than 60,000 employees around the world and over 150 research and development hubs globally.

Every year we invest \$2 billion in R&D across seeds, crop protection, biologicals, crop nutrition and digital innovations – so farmers around the world have the latest tools they need to grow crops in any conditions.

These include new technologies that enable crops to resist destructive pests and diseases, biological solutions that help fight drought and heat stress, as well as improved seed varieties with stronger root systems that can withstand floods and high winds.

We also believe that artificial intelligence and quantum computing will play a major role in helping to improve soil health and optimize application of inputs in the future.

We wish you a successful IFAJ Congress and I and my Syngenta colleagues look forward to connecting with you personally over the next few days.

Best regards,  
**Jeff Rowe**  
CEO Syngenta Group



# HOW TO FIND YOUR WAY AROUND THE CONGRESS

Schweizer Agrarjournalisten SAJ, the representative association of Swiss agricultural journalists and communication specialists in the agriculture and food industry, welcomes you to the annual congress of the International Federation of Agricultural Journalists IFAJ from 14 to 18 August 2024 in Interlaken. An impressive landscape and diverse agriculture await you!

The congress will shed light on the role of Swiss agriculture in a modern, constantly changing and demanding industrial and service society: Discover with us how the Swiss food and agriculture sector meets the needs of our planet and manages the high expectations of retailers and consumers.

## Welcome Desk

The Welcome Desk for your registration is open at Hotel Metropole on Tuesday Aug 13 from 10 am to 5 pm and Wednesday Aug 14 from 10 am to 5 pm. Participants will receive the congress bag and information.

## Phone number Welcome Desk

Tel. +41 76 459 39 39

The Hotel Metropole is within walking distance from Interlaken train station West – just follow the main street (Bahnhofstrasse).

Very few parking spaces are available around the Hotel Metropole.

## Information Desk/Congress Office

The Information Desk and Congress Office will be at your disposal during the congress day, August 15 at the Congress Center Interlaken. Take the entrance on the riverside. Parking spaces are available, also on the riverside.

## Congress Center Interlaken

Strandbadstrasse 44, 3800 Interlaken

## FIND YOUR HOTEL

### Hotel Interlaken

Höheweg 74  
CH-3800 Interlaken  
[www.hotelinterlaken.ch](http://www.hotelinterlaken.ch)  
Tel. +41 33 826 68 68  
Train station: Interlaken OST

### Hotel Merkur

Bahnhofstrasse 35  
CH-3800 Interlaken  
[www.merkurhotel-interlaken.ch](http://www.merkurhotel-interlaken.ch)  
Tel. +41 33 826 77 88  
Train station: Interlaken WEST

### Hotel Metropole

Höheweg 37  
CH-3800 Interlaken  
[www.metropole-interlaken.ch](http://www.metropole-interlaken.ch)  
Tel. +41 33 826 66 66  
Train station: Interlaken OST

### Youth Hostel

Untere Bönigstrasse 3A  
3800 Interlaken  
[www.youthhostel.ch/de/hostels/jugendherberge-interlaken](http://www.youthhostel.ch/de/hostels/jugendherberge-interlaken)  
Tel. +41 33 826 10 90  
Train station: Interlaken OST

All hotels in Interlaken are within walking distance to the Congress Center and the train stations.

## IFAJ ALLTECH YOUNG LEADERS

### Hotel Alpenrose & Edelweiss Lodge

Kirchgasse 72, CH-3812 Wilderswil  
[www.alpenrosehotel.ch](http://www.alpenrosehotel.ch)  
[www.edelweisslodge.ch](http://www.edelweisslodge.ch)  
Tel. +41 33 822 10 24  
Train station: Wilderswil



## THANK YOU PATRONS!

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| Appenzell Ausserrhoden                                    | Raclette Suisse  |
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| foodaktuell   | Stadt Rapperswil-Jona  |
| Galledia Fachmedien AG /<br>St.Galler Bauer               | St. Galler Bauernverband   |
| Gemeinde Interlaken                                       | St. Galler   |
| Gemeinde Neckertal  | Braunviehzuchtverband  |
| Gemeinde Stein AR   | Swissgenetics  |
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| Konferenz der kantonalen<br>Landwirtschaftsdirektoren LDK | Wander AG  |
| LBBZ Schluechthof   |  |
| Lindner Suisse GmbH                                       |  |

### Guest Card for Free Use of Public Transportation

After obtaining the guest card online or from your host you can profit from special deals and offers. You also travel for free on the local public transport Interlaken – Wilderswil. Each guest paying visitor's tax is entitled to a guest card. The card is personal and only valid during your stay in our region.

**Please carry the guest card with you at all times.**

We wish you a pleasant stay in the beautiful holiday region of Interlaken.

### Dress for a Successful Congress

The dress code is business casual for the congress day and the gala dinner on Thursday.

A casual dress code applies on the other days. Bear in mind that certain tours require good footwear and clothing for slightly colder temperatures. The excursion on Saturday takes us to over 3000 meters/11.100 ft above sea level, where you will walk on ice at the Ice Palace and also have the opportunity to take a short walk on snow – so you will need suitable footwear and a warmer jacket.

### We Are Taking Pictures – and so Are You

By registering for, attending and participating in the IFAJ Congress, the registrant or participant agrees to the use and distribution of his/her image by the Congress.

Are you posting your own pictures on social media platforms? Great, use the hashtag **#ifaj2024** – we want to see them!

Please send pictures of the 2024 Congress to Martina Graf, the Global Manager of IFAJ, by e-mail: [globalmanager@ifaj.org](mailto:globalmanager@ifaj.org)  
**Thank you!**



**Creating the best dairy moments is our passion.**

# MAP OF INTERLAKEN / INFO ABOUT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION



## Wilderswil Station – Interlaken WEST - Wilderswil

by public Bus (route 105), Transfer time 10 minutes

### Departure Wilderswil Station:

from 06:21 on every half an hour (:21 and :51)  
except for the last three busses, which depart at 19:21,  
20:21 and 21:21 respectively.

### Departure Interlaken WEST:

from 06:27 on every half an hour (:27 and :57)  
except for the last three busses, which depart at 20:57,  
21:57 and 22:57 respectively.

Find more details here:

[www.oev-info.ch/sites/default/files/fap/2021/pdf/31.105.pdf](http://www.oev-info.ch/sites/default/files/fap/2021/pdf/31.105.pdf)

## Wilderswil Station – Interlaken OST – Wilderswil

by railway, Transfer time 5 minutes

### Departure Wilderswil Station:

from 06:48 on every half an hour (:18 and :48) except for the  
last two trains, which depart at 20:48 and 21:48 respectively.

### Departure Interlaken OST:

from 06:04 on every half an hour (:04 and :34) except for the  
last two trains, which depart at 21:04 and 22:04 respectively.

For details and the online timetable visit:

[www.sbb.ch/en](http://www.sbb.ch/en) and

[www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/plan-book/timetable/](http://www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/plan-book/timetable/)

### Google Maps Offline Map

We recommend downloading Google Maps Switzerland  
offline to save data on the journey and at the Congress.



## CONNECTIONS TO INTERLAKEN

### Arrival by plane, train and car

Depending on your arrival time there will be greeters with the congress-logo at the airport or railway station.

### Zurich Airport

This is the largest Swiss airport. Direct trains run from here to Interlaken West and Interlaken East. The train journey takes just under 2 hours and 15 minutes.

On August 14 from 10 am to 4 pm our IFAJ staff will welcome you at Zurich Airport, on the level above the train departure gate, next to the SBB/train ticket desk. If needed they will assist you with your ticket and train connection to Interlaken.

### Geneva Airport

Numerous international flights also land at Geneva Airport. The journey from the airport train station to Interlaken takes a good three hours. You have to change trains in Bern and, depending on the timetable, also in Spiez.

The Pre-Congress tour starts in Geneva. If you have booked this tour, Geneva would be the preferred arrival airport.

### International Trains

Frankfurt Airport has a direct rail connection to Interlaken. The journey takes about 5 hours. Other international trains also stop in Interlaken, for example direct trains from Hamburg or from Milan with one change in Spiez.

### How to Travel to Interlaken

Here you will find your connection by train [www.sbb.ch/en](http://www.sbb.ch/en)

Buy your ticket at the ticket machine or at the SBB counter.

### Extended Stay in Switzerland

Will you stay additional days in Switzerland and like to explore our country by train, bus and boat? Don't miss checking the possibilities with the Swiss Travel Pass (also Swiss Travel Pass Flex) or Swiss Half Fare Card. Please check it before buying your ticket to Interlaken.

[www.sbb.ch/en/tickets-offers/tickets/guests-abroad.html](http://www.sbb.ch/en/tickets-offers/tickets/guests-abroad.html)

At the airport SBB/ticket counter desk they will advise you.

### Train Stations in Interlaken

There are two train stations in Interlaken. Interlaken West and Interlaken Ost. The stations are only around 2 kilometers apart and are both served by long-distance trains. The congress center is located roughly halfway between the two stations.

### Take Interlaken WEST for

- Welcome Desk (at Hotel Metropole) on Aug 13 and 14
- Pier for Dinner Lake Cruise on Aug 14
- Congress Center Interlaken Aug 15
- Hotel Metropole
- Hotel Merkur

### Take Interlaken OST for

- Hotel Interlaken
- Youth Hostel
- Alpenrose and Edelweiss Lodge  
(change to another train at Interlaken Ost for Wilderswil)

### Arrival by Car

Interlaken is easy to reach by car via the A8 freeway and highway. Take Exit 24 «Interlaken West» or Exit 26 «Interlaken Ost».

**Auf die inneren  
Werte kommt es an.**  
*Schweizer Milchprodukte*

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### Excursion to Jungfrauoch

Icy air sweeps over your face, snow crunches underfoot, and the panorama almost takes your breath away: on one side the view of the Swiss Plateau as far as France, on the other the Aletsch Glacier, lined with four thousand meter peaks. Standing on the Jungfrauoch 3,454 meters above sea level, you can feel it with your first step: this is a different world. It's one you will experience on August 17.

The Jungfrau railways make possible rapid travel up to high altitudes. Air pressure and thus the oxygen in the air we breathe reduce with increasing altitude. A healthy body has a first-class acclimatization mechanism that allows a relatively fast ascent to medium and higher altitudes (to around 4000 m) without any detrimental effect on health. The classic forms of altitude sickness (high-altitude edemas) first appear after a 6–12 hour stay at over 2500 m.

A high-altitude stay carries risks for persons suffering from certain cardiac, lung, circulatory and blood disorders.

Further information:

[www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/faq/#7048](http://www.jungfrau.ch/en-gb/faq/#7048)

**JUNGFRAU**  
TOP OF EUROPE

# Jungfrauoch

TOP OF EUROPE



[jungfrau.ch](http://jungfrau.ch)



# INTERLAKEN AT A GLANCE

Interlaken, located in the Interlaken-Oberhasli administrative district of the canton of Bern, is a renowned tourist destination nestled in the heart of the Bernese Oberland region of the Swiss Alps. It serves as the primary gateway to the region's breathtaking mountains and pristine lakes.

## A Unique Location

Situated on the flat alluvial land known as Bödeli, Interlaken lies between Lake Brienz to the east and Lake Thun to the west, with the River Aare flowing through the town. This unique position provides stunning views and easy access to the surrounding natural beauty. The town is also a starting point for excursions to the Bernese Alps, including the famous peaks of Eiger, Mönch, and Jungfrau.

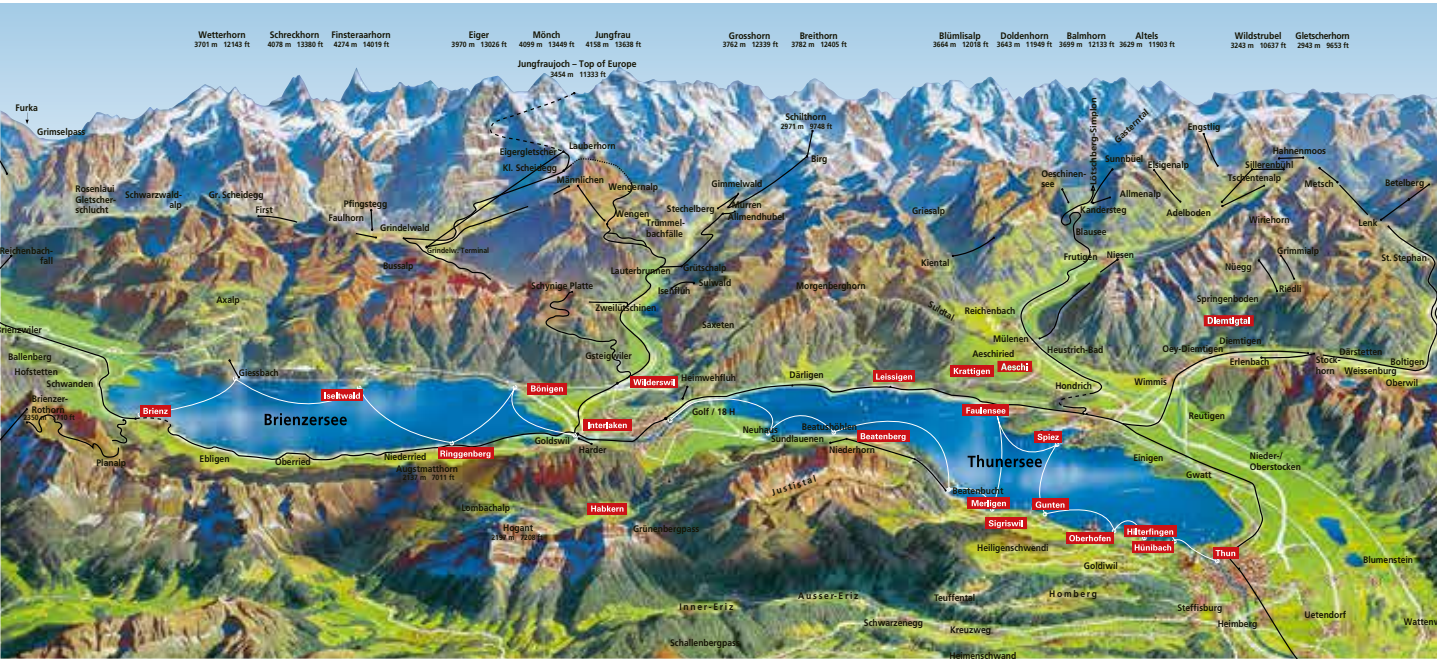
Interlaken has long been a magnet for mountaineers, artists, writers, and musicians from around the world. The town's rich cultural history is evident in the numerous works of art, literature, and music inspired by the majestic landscape of the Bernese Oberland.

## Excursions in and around Interlaken

Interlaken's position between two of Switzerland's most beautiful lakes is one of its defining features. A boat trip on Lake Thun or Lake Brienz offers breathtaking views and the chance to visit the Giessbach Falls, the St. Beatus Caves, and charming villages like Iseltwald, Brienz, and Thun.

The surrounding area offers a variety of excursions. For example, a nostalgic trip to the Schynige Platte, a natural paradise with panoramic views or a visit to the Lauterbrunnen Valley, famous for its waterfalls and traffic-free mountain villages like Mürren and Wengen. Other notable destinations include the Brienzer Rothorn, the Niederhorn, and the Schilthorn, each offering unique experiences and stunning vistas.

Interlaken is also a paradise for adventure sports enthusiasts. The region offers activities such as white-water rafting or paragliding. Winter sports are equally thrilling, with opportunities for skiing, snowshoeing, sled dog tours, ice climbing and tackling the Bernese Oberland's legendary Via Ferratas.



# THE CONGRESS SPEAKERS

The speakers on Thursday (congress day in the Congress Center) and on Saturday at the Grenchenhof, Wilderswil



## **Guy Parmelin, Federal Councillor, Minister of Agriculture**

Guy Parmelin has been a member of the Swiss Federal Council since December 9, 2015, and has headed the Federal Department of Economic Affairs, Education and Research (EAER) since

January 2019. Born in 1959 in Bursins (VD), he holds a master's diploma in agriculture and viticulture and worked from 1985 to 2015 as a master farmer and winemaker. Parmelin was a member of the National Council from 2003 to 2015 and held various political positions in the Canton of Vaud. He is a member of the Swiss People's Party (SVP).

## **Christian Hofer, Director of the Federal Office for Agriculture**

Christian Hofer has been the Director of the Federal Office for Agriculture since December 2019. Previously he was Head of the Bern Cantonal Office for Agriculture and Nature for almost two years. From 2009 to 2017, he served as an Assistant Director of the Federal Office for Agriculture. Hofer studied Agronomic Engineering at the Federal Institute of Technology ETH Zurich, graduating in 1998 and obtained an MBA in Integrated Management from Bern University of Applied Sciences. From 2000 to 2003, he managed the Profi Lait office for professional milk production. In 2003, he became Head of Sales Switzerland at DeLaval.



## **Fritz Glauser, Vice President Swiss Farmers' Union**

Fritz Glauser is the Vice President of the Swiss Farmers' Union and the President of the Swiss Grain Producers' Association. Glauser is a trained farmer and took over a farm business in 1994 in Châttonnay (FR) with his family. Since 2013, he has partnered with his son Andreas to manage the 40-hectare farm. The farm, operated organically, includes dairy farming, beef farming, arable farming, direct sales, pig fattening and 1.5 hectares of forest. Fritz Glauser has held numerous other roles in agricultural organizations: The Vice-Presidency and Presidency of Swiss Granum, as well as the Vice-Presidency and Presidency of the Union of Fribourg Farmers.







**Jonas Schälle, Project Manager  
Agriculture BirdLife Switzerland**

Jonas Schälle is a sociologist, specialized in agroecology, and did research on agroecology in Bolivia. Schälle is Project Manager at «Obstgarten Farnsberg», an exemplary eco-

logical project since 2004. In close cooperation with farmers, local nature conservation associations and the Ebenrain Agricultural Center, habitats are being enhanced to enable the project's target species to survive in the project perimeter. With 69,000 members, BirdLife Switzerland is one of the largest nature conservation organizations in Switzerland.



**Christophe Barman, President Fédération  
Romande des Consommateurs**

The economist and entrepreneur Christophe Barman has been President of the Fédération Romande des Consommateurs (FRC) since 2017. He holds a MSc for Management & Economics

of the University of Lausanne. The main concerns of the FRC are transparency and fairness in the markets and educating consumers in the French-speaking part of Switzerland about their rights. Barman is also co-founder and CEO of Loyco, a non-hierarchical consulting company.



**Urs Riedener, Chairman of the Board  
of Directors Emmi Group**

Urs Riedener was CEO of the Emmi Group for 14 years before handing over this position in 2023 to become Chairman of the Board of Directors. He holds a degree in economics from

the University of St. Gallen and completed further training at the Stanford Business School. Riedener held management positions at Lindt & Sprüngli and Migros and is a Member of the Board of Advisors at Schwarz Group. Emmi is the leading manufacturer of high-quality dairy products in Switzerland, with a strong local presence in 14 countries. The company distributes its quality products in around 60 countries and runs 57 production sites in eleven countries. With more than 9,000 employees, around 70% of whom work outside Switzerland, the Emmi Group generated sales of CHF 4.2 billion in 2023.

**Mark Schneider, CEO Nestlé**

Mark Schneider became Nestlé's Chief Executive Officer in January 2017. From 2003 to 2016, Schneider was CEO of the health company Fresenius Group. Between 1989 and 2001, he held several senior executive positions with the investment company Haniel Group. He has a graduate degree in Finance and Accounting and a doctoral degree in Business Administration from the University of St. Gallen, Switzerland. He also holds an MBA from Harvard University. Mark Schneider has worked with Nestlé's Board and executive team to sharpen the company's strategic focus on high-growth categories like coffee, pet care and nutritional health products. Nestlé has 270,000 employees in 188 countries and manages over 2000 brands.



**Jeff Rowe, CEO Syngenta Group**

Jeff Rowe joined Syngenta as President of Syngenta Seeds and North America in September 2016. He was responsible for the successful turnaround of the Seeds business, with outstanding growth and return to profitability.

He has also spearheaded Syngenta Group's efforts into regenerative agriculture and soil health. Prior to joining Syngenta, Jeff served in several leadership roles at DuPont Pioneer over a 20-year period. Before being appointed CEO of the Syngenta Group, Jeff Rowe served as head of the crop protection business, Syngenta Group's largest business unit.

Syngenta Group is one of the world's biggest agricultural technology companies, with roots going back more than 250 years. With more than 59,000 employees, operating in more than 100 countries, the company strives to transform agriculture with science-driven, technological innovations to deliver high productivity and high-quality food while fighting climate change and restoring nature.



## THANKS TO REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE WE CAN:

- improve soil health
- promote biodiversity
- protect water cycles
- help make food supply resilient
- support communities
- and reduce our emissions

[www.nestle.ch/de/nachhaltigkeit](http://www.nestle.ch/de/nachhaltigkeit)



Good food. Good life

**Nicole Ramsebner, IP-Suisse**

Nicole Ramsebner has been Head of Sustainability at IP-Suisse, the Swiss producers' association for Integrated Production, since February 2022. She graduated as an agronomist at the Bern University of Applied Sciences for Agriculture,

Forestry, and Food Sciences (BFH-HAFL). IP-Suisse is the Swiss Producers' Association for environmentally and animal-friendly agriculture. IP-Suisse awards the well-known IP-Suisse label with the ladybug.

**Balz Strasser, Director Bio Suisse**

Dr. Balz Strasser has been the CEO of the association of Swiss organic farmers, Bio Suisse, since 2018. He is a certified agricultural economist from ETH and his family ran one of the first organic farms in the Canton of Jura.

He worked for the aid organization Helvetas and founded Pakka in 2012, a company specialized in building sustainable value chains in developing countries. From 2014 to 2017, he led Swissnex India, an initiative of the Swiss State Secretariat for education, research, and innovation. Bio Suisse represents the 7400 organic farmers in Switzerland and licenses the well-known «Knospe» label.

**Nina Buchmann, Swiss Federal Institute of Technology ETH Zurich**

Prof. Dr. Nina Buchmann has been a professor of grassland sciences at the Institute of Agricultural Sciences at ETH Zurich since 2003. Among other things, she is a founding member of the

World Food System Center at ETH Zurich, which does research on sustainable food systems, and has been inducted into the German Academy of Natural Scientists Leopoldina. ETH Zurich is a leading research university, globally recognized for its excellence in science and engineering.

**Eva Reinhard, Director Swiss Federal Research Institute Agroscope**

Dr. Eva Reinhard has been leading Agroscope, Switzerland's competence center for agricultural research, since 2018. Prior to that, she was Deputy Director of the Federal Office for Agriculture. Reinhard studied biology at ETH Zurich and worked at various international universities as well as at Sandoz in Austria and the European Chemicals Bureau in Italy. Agroscope focuses on developing sustainable and innovative solutions for agriculture to strengthen the competitiveness of Swiss agriculture while considering ecological and social aspects.

**Alexandra Stark, AI Expert at CH Media**

Alexandra Stark has been working at CH Media since 2020, initially as Storytelling Expert and since January 2024 as an AI Expert. CH Media is one of the leading media companies in Switzerland. Furthermore, Stark has been the Head of Multimedia and Data Journalism Studies at the MAZ journalism school since 2010. Before 2010, she worked as a freelance journalist for various media and as a consultant, including for the media companies Ringier and Neue Zürcher Zeitung.

**Christina Senn-Jakobsen, Swiss Food and Nutrition Valley**

Christina Senn-Jakobsen is the Managing Director of the Swiss Food & Nutrition Valley (SFNV). She holds an MSc in European Food Studies from Wageningen University. Senn-Jakobsen worked at Mondelez as Senior Brand Manager Toblerone, at Cadbury as Senior Strategy & Innovation Manager, and as an independent consultant. Swiss Food & Nutrition Valley was founded in 2020 and promotes innovation in food and nutrition sciences in Switzerland and worldwide.





### **Christian Robin, Executive Director Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa**

Christian Robin has been Executive Director of the Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa since June 2021. Previously, he worked at the Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs (SECO) as Deputy Head of Trade Promotion. He holds a licentiate in Political Science from the University of Zurich and a Ph.D. in Political Economy from the Center for Comparative and International Studies Zurich. The Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa (SWISSCO) was founded in 2018 and brings together actors from the cocoa and chocolate industry, the public sector, non-governmental organizations, and research institutes. The platform aims to improve the living conditions of cocoa farmers, protect natural resources, and promote a sustainable cocoa value chain.



### **Angelika Hardegger, Reporter Die Republik**

Since 2022, Angelika Hardegger has been a renowned reporter at «Republik», an independent online magazine known for its thorough and investigative journalism founded in 2018.

Hardegger studied international relations in Geneva and completed her master's degree in History at the University of Bern. She began her journalistic career at the «Neue Zürcher Zeitung» (NZZ), where she worked for five years in the domestic section and completed her traineeship. In 2022, she was awarded the Zurich Journalism Prize for her story «Liebe Bauern, lasst uns reden» (Dear Farmers, Let's Talk).



### **Anne Kokenbrink, Journalist FAZ**

Anne Kokenbrink is a distinguished journalist currently working in the economic section of the «Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung» (FAZ). After completing a commercial apprenticeship in an agricultural publishing house, she studied

Industrial Engineering in Agribusiness at the University of Osnabrück. During her studies, she completed internships on agricultural farms. Before joining the Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung, Kokenbrink wrote for the specialized agricultural magazine «top agrar». In February 2023, she took on her current role at the FAZ, where she focuses on agricultural economics and related issues.

### **Andreas Wyss, President «Das Beste der Region»**

Andreas Wyss is the president of the association «Das Beste der Region». Wyss holds a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics from the University of Applied Sciences for Agricultural, Forestry, and Food Sciences (BFH-HAFL) and was the Managing Director of the Bernese Farmers' Association from 2012 to 2020. «Das Beste der Region» promotes the sale of regional food specialties and value creation in the regions. The association co-owns the «regio.garantie» seal, which certifies regional products.



### **Markus Rediger, Swiss Farmers' Campaign**

Markus Rediger has spent the last 25 years as Managing Director of the Agricultural Information Center LID in Bern. Prior to this, he was Editor-in-Chief and Publishing Manager of the agricultural magazine UFA-Revue. He also taught at agricultural colleges. He studied agronomy and communication at Swiss Federal Institute of Technology ETH Zurich, the University of Illinois and the University of Applied Sciences Northwestern Switzerland. Today, he continues to be involved in projects that build bridges between farmers and consumers. Within the IFAJ, Markus helped to further develop the organization on the IFAJ Presidium since 2004, from 2012–2016 as IFAJ President.



### **Stefan Kohler, Director Branchenorganisation Milch**

Stefan Kohler has been the managing director of the Branchenorganisation Milch since 2014. Prior to this, he was the editor-in-chief of the agricultural magazine «Die Grüne» from 2001 to 2013. Stefan Kohler holds a Ph.D. in Geography and has studied Agricultural Economics as a minor subject. Under his leadership, important initiatives such as the promotion of sustainable milk production were driven forward. The Branchenorganisation Milch was founded in 2009 and includes 37 regional and national organizations of milk producers, milk processors, and retailers. The purpose of the Branchenorganisation Milch is to strengthen the economic viability of its members by promoting value creation and market shares in domestic and foreign markets.







# MAIN CONGRESS INTERLAKEN

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 14

| Hotel Metropol |       |  |
|----------------|-------|--|
| From           | Till  | Programm   |
| 07.00          | 08.30 | <b>Breakfast @Hotels</b>   |
| 08.30          | 12.00 | <b>Congress Registration</b><br>Hotel Metropole                                  |
| 07.45          | 08.45 | <b>IFAJ Committee Meetings</b><br>Hotel Metropole 1 <sup>st</sup> floor          |
| 09.00          | 12.00 | <b>IFAJ Executive Committee Meeting</b><br>Hotel Metropole 1 <sup>st</sup> floor |
| 12.00          | 13.00 | <b>Standing Lunch<br/>for IFAJ-Executive Committee</b>                           |
| 13.00          | 16.00 | <b>IFAJ Delegate Assembly</b><br>Hotel Metropole 1 <sup>st</sup> floor           |
| 17.45          | 18.00 | <b>Individual Transfer to the Ship's Landing Stage</b><br>(Interlaken West)      |
| 18.00          | 22.00 | <b>Apéro and Welcome-Dinner<br/>on ship @ Lake of Thun</b>                       |
| 22.00          | 00.00 | <b>Hang-out @ IFAJ Bar</b><br>Hotel Merkur (Run by Swiss colleagues)             |

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| Congress Center  |       |   |
|--|-------|---|
| From   | Till  | Programm  |
| 07.00  | 08.00 | <b>Breakfast @Hotels</b>  |
| All day meetings and infomarket at the Congress Center, Kursaal Interlaken |       |   |
| 08.30  | 08.40 | <b>Welcome Words</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Roland Wyss-Aerni, President of the Organizing Committee</li><li>– Kirsten Müller, President Swiss Guild of Agricultural Journalists (SAJ)</li></ul>   |
| 08.40  | 09.00 | <b>Welcome Words</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Guy Parmelin, Swiss Federal Councillor, Minister of Agriculture</li></ul>  |
| 09.00  | 09.20 | <b>How Switzerland Reconciles Food supply and Sustainability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Christian Hofer, Director of the Federal Office for Agriculture (FOAG)</li></ul>   |
| 09.20  | 09.40 | <b>How Swiss Farmers Meet Society's High Expectations</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Fritz Glauser, Vice President Swiss Farmers Union (SFU)</li></ul>   |
| 09.40  | 10.10 | <b>Panel: What Are the Needs of Consumers and Nature?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Jonas Schälle, Project Manager Agriculture BirdLife Switzerland</li><li>– Christophe Barman, President Fédération Romande des Consommateurs FRC</li></ul> |
| 10.10  | 10.40 | <b>Break and networking / Infomarket</b>  |
| 10.40  | 10.55 | <b>Emmi - More than Swiss Cheese</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Urs Riedener, Chairman of the Board of Directors Emmi Group</li></ul>  |
| 10.55  | 11.10 | <b>Nestlé – Regenerative Practices for the World Market</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Mark Schneider, CEO Nestlé</li></ul>  |
| 11.10  | 11.25 | <b>Syngenta: Reconciling Sustainability and Productivity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Jeff Rowe, CEO Syngenta Group</li></ul>  |
| 11.25  | 12.00 | <b>Panel and Q&amp;A</b><br>with Mark Schneider, Urs Riedener and Jeff Rowe   |
| 12.00  | 12.15 | <b>Swiss Food Research: Pitches from Swiss Agri-Food Start-Ups</b>  |
| 12.15  | 14.00 | <b>Lunch Break</b><br>Standing Lunch and Infomarket   |

| Congress Center |       |   |
|-----------------|-------|---|
| From            | Till  | Programm  |
| 14.00           | 14.45 | <b>Breakout Session 1</b> (Congress Centre): <b>How to Bring Sustainability to the Market</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Balz Strasser, CEO Bio Suisse</li><li>– Nicole Ramseber, Sustainability Officer IP-Suisse</li></ul>   |
|                 |       | <b>Breakout Session 2</b> (Room «Brünig» 1 <sup>st</sup> floor Congress centre): <b>How to Organize Private Standards for Production</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Stefan Kohler, Director Branchenorganisation Milch</li><li>– Christian Robin, Manager Monitoring and Climate, Swiss Platform for Sustainable Cocoa</li></ul> |
| 15.00           | 15.45 | <b>Breakout Session 3</b> (Congress Centre): <b>Research and Innovation: Meeting Expectations of the Society</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Nina Buchmann, Professor at the Departement of Environmental System Science, ETH Zurich,</li><li>– Eva Reinhard, Head of Agroscope</li></ul>   |
|                 |       | <b>Breakout Session 4</b> (Room «Brünig» 1 <sup>st</sup> floor Congress centre): <b>Professional Development: Latest Technologies for Agricultural Journalists</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Alexandra Stark, Journalist, AI specialist</li></ul>   |
| 15.45           | 16.00 | <b>Short Break</b>  |
| 16.00           | 16.45 | <b>Wrap-up: Essentials from the Discussions</b><br>moderated by Hansjürg Jäger  |
| 16.45           | 17.00 | <b>A Swiss Ecosystem Approach to Driving Impact at Scale</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>– Christina Senn-Jacobsen, Managing Director Swiss Food &amp; Nutrition Valley</li></ul>   |
| 17.00           | 19.00 | <b>Free time in Interlaken / Infomarket until 18.00</b>   |
| 19.00           | 22.00 | <b>Gala Dinner with Cheeses from Switzerland by Ivo Adam</b><br>(Theatersaal, Congress Center, Kursaal, Interlaken)   |
|                 |       | <b>Performance</b><br><b>«William Tell and the Origin of Switzerland 1291»</b><br>will provide an insight into the birth of Switzerland. The topics of liberation from tyranny, autocrats and the fight for self-determination, freedom of opinion and ultimately democracy are more relevant today than ever.                                |
|                 |       | <b>IFAJ Star Prize Award Ceremony</b>   |
| 22.00           | 00.00 | <b>Hang-out @ IFAJ Bar</b><br>Hotel Merkur (Run by Swiss Colleagues)  |

**FRYDAY AUGUST 16**

## TOUR A–E

The tours on Friday go in all directions and start early in the morning. Please familiarize yourself with the boarding point for you, which varies depending on the hotel and location. Make sure to be ready for your departure at the times according to the table on the next page. Most tours are fully booked so it is not possible to change the tour at the last minute.

### TOUR A: EASTERN SWITZERLAND

Tour leader: **Melanie Graf**,  
*Editor-in-Chief St. Galler Bauer*



In Eastern Switzerland, tradition meets innovation. The landscape with its scattered individual farms, rolling hills and mountains is charming. The area is agricultural and traditional.

### TOUR B: SWISS MIDLAND

Tour leader: **David Eppenberger**,  
*Past President Swiss Ag Journalists SAJ*



The Central Plateau (Mittelland) stretches from Lake Geneva in the southwest to Lake Constance in the northeast. It is the most densely populated region in Switzerland, and agriculture is practiced on about half of the area.



### TOUR C: EMMENTAL TO SIMMENTAL

Tour leader: **Kirsten Müller**,  
*President Swiss Ag Journalists SAJ and*  
**Adrian Krebs**, *Media spokesperson,*  
*Editor bioaktuell.ch*



This tour will bring the participants to the heart of the famous Emmental and of the Swiss Alps. The main subjects are sustainability, cheese production, mechanization and mountain farming under difficult alpine conditions.



### TOUR D: VALAIS

Tour leader: **Christian Carron**,  
*Head of Promotion and*  
*Communication Canton Valais*



The Valais is a canton in southern Switzerland, home to the pyramid-shaped Matterhorn. It is known for mountain pastures with milk and cheese production, First-class vineyards and fruit cultivation.



### TOUR E: CENTRAL SWITZERLAND

Tour leader: **Seppi Scherer**,  
*Editor-in-Chief of BauernZeitung*  
*Zentralschweiz/Aargau*



The tour is a show of diversity: Cattle, pigs, mushrooms, Cellar cheese and the Burgrain concept on sustainability. It takes the participants over the Brünig Pass into the heartland of Switzerland.



### EVENING:

Back from the tours in Interlaken: We want to celebrate the evening together at the IFAJ bar in the Hotel Merkur!

**Boarding times für Tours A – E : next page.**

FRIDAY AUGUST 16

TOUR A-E

|                                   |                         | A)<br>Eastern<br>Switzerland | B)<br>Swiss Midland | C)<br>From Emmental<br>to Simmental | D)<br>Valais<br>(updated)                                  | E)<br>Central<br>Switzerland |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------------------|--|------------------------------|
| Your hotel                        | You board from here     | departure time               | departure time      | departure time                      | departure time**   | departure time               |
| Hotel Alpenrose + Edelweiss Lodge | in front of hotel       | 05:05                        | 06:20               | 05:50                               | train departure 06:48<br>(arrival 06.54 Ost, change train) | 06:50                        |
| Hotel Merkur                      | in front of hotel       | 05:25                        | 07:00               | 06:30                               | train departure 07:05                                      | 07:10                        |
| Hotel Metropole                   | walk to Interlaken WEST | 05:25                        | 07:00               | 06:30                               | train departure 07:05                                      | 07:10                        |
| Hotel Interlaken                  | walk to Interlaken OST  | 05:45                        | 06:40               | 06:10                               | train departure 07:00                                      | 07:30                        |
| Youth Hostel                      | walk to Interlaken OST  | 05:45                        | 06:40               | 06:10                               | train departure 07:00                                      | 07:30                        |

Please add walking time form hotel to boarding point (departure time)

☐ GREEN: Final Departure from Interlaken

\*\* Train departure for Spiez and Valais with Train RE 9  
Ost: 07:00 / West: 07:05

Due to traffic restrictions, the buses cannot get to the hotels in town.



SATURDAY AUGUST 17

| Grenchenhof, Wilderswil |       |  |
|-------------------------|-------|--|
| From                    | Till  | Programm   |
| 07.30                   | 08.30 | <b>Breakfast @Hotels</b>   |
| 08.45                   | 09.15 | <b>Individual Transfer to Grenchenhof Farm,</b><br>Grenchenweg 6, Wilderswil<br>by Public Bus (Transfer-Information<br>at the Welcome desk and in your Hotel)  |
| 09.30                   | 09.45 | <b>Presentation of the Farm</b><br>by Karin and Urs Wyss   |
| 09.45                   | 11.00 | <b>Barn 1: Local Farmers Build Bridges</b><br>– Markus Rediger, Former Director<br>Agricultural Information Center LID<br><b>How Do Journalists View Swiss Agriculture?</b><br>– Angelika Hardegger, Journalist Die Republik |
| 09.45                   | 11.00 | <b>Barn 2: Regional Food as a Brand</b><br>– Andreas Wyss, President Das Beste der Region<br><b>How Do Journalists View Swiss Agriculture?</b><br>– Anne Kokenbrink, Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung                          |
| 11.00                   | 12.45 | <b>Lunch Break</b>   |



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| Jungfrauoch |       |  |
|-------------|-------|--|
| From        | Till  | Programm   |
| 13.00       | 13.30 | <b>Walk to railway station Wilderswil</b>  |
| 13.40       | 14.00 | <b>Take Train to Grindelwald</b>   |
| 14.04       | 15.11 | <b>V-Bahn:</b><br>Grindelwald Terminal – Eigergletscher,<br>Transfer to Jungfrauoch by cable car and alpine train.   |
| 15.11       | 17.47 | <b>Top of Europe, Jungfrauoch,</b><br>3450 m above sea level. The highest railroad station<br>in Europe. The Jungfrauoch is located in the heart of the<br>Swiss Alps Jungfrau-Aletsch Unesco World Heritage Site.                               |
| 17.47       | 18.30 | <b>Transfer from Jungfrauoch to Kleine Scheidegg,</b><br>2472 m a. s. by train   |
| 18.30       | 21.30 | <b>Farewell Dinner at Restaurant Eigernordwand,</b><br>Kleine Scheidegg. (Kleine Scheidegg is the pass summit<br>(2061 m above sea level) between the Eiger (3967 m)<br>and the Lauberhorn (2472 m)<br><b>Handover of the IFAJ Flag to Kenya</b> |
| 21.30       | 22.54 | <b>Transfer to Grindelwald and Interlaken Ost (Train)</b>  |
| 23.00       | open  | <b>IFAJ-Band live / Hang-out @ Frankie's Bar,</b><br>Kammstrasse 11, Interlaken<br>(3 minute walk from train station Interlaken Ost)   |

SUNDAY AUGUST 18

| Hotels |       |  |
|--------|-------|--|
| From   | Till  | Programm   |
| 07.30  | 09.30 | <b>Breakfast @Hotels</b>   |
| 08.30  | 12.00 | – Departure<br>– Post Congress Tour Eastern<br>Switzerland / Austria |

fenaco  
de la terre à la table



## ABOUT SWITZERLAND

Switzerland, with a population of approximately 8.4 million people, is a land of remarkable diversity. It is quite small in size: Travellers never fail to be astonished by the short distances within Switzerland. One needs no more than five hours from one end to the other. This compactness demands mutual respect and consideration among its residents. The country boasts four official languages: German, French, Italian, and Rhaeto-Romanic, each adding to the rich tapestry of Swiss culture. About 65% of the population speak Swiss-German, 20% French, 8% Italian, and 0.5% Rhaeto-Romanic, predominantly in the Canton of Graubünden. This linguistic variety means that cultural experiences can differ significantly from one region to another, fostering a unique sense of regional identity.



### Federalism and Direct Democracy

Switzerland is renowned for its political structure, which includes 26 cantons, each with a high degree of autonomy. This federal system allows cantons to maintain their own constitutions, laws, and governmental bodies, provided they do not conflict with federal law. The country operates under a system of direct democracy, enabling citizens to vote on various issues, from tax rates to international treaties. Swiss citizens aged 18 and above can participate in elections and referendums, ensuring a high level of civic engagement. This robust democratic framework empowers individuals to influence decisions at local, cantonal, and national levels.

### Fundamental Rights and Equality

Switzerland places a strong emphasis on fundamental rights and equality. The constitution guarantees non-discrimination based on origin, race, gender, religion, or sexual orientation. Men and women enjoy equal rights, including the freedom to choose their profession and marital partner. Religious freedom is also enshrined in the constitution, allowing individuals to follow their own beliefs while respecting others' rights to do the same. This commitment to equality and individual rights underpins the harmonious coexistence of diverse communities within the country.

### Education and Vocational Training

Education is highly valued in Switzerland, beginning with compulsory schooling at the primary and secondary levels. The state provides free, high-quality education for nine years, divided into primary (six years) and secondary level I (three years). After compulsory education, students can pursue various paths, including vocational training or higher secondary education. Vocational training is particularly popular, with two-thirds of Swiss youths opting for apprenticeships that combine on-the-job training with classroom instruction. This system ensures that students are well-prepared for the professional world and can attain further education if desired.

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## Work and Social Security

In Switzerland, work is not only a means of financial independence but also a cornerstone of social integration and self-esteem. Employment contracts clearly outline rights and duties, including working hours, wages, and holiday entitlements. While there is no statutory minimum wage, many sectors have collectively agreed minimum wages. Social security is comprehensive, covering unemployment, health, old age, and disability. Health insurance is mandatory, providing coverage for medical treatments and prescribed medications. In case of unemployment, all employees are insured, and women are entitled to 14 weeks of maternity leave at 80% of their previous income.

## Solidarity and Personal Responsibility

Switzerland's social system is a balance of solidarity and personal responsibility. The federal constitution mandates that individuals contribute to society to the best of their ability while ensuring that those in need receive adequate support. This includes provisions for old-age pensions, disability benefits, and survivor pensions. The country also promotes saving for retirement through pension funds and private savings, incentivized by tax benefits. In cases where individuals cannot sustain themselves, social welfare, funded by taxes, provides a safety net.

## A Unique Blend of Diversity and Tradition

Switzerland's mosaic of cultures and languages along with its unique blend of cultural diversity, strong democratic traditions, and a robust social security system creates a society that values both individual rights and communal responsibilities. This delicate balance contributes to the high quality of life and the stable, prosperous environment that the country is known for. Whether through its multilingual communities, decentralized governance, or commitment to equality and education, Switzerland exemplifies how a small nation can achieve remarkable harmony and success.



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# ABOUT SWITZERLAND'S AGRICULTURE

Swiss agriculture plays a vital role in supplying the population with high-quality food and significantly enhances the landscape's appeal, which in turn boosts tourism. Despite its importance for daily life and cultural identity, agriculture contributes less than 1% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Nevertheless, Swiss farmers meet high societal expectations through a blend of tradition, innovation, and sustainable practices.

## Structural Development and Changes

Switzerland has around 48,000 farms, averaging 22 hectares each. The number of farms has significantly decreased over the past decades, from over 80,000 in 1996 to the current number. Simultaneously, the size of the remaining farms has increased, with a rise in agribusinesses managing over 30 hectares. Most of these farms specialize in livestock farming, particularly dairy and beef production.

The workforce in the agricultural sector has also evolved. In 1996, over 200,000 people were employed in agriculture, compared to about 160,000 today. This reduction reflects the broader trend of modernization and efficiency improvements in farming practices. Despite the decrease in the number of farms and agricultural workers, productivity and sustainability have seen significant advancements.

## Agricultural Production and Market

In 2022, Swiss agriculture generated revenues of CHF 12 billion, with half of this income coming from livestock farming. Dairy and beef production are particularly significant, underpinned by Switzerland's reputation for high-quality cheese and meat products. Crop farming, including arable farming, fodder production, fruit growing, viticulture, and horticulture accounts for just over a third of agricultural revenue.

While most agricultural produce is destined for the domestic market, the Swiss food industry also plays a crucial role in the export sector. Products such as cheese, baked goods, and beverages are exported, indirectly promoting Swiss agricultural standards and quality on an international level. This dual focus on domestic satisfaction and international reputation helps sustain the sector's economic viability.

## Landscape Conservation and Food Security

Agriculture uses about half of Switzerland's land area, contributing significantly to the protection and preservation of natural resources and the landscape. These activities are crucial for decentralized settlement and animal welfare. Swiss farmers produce over 50% of the food consumed in the country, thereby ensuring national food security.

The well-maintained landscapes not only support agriculture but also enhance Switzerland's scenic beauty, which is a significant draw for tourists. This interconnection between agriculture and tourism highlights the multifaceted benefits of sustainable farming practices. The emphasis on maintaining biodiversity and natural habitats further strengthens Switzerland's commitment to environmental stewardship.

## Swiss Climate Strategy for Agriculture

Swiss agriculture is both affected by and contributes to climate change. The Swiss Climate Strategy for Agriculture sets priorities for adapting to climate change and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. This includes measures in areas such as livestock management, manure handling, land management, and energy production.

Climate change poses risks like reduced crop yields, damage to agricultural land from floods and landslides, and increasing water scarcity. However, milder temperatures also offer new opportunities for warm-requiring crops and extended growing seasons.

## Action Options and Adaptation Strategies

Adaptation strategies include optimizing water management, growing drought-tolerant crops, preventing heat stress in animals and plants, and monitoring and controlling potentially harmful organisms. These strategies aim to make agricultural practices more resilient and sustainable in the face of climatic shifts.

Specific strategies include:

- Site suitability: Ensuring that agricultural production aligns with changing environmental conditions.
- Heavy rainfall management: Reducing erosion and nutrient leaching risks.
- Drought management: Improving soil water retention and efficient irrigation practices.
- Heat stress prevention: Implementing measures like shading and cooling for animals and plants.
- Pest management: Early detection and control of harmful organisms, including cross-border collaboration.

## Swiss Quality Products:

### Meat and Dairy Production

Swiss agriculture is renowned for its high-quality products. Swiss consumers highly value the variety and quality of local products, ranging from meat and dairy products to fresh fruits and vegetables.

Animal welfare and quality processes are at the forefront of meat production. Switzerland has the world's lowest livestock density limits and various voluntary animal welfare programs that enhance consumer trust. Swiss dairy products, such as cheese and yogurt, benefit from the abundant grasslands.

Swiss meat production emphasizes animal welfare and sustainable practices. The country's stringent animal welfare laws and voluntary programs ensure that livestock are raised in humane conditions, which is reflected in the quality of the meat. Examples include suckler cow husbandry, where cattle are raised in near-natural conditions.

# ASR

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## Swiss cattle breeders association

The Association of Swiss Cattle Breeders (ASR) is the umbrella organisation of the Swiss cattle breeding organisations Braunvieh Schweiz, Hérens association, Holstein Switzerland, swissherdbook and Suckler Cow Switzerland. If you are looking for cattle genetics, here in Switzerland you will find almost everything – whatever production system you have.

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## Animals in Swiss Agriculture

In addition to cows, pigs, poultry, goats, and sheep, Swiss farmers also keep exotic animals such as alpacas and water buffaloes. These animals contribute to diverse agricultural practices and provide valuable manure for crop production.

Switzerland has some of the strictest animal protection laws globally. In addition to mandatory legal standards, numerous labels and voluntary animal welfare programs ensure high-quality livestock products. These programs guarantee that animals are kept in conditions that promote their well-being, which is a significant factor for Swiss consumers when choosing meat, eggs, and dairy products.

The Swiss Animal Welfare Act and its associated regulations ensure that livestock are treated humanely. For example, individual housing of calves is only permitted during their first two weeks of life, after which they must be kept in groups. Additionally, practices such as dehorning and castration must be performed with anesthesia, and tail docking and tooth clipping of piglets are prohibited.

## Swiss Quality Products: Fruits and Vegetables Production

Fresh and seasonal fruits and vegetables are highly popular among Swiss consumers. Production includes a wide variety of products, either directly from the field or from energy-efficient greenhouses. Swiss fruits, particularly apples and berries, are essential for a healthy diet.

Swiss vegetable farming is diverse, with crops grown both in open fields and greenhouses. Greenhouse farming, in particular, is known for its efficiency and resource-saving methods. Popular crops include tomatoes, cucumbers, and carrots. Fruit farming also includes innovative practices such as protective nets and plastic covers to safeguard crops like cherries from adverse weather and pests.

## Labels and Certifications

Efficient and sustainable production methods are paramount for Swiss farmers. Regional specialties, such as vegetable growing in the Bernese Seeland or orchards in Eastern Switzerland, shape agricultural production and the cultural landscape of Switzerland.

Many Swiss farmers participate in organic farming and animal welfare programs to add extra «Swissness» to their products. Labels such as the «Knospe» for organic food or the IP Suisse ladybird label represent additional efforts and added value.

Swiss agricultural products often bear labels that signify their adherence to high standards of quality and sustainability. These labels provide consumers with assurance regarding the origins and production methods of their food. Furthermore, the careful management of feed, including the preference for locally grown grass and certified sustainable soy, ensures that livestock are fed in an environmentally responsible manner.

## Swiss Agriculture: Diversity and Quality in the Alps

Swiss agriculture meets the high expectations of society through a combination of tradition, innovation, and sustainability. It not only provides high-quality food but also contributes to preserving Switzerland's unique landscape and culture. By focusing on efficient production methods, stringent animal welfare standards, and adaptive strategies to combat climate change, Swiss farmers continue to uphold the country's reputation for excellence in agriculture.

## Female Farmers Play a Key Role

In Switzerland, 7.2 % (3'470) of the 48,000 farms are run by women. The number is rising steadily. Factors such as earning a living outside the farm, increasing farm mechanisation and the courage of women to learn the profession of farmer speak for changes in the self-image and role model of women in agriculture. Young women in particular see themselves more often in the role of farm manager. They are more self-confident and take on more and more responsibility on the farm. However, the commitment of female farmers in the traditional role of homemaker, office manager, feeding calves etc. is also highly valued. Particularly in maintaining a good climate in the family home and farm, women usually play a key role.

## GOOD TO KNOW

### Business Hours

Business opening hours vary from town to town and canton to canton. In general, supermarkets usually open between 8 and 9 a.m. and close between 6 and 7 p.m. On Saturdays, most stores close at 5 pm. The stores are closed on Sunday. Many smaller stores also take a lunch break and reopen in the afternoon.

At many tourist destinations as well as at railroad stations and airports, stores are often open longer, sometimes even on Sundays.

The two largest supermarket chains in Switzerland are Migros and Coop. The opening hours in Interlaken:

#### **Migros Supermarkt, Interlaken West:**

Mon–Thu: 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. / Fri: 8 a.m. – 9 p.m. /  
Sat: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. / Sun: closed

#### **Coop Supermarket, Interlaken Ost:**

Mon – Thu: 8 a.m. – 7 p.m. / Fri: 8 a.m. – 8 p.m. /  
Sat: 8 a.m. – 6 p.m. / Sun: closed

### Criminality and Security

Switzerland has a low crime rate. Nevertheless, it makes sense to keep an eye on your valuables, especially in busy places and places frequented by tourists. Despite the low crime rate, there are pickpockets here too.

### Cash/Credit Cards

The Swiss currency is the Swiss franc. There are coins in denominations of 5, 10, 20 and 50 centimes as well as 1, 2 and 5 francs. The banknotes have denominations of 20, 50, 100, 200 and 1000 francs. However, you will hardly ever come across the 1000-franc note in everyday use.

Credit cards are widely accepted in Switzerland. The most common credit cards are Visa and Mastercard followed by American Express. Cash can be withdrawn from ATMs using credit cards or debit cards (Mastercard Debit, Visa Debit). Even if small amounts can usually be paid by card, it is advisable to have a small amount of cash with you on arrival.

### Drinking

Drinking Age for wine, beer and some other alcoholic beverages up to 15 percent by volume is 16 years. For spirits and everything else above 15 percent by volume, the drinking age is 18. It is permitted to consume alcohol in public.

### Electricity

Type C and type J plugs are used in Switzerland. Most sockets are designed for three pins, but can always be used with two-pin Type C plugs. Please bring a travel adapter, even if you are traveling from our neighboring countries.

The standard voltage is 230 V. The frequency is 50 Hz.



## Languages

Switzerland has four official national languages: Swiss-German, French, Italian and Romansh. Swiss-German is spoken in Interlaken. However, it is usually no problem to communicate in English.

## Public Transportation

Switzerland has a very well-developed public transportation system. It is possible to reach almost any place in Switzerland by train and bus. Timetables and further information can be found on the website **[www.sbb.ch](http://www.sbb.ch)**.

If you're staying longer in Switzerland, the Swiss Travel Pass may be a good option for you. It allows unlimited travel by train, bus and boat and other benefits.

## Smoking

Smoking is usually permitted in outdoor areas in Switzerland. However, please observe any prohibitions. Smoking is generally not permitted indoors, although there are some smoking rooms («Fumoir»). The minimum age for buying cigarettes is 18 years in most cantons. Even though the use of marijuana is not uncommon, it is prohibited.

## Tipping

The tip is included in the price. However, if the service is good, it is customary to round up the amount to be paid. When visiting a restaurant, a tip of 5 to 10 percent is customary.

## Traffic

In Switzerland, traffic is on the right. The speed limit on motorways is 120 km/h, in other places 80 km/h and in urban areas 50 km/h. In urban areas, however, speed 30 is becoming more and more common, especially in residential areas. Stick to the speed limits. The fines are high, and there are regular speed controls.

The maximum permissible alcohol level for drivers is 0,5 ‰ blood alcohol.

## Water

Swiss water is safe. You can drink the water straight from the tap. Public fountains are marked if the water is not suitable for drinking.







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# PRE-TOUR WESTERN SWITZERLAND

## DAY 3 WITH YOUNG LEADERS

### SUNDAY AUGUST 11

| Geneva |       |                      |
|--------|-------|----------------------|
| From   | Till  | Programm             |
| 07.30  | 08.30 | <b>Breakfast</b>     |
| 10.30  | 13.00 | <b>Gourmet Rally</b> |
| 14.00  | 15.00 | <b>City Tour</b>     |
| 19.00  | 20.00 | <b>Dinner</b>        |
| 20.00  | 22.30 | <b>Wine Domain</b>   |

### MONDAY AUGUST 12

| Geneva |       |   |
|--------|-------|---|
| From   | Till  | Programm  |
| 07.30  | 08.30 | <b>Breakfast</b>                                  |
| 10.30  | 12.00 | <b>Agricultural / Research Institute Changins</b> |
| 12.00  | 14.00 | <b>Lunch in Lausanne</b>                          |
| 15.00  | 17.00 | <b>Nestlé Research Institute Vers-les-Blancs</b>  |
| 19.00  | 20.00 | <b>Dinner</b>                                     |
| 20.00  | 22.30 | <b>Lavaux Wine / Domain Montreux</b>              |

### TUESDAY AUGUST 13

| Montreux |       |   |
|----------|-------|---|
| From     | Till  | Programm  |
| 07.30    | 08.30 | <b>Breakfast</b>                                  |
| 10.30    | 12.00 | <b>Show Cheesery / Maison du Gruyère / Pringy</b> |
| 12.00    | 13.30 | <b>Fondue Lunch</b>                               |
| 13.30    | 15.00 | <b>Gruyère City Tour</b>                          |
| 15.00    | 16.30 | <b>Visit of Maison Cailler</b>                    |
| 17.00    | 19.00 | <b>Farm Visit Lake Geneva Region</b>              |
| 19.00    | 21.00 | <b>Dinner IFAJ Committe / VL / MC</b>             |

# POST-TOUR EASTERN SWITZERLAND | AUSTRIA

## SUNDAY AUGUST 18

| Grenchenhof Wilderswil |       |   |
|------------------------|-------|---|
| From                   | Till  | Programm  |
| 09:05                  |       | <b>Departure</b> by train from Interlaken                               |
|                        | 12.02 | <b>Arrival Sargans</b>  |
| 12.30                  | 13.30 | <b>Lunch and farm visit at<br/>«Neufeldhof» in Vaduz, Liechtenstein</b> |
| 14.00                  |       | <b>Weltacker Plus,<br/>Momentum for a Responsible Food Production</b>   |
| 16.45                  |       | <b>Walk through the city of Werdenberg</b>                              |
| 18.00                  |       | <b>Arrival at Agricultural Center LZSG Salez</b>                        |

## MONDAY AUGUST 19

| LZ Salez, SG |       |   |
|--------------|-------|---|
| From         | Till  | Programm  |
| 07.30        | 08.30 | <b>Breakfast</b>  |
| 10.30        | 12.00 | <b>– Visit Landwirtschaftliches Zentrum Salez</b><br>– education – plant breeding – wine varieties collection |
| 12.00        | 13.30 | <b>Lunch</b>  |
| 14.00        | 17.00 | <b>Train Journey to Mittersill</b>  |
| 18.30        | 20.30 | <b>Dinner</b> and Presentation Lindner Tractors   |

## TUESDAY AUGUST 20

| Mittersill |       |  |
|------------|-------|--|
| From       | Till  | Programm   |
| 07.30      | 08.30 | <b>Breakfast</b>   |
| 10.30      | 12.00 | <b>National Park Center Mittersill<br/>– Alp with Milking Cows</b>       |
| 12.00      | 13.30 | <b>Alpine Lunch</b>  |
| 14.00      | 17.00 | <b>National Park Center Mittersill</b>                                   |
| 18.30      | 20.30 | <b>Dinner –</b><br>Reception by Josef Schwaiger, Minister of agriculture |

## WEDNESDAY AUGUST 21

| Schachernhof |       |   |
|--------------|-------|---|
| From         | Till  | Programm  |
| 07.30        | 08.30 | <b>Breakfast</b>                                |
| 10.30        | 12.00 | <b>Dairy Farm in Flachgau Region – Hay Milk</b> |
| 12.00        | 13.30 | <b>Lunch with ARGE Heumilch</b>                 |
| 14.00        | 17.00 | <b>Train Journey to Traunkirchen</b>            |
| 17.00        | 18.00 | <b>Waldcampus Wood Competence Center</b>        |

## THURSDAY AUGUST 22

| Hallstatt |       |  |
|-----------|-------|--|
| From      | Till  | Programm   |
| 07.30     | 08.30 | <b>Breakfast</b>   |
| 10.00     | 12.00 | <b>– Train to Hallstatt</b><br><b>– Visit Hallstatt – Salt Mines</b>       |
| 12.00     | 14.00 | <b>Lunch</b>   |
| 15.00     | 18.00 | <b>Bad Goisern – Forestry Highlights –<br/>European Capital of Culture</b> |
| 18.30     | 19.30 | <b>Traunkirchen</b>  |
| 19.30     | 20.00 | <b>Ship Cruise</b>   |
| 20.00     | 22.00 | <b>Farewell Dinner at Hoisn Wirt</b>                                       |



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