

SMP•PSL

*Schweizer Milchproduzenten  
Producteurs Suisses de Lait  
Produttori Svizzeri di Latte  
Producers Svizzers da Latg*

The added value of sustainable

# Swiss Milk



swissmilk

High mountains, blue lakes, clear rivers, rich green pastures with happy grazing cows kept on professionally managed dairy farms.

Are these the characteristics of Swiss milk that differentiate it from milk abroad? Find here the arguments for a fact-based discussion on the most important economic sector of Swiss agriculture.







#### Animal welfare

First-class and species-appropriate conditions in animal husbandry are a central component.



#### Biodiversity

The Ecological Performance Record (ÖLN Programme) is among the basic requirements.



#### Feeding

The quality and origin of the fodder influence the milk quality and are vital factors. In Switzerland no palm oil is fed to the animals and 100 % of the soya used comes from certified sustainable production.



#### Additional requirements

Further measures for social security, training and professional development, and even more animal welfare.



#### Processing

Each milk processor must implement measures for sustainable milk processing

**75 % of Swiss dairy milk is produced in accordance with the “industry standard Sustainable Swiss Milk” and bears the label “swissmilk green”.**

## Swiss milk is produced sustainably

Since September 2019 the industry standard “Sustainable Swiss Milk” has been in effect. These specifications have helped Swiss milk producers strengthen their leading role in animal welfare, natural feeding, ecological production and social benefits. Applied sustainability in all three dimensions! Certification requires meeting 10 basic requirements and 2 out of 8 additional requirements.



You can find the detailed description for the “industry standard Sustainable Swiss Milk” at [swissmilkgreen.ch](http://swissmilkgreen.ch)

We only use

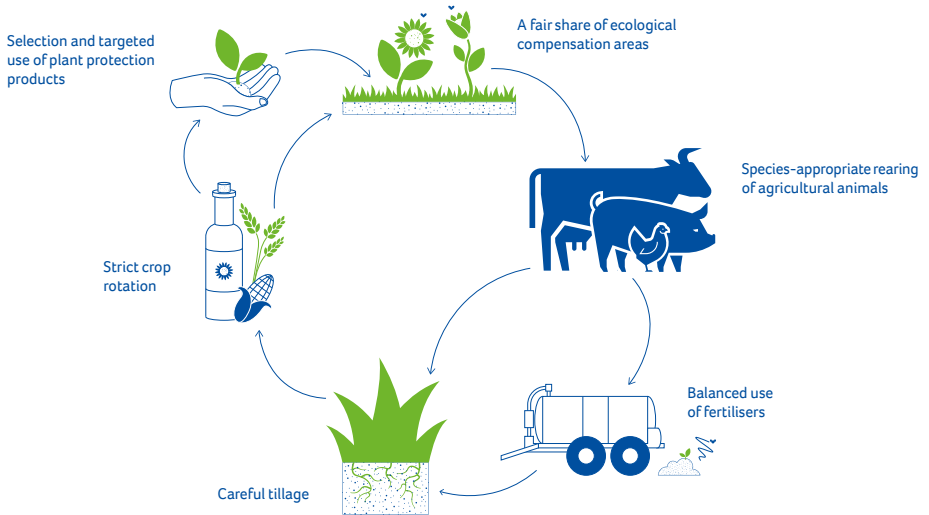
# 2 %

**of the water** in Switzerland  
(compared with almost 70 % worldwide).

**In a water  
country like  
Switzerland, the  
dairy industry is  
particularly well  
adapted to local  
conditions**

**In** Switzerland, Europe's water tower, we have enough water. We only need 2 % of our water for agriculture (compared with almost 70 % worldwide). In these natural conditions, with abundant grass and sufficient water, the dairy economy is a perfect fit.

## ECOLOGICAL MILK PRODUCTION



**96 % of milk producers apply environmental guidelines and promote valuable biodiversity in a recycling economy.**

**Milk producers  
care about  
the environment  
and apply  
environmental  
guidelines**

The diverse, small-scale farming of grassland and cropland in Switzerland is ecologically advantageous. 96 % of dairy farms in Switzerland produce in accordance with the guidelines of ecological performance (ÖLN). These farms feature a minimum share of 7 % of ecological, non-intensively farmed compensation areas, species-appropriate rearing of livestock, balanced use of fertilisers, strict crop rotation and careful tillage.

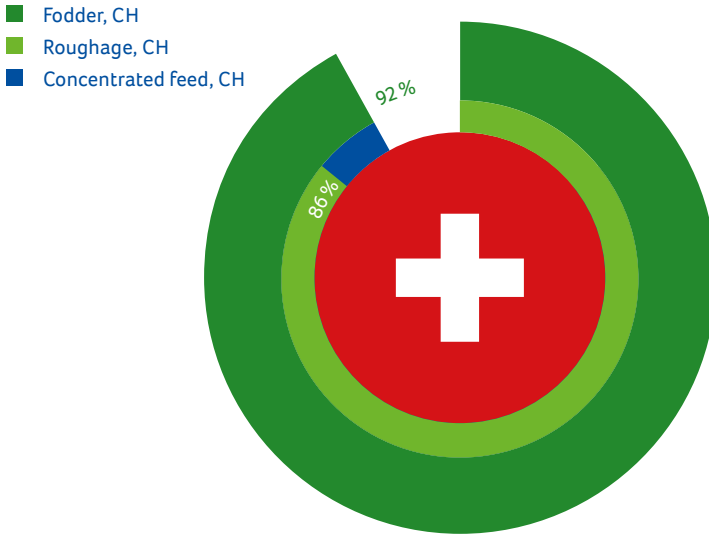
**70 %** of utilised agricultural area is grassland, which constitutes the staple diet for our cows. Without grazing, these areas would shrink, reducing biodiversity.

**Without cows  
no grass and  
no biodiversity**

**Switzerland** offers optimal conditions for grassland. Together with the summer grazing areas, grassland accounts for well over 70 % of utilised agricultural land. This provides an ideal basis for animal husbandry and also for the processing of roughage (grass, hay, silage) into milk and meat.

When ruminants graze on grassland, this boosts the diversity of the grass cover, enabling great biodiversity for flora and fauna in the meadows. In addition, meadows act as major infiltration areas for rain and surface water, and combat soil erosion through their strong roots. Artificial meadows promote humus formation, bind CO<sub>2</sub> and help maintain soil fertility.

Without grazing, these open grassland areas would become forest again and become overgrown with competing weeds and undergrowth.



**Around 92 %** of the fodder for our cows comes from Switzerland and 86 % is roughage. The rest is primarily by-products from food production.

**Swiss cows  
primarily  
eat Swiss  
roughage, which  
we have in  
abundance**

**Our** dairy cows get 92 % domestic feed. The main component is natural roughage like grass, hay, silage and maize, which are abundantly available in Switzerland.

We rely on domestic, high-quality roughage to meet a good four-fifths of our cows' daily fodder needs. Only 2 % has to be imported. A cow can eat approximately 70-80 kg of domestic meadow forage per day, and 15-25 kg of hay in winter.



In Switzerland, very little concentrated feed is used. Two-thirds of concentrated feed fed to livestock consists of by-products from food production. This prevents food waste!

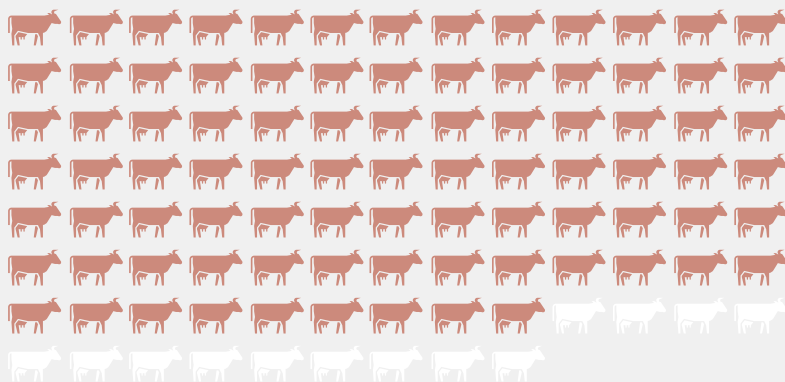
**Food production waste provides concentrated feed for dairy cows**

**By-products** that are inedible for human beings contain plenty of valuable energy and nutrients suitable for use as concentrated feed. For example, cattle eat  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the resulting oilcakes (soy and rapeseed meal extract),  $\frac{2}{3}$  of molasses,  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the sugar beet pulp, 100 % of spent grain and around  $\frac{1}{2}$  of grinding by-products.

This not only leads to the production of delicious, nutritional milk and dairy products but also helps significantly to reduce food waste.

In Switzerland, cows only eat fodder that is free of genetically modified plants, palm oil or animal meal. In comparison to foreign countries, very little concentrated feed is used in Switzerland: barely 100g per kg of milk (well over 200g in Germany and Holland).





**87 % of our cows are outdoors over 26 days per month between May and October.**

**Swiss cows  
are reared  
species-  
appropriately  
on family-  
run farms**

**The** close-to-nature, animal-friendly rearing of our dairy cows is typical for Switzerland. Most of our farms are run by families. They keep 26 animals on average, with which they have a strong bond. For example, every cow in Switzerland has been named by its keepers.

Switzerland has one of the world's strictest animal protection laws. Over 80 % of Swiss dairy farms participate in RAUS, the government subsidy programme, guaranteeing regular outdoor exercise for cows.

This programme benefits 87 % of our cows. From early May to late October, they can spend at least 26 days per month outdoors, and from early November to late April at least 13 days per month outdoors.



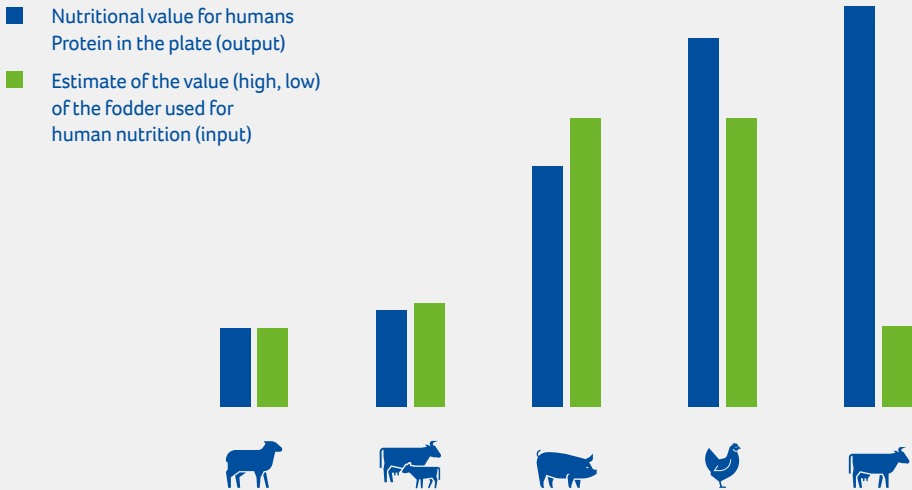
A rigorous control system, based on close cooperation between the cantons and the federal government, guarantees the implementation of the Swiss Animal Protection Law.

**In Switzerland, one of the world's strictest animal protection laws is implemented and enforced**

**The** Swiss Animal Protection Law sets particularly high requirements aimed at ensuring animal welfare. In order to compare animal protection standards in the different countries, national legislation, voluntary participation in state animal welfare promotion programmes and participation in private-law label programmes were juxtaposed.

In a comparative study, the Swiss Animal Protection Law stood out from the others. Most animal protection criteria are stricter than in neighbouring countries.

Two of the key distinguishing features are the state animal welfare programmes RAUS and BTS, affording Swiss cows much more exercise. Pasture grazing for dairy cows is unique in Europe. A continent-wide comparative study shows that Swiss cows spend 2 to 8 times more time in the meadow.



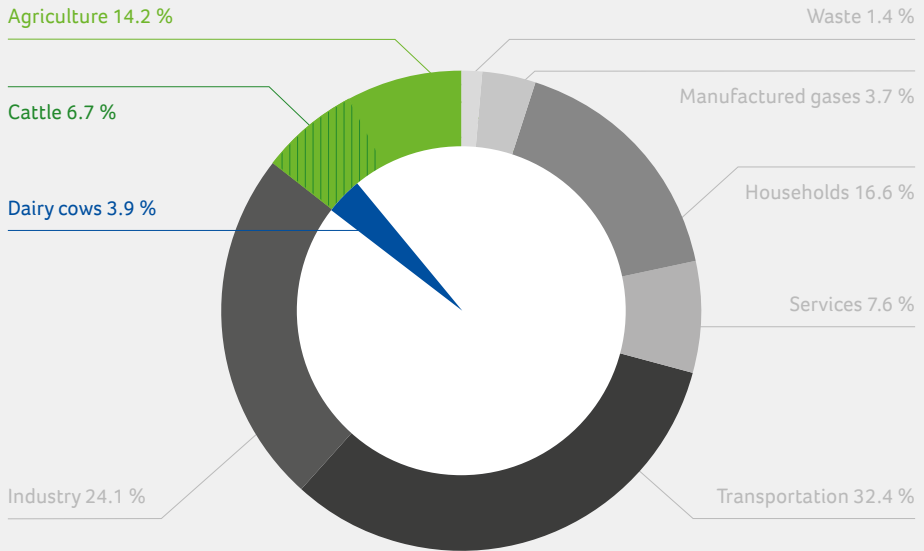
No other animal turns low-quality food into valuable protein for humans as efficiently as the cow.

**Thanks to cows,  
humans can  
subsist efficiently  
on grass**

**70 %** of the utilised agricultural area is grassland and is unsuitable for food production. In agriculture, artificial pastures are important for high soil fertility. Ruminants turn grass that is indigestible for humans into superior high-protein, high-energy milk and meat.

With a protein efficiency ratio of 25 %, the cow is one of the few animals that can turn grass into a valuable foodstuff with little input.

## CLIMATE-FRIENDLY MILK PRODUCTION



Swiss dairy cows are responsible for 3.9 % of our CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents. Moreover, these emissions form part of a continuous biological cycle.

## Cows are not climate killers

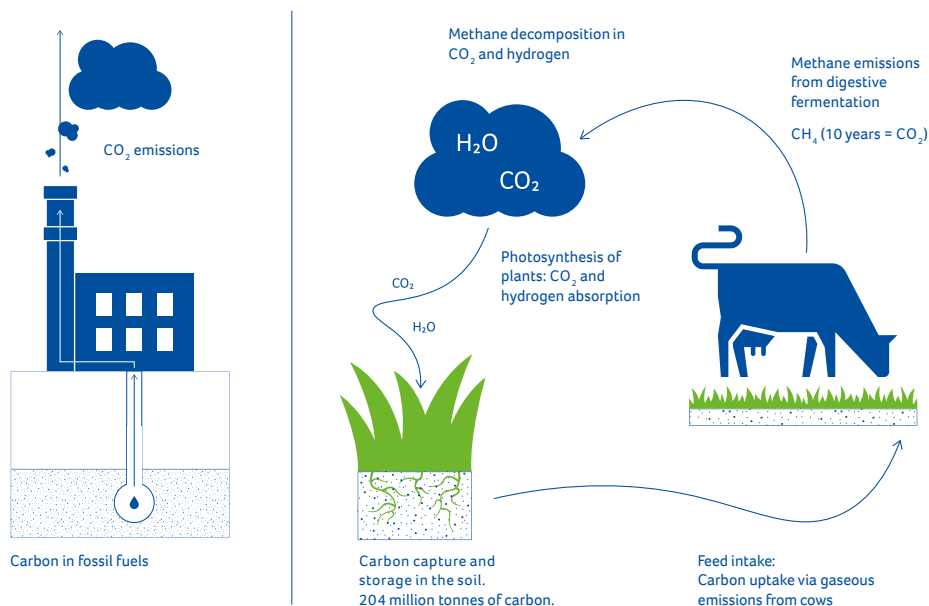
**All** life on earth is in principle linked to the production of carbon dioxide. In Switzerland, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions total 47 million tonnes per year.

Transportation accounts for the largest share with 32 %, followed by industry with 24 % and households with 17 %. Swiss agriculture is responsible for 14.2 % (7 million tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equiv.) of the CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents in Switzerland.

However, dairy cows only account for 3.9 % of gross emissions in Switzerland. These emissions form part of a continuous biological cycle. Net emissions are also smaller.

With sustainable, humus-building agriculture, grazing land acts as a major carbon sink. For Switzerland, where ¾ of the utilised area is grassland, this is a real advantage.



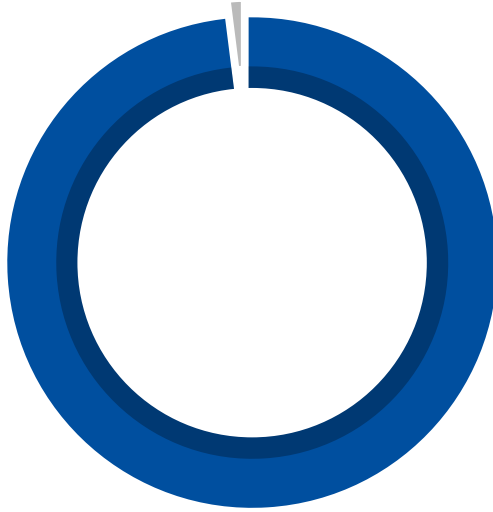


**Unlike automobiles and industry, gaseous emissions from cows are part of a biological cycle. Grazing land has a particularly high potential for CO<sub>2</sub> storage**

**Cows** produce not only milk but also carbon dioxide alongside methane, another greenhouse gas. The methane expelled by cows breaks down into CO<sub>2</sub> after a decade, thereby returning to the cycle.

Plants use photosynthesis to bind CO<sub>2</sub> from the air and store carbon in the soil. Humus is concentrated in mineral-rich farmland. When plants wither, are eaten or harvested, part of the carbon returns in the atmosphere in the form of CO<sub>2</sub>, while the rest remains bound to the soil as humus. CO<sub>2</sub> absorption in the soil is an ongoing process, and is heavily dependent on soil binding capacity and management.

It is estimated that worldwide, 705 billion tonnes of carbon can be stored in grassland and farmland. The figure for Switzerland is some 204 million tonnes. Humus-building agriculture, like farming in Switzerland, can maintain or even expand this storage effect.



In 2019, out of 428,850 samples, **99.94 % were germ-free**, a peak value by international comparison.

**Strict controls  
guarantee  
high-quality, safe  
milk and dairy  
products**

**Our** Swiss milk contains no residues or additives. If sick animals are treated with medicine, withdrawal and blocking periods apply, during which the milk may not be used for consumption. In addition, in our country neither hormones nor antibiotics may be administered to boost performance.

We are renowned worldwide for the quality and safety of our foodstuffs. In terms of integrated process control, from animal husbandry through milk testing to hygiene in processing plants, the relevant requirements are monitored and controlled by the responsible agencies.

# Facts

## #1

To get enough calcium, nobody eats 300g of broccoli per day – but 180g of yoghurt is enough.

## #2

If I am lactose-intolerant, I don't have to give up dairy products.

## #3

Milk is a natural foodstuff without additives.

## #4

Science shows that increased consumption of milk and dairy products can lower the rate of heart attacks.

## #5

Milk is important for bone formation and bone strength.

## #6

Milk consumption can reduce the risk of colon cancer.



For more milk myths and their solutions, click here.





The value chain around Swiss milk production is a key pillar of the domestic economy. Upstream and downstream sectors provide a livelihood for many families all over Switzerland.



## 1. Upstream milk production jobs

Knowledge is created through research and put into practice. This increases the professionalism of Swiss milk producers and creates the conditions for mastering the challenges of the future.

## Milk production jobs in upstream companies

	as a %	Jobs
EPFL, Agricultural Sciences	30	14
Seed trade	35	3 348
Fenaco	35	3 568
Agroscope Dairy sector	100	162
Agroscope Meat sector	85	126
Agroscope Other incl. AGFF	35	322
Agridea consulting	35	41
Agricultural schools	35	714
<b>Total upstream jobs</b>		<b>8 295</b>

Source: SMP 2018

## Key figure

**8295** people work in the production environment of Swiss milk producers.

## 2. Jobs and companies around the milk production industry

Milk production on Swiss farms provides income for various suppliers who also generate costs, making it a profitability factor for individual farms and the entire value chain.

### Suppliers, feed and adjuvants

	as a %	Jobs	Companies
Contractors	35	86	256
Machines and equipment suppliers	80	51	25
Federal offices	35	198	3
Cantonal agricultural offices	35	466	26
SMP and its member associations	100	178	13
Feed producers / Importers	35 / 85	441	1 444
Adjuvants and fertiliser suppliers	35	2 380	50
<b>Total suppliers; feed and adjuvants</b>		<b>3 800</b>	<b>1 817</b>

NB: Building and installation companies are not taken into consideration.

Source: SMP 2018

**Reading aid: explanation of the number of jobs in the tables.**

X percent of total jobs are attributed to the dairy sector.

## 3. Jobs and businesses related to dairy cows

	as a %	Jobs	Companies
Livestock breeding <sup>1</sup>	85	76	3
Livestock vets <sup>2</sup>	100	552	
Mixed vets <sup>2</sup>	50	336	888
Inseminators <sup>3</sup>	85	113	1
Controls and labs (w/o cantonal offices) <sup>1</sup>	100	402	6
Stock movement database TVD, Identitas <sup>1</sup>	85	79	1
TSM Treuhand GmbH <sup>1</sup>	100	24	1
Dairy farm staff (producers / employees / apprentices) <sup>4</sup>	100	75 802	25 792*
<b>Total</b>		<b>77 384</b>	<b>26 692</b>

Sources: 1 SMP 2018 2 GST 2018 3 Datenlage: Swissgenetics 4 BFS 2018

\* of which 20 372 companies w/ transported milk production

## Key figure

**75 802** people owe their work  
to Swiss dairy farms.

Transporting milk and meat from production sites to processing plants generates a large amount of jobs and income.



## 4. Jobs and companies in milk transportation and trade

	as a %	Jobs	Companies
Slaughterhouses / Meat trade and processing <sup>1</sup>	85	15 966	834
Milk marketing organisations <sup>2</sup>	100	492	11
Raw milk transportation <sup>2</sup>	100	208	7
<b>Total</b>		<b>16 666</b>	<b>852</b>

Source: 1 BFS 2018 2 SMP 2018 NB: Livestock trading companies are not taken into consideration.

## 5. Milk processing jobs and companies

	as a %	Jobs	Companies
Cheese dairies <sup>1</sup> and dairies <sup>2</sup>	100	12 674	2 043
Second processing stage <sup>3</sup>	60	52 080	2 940
Switzerland Cheese Marketing AG SCM <sup>4</sup>	100	36	8
<b>Total</b>		<b>64 790</b>	<b>4 991</b>

Sources: 1 TSM (cheese dairies incl. alpine dairies) 2 TSM (dairies) 3 BFS 2019 4 SCM

The Swiss dairy industry relies on successful processing companies, generating many jobs and considerable value creation.

## 6. Jobs and companies in retail trade, catering and tourism

	as a %	Jobs	Companies
Retail trade with foodstuffs <sup>1</sup>	13	13 002	1 509
Wholesale trade with foodstuffs <sup>1</sup>	13	4 624	462
Catering in Switzerland <sup>1</sup>	50	86 750	13 300
<b>Total</b>		<b>104 376</b>	<b>15 271</b>

Source: <sup>1</sup> BFS 2019

The positive image of Swiss milk producers provides retailers and restaurateurs with good sales arguments.

Key figure

**13 002** people are employed in the retail trade thanks to the good image of Swiss dairy products

### Number of jobs and companies in the dairy industry

	Jobs	Companies
Upstream milk production jobs	8 295	1 250
Jobs and companies around milk production	3 800	1 817
Jobs and businesses in direct contact with dairy cows	77 384	26 692
Jobs and companies in milk transportation and trade	16 666	852
Jobs and companies in milk processing	64 790	4991
Jobs and companies in retail trade, catering and tourism	104 376	15 271

### Overview of value-adding elements in the dairy industry

Sales in Swiss Francs	Total	as a %	Dairy industry
Upstream services in agriculture / dairy industry <sup>1</sup>	6 821 540 000	35	2 387 539 000
Output for agriculture / dairy industry <sup>1</sup>	10 980 065 000	35	3 843 022 750
Output for dairy milk processing <sup>2</sup>	5 559 000 000	100	5 559 000 000
Output for cheese-making milk: small-scale cheese dairies w/o industrial cheese production <sup>3</sup>	900 000 000	100	900 000 000
Output for retail trade with foodstuffs <sup>4</sup>	25 499 000 000	13	3 467 864 000

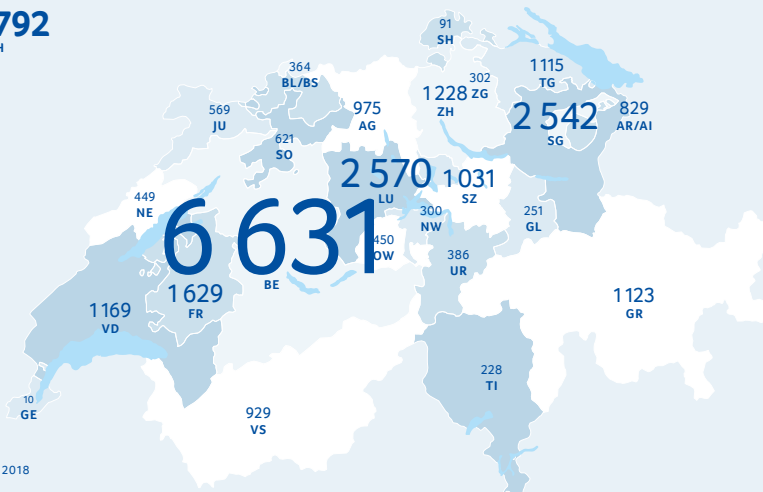
Source: <sup>1</sup> Basis national accounts 2019 <sup>2</sup> Milk statistics 2018

<sup>3</sup> Fromarte Annual Report 2018 <sup>4</sup> Nielsen Retail-Scan + Off-Scan 2019

**The number of milk producers is constantly declining.  
This is a problematic trend precisely in grassland areas**

Total businesses with dairy cows, w/ or w/o transported milk production

**25 792**  
CH

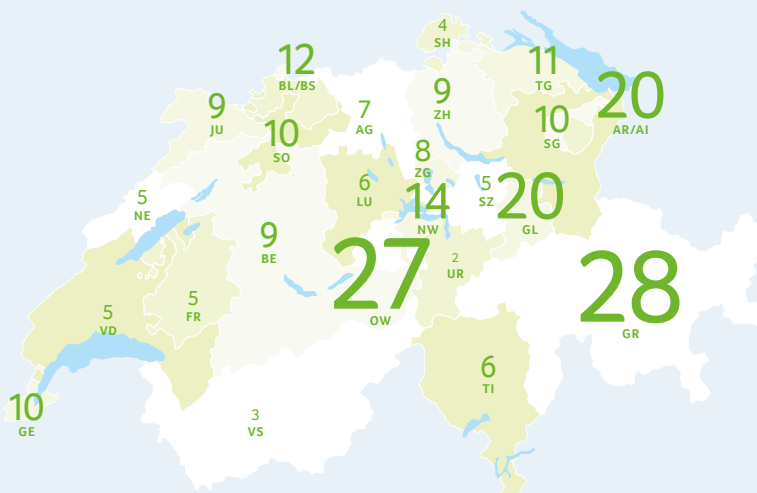


Source: BFS 2018

**The number of organic dairy farms is increasing nationwide from year to year.**

Share of organic dairy farms per canton as a percentage

**9**  
Average CH



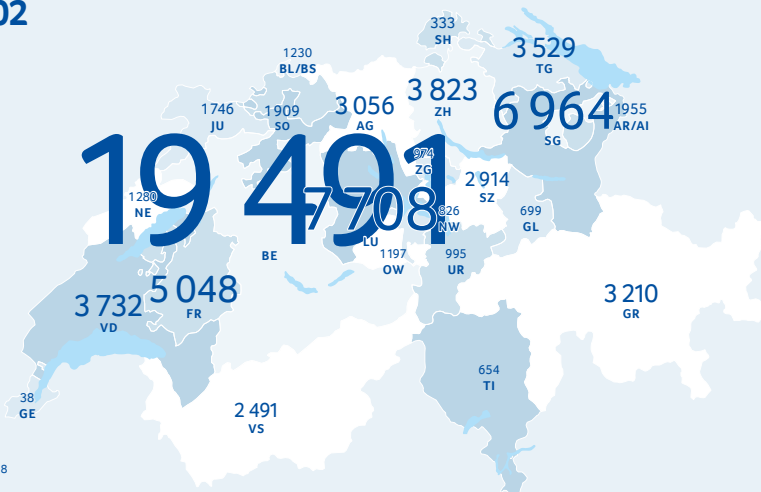
Source: BLW milk production data for 2019

**Even in the most remote areas, dairy farms provide work for many**

Number of people working in dairy farms w/ and w/o transported milk

**75 802**

CH



Source: BFS 2018

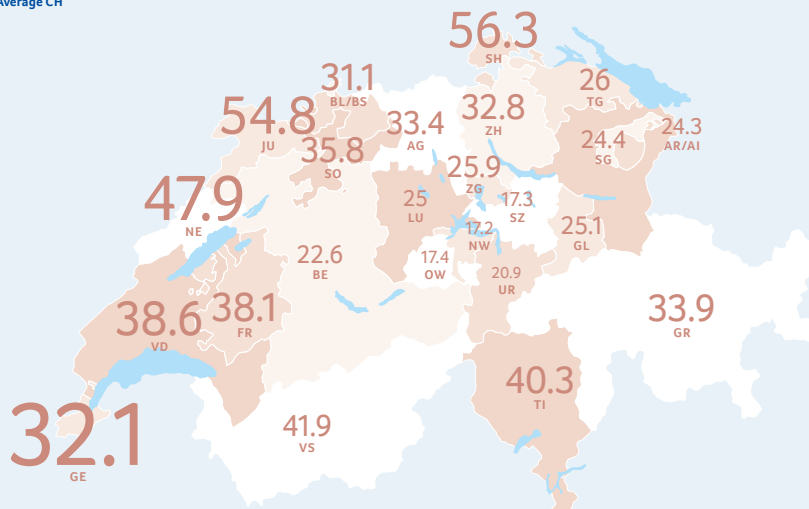
**Milk is produced in all cantons.**

**Smaller dairy farms are in the mountains, larger ones are in the Mittelland (plateau)**

Average dairy farm size in hectares

# 31.8

Average CH

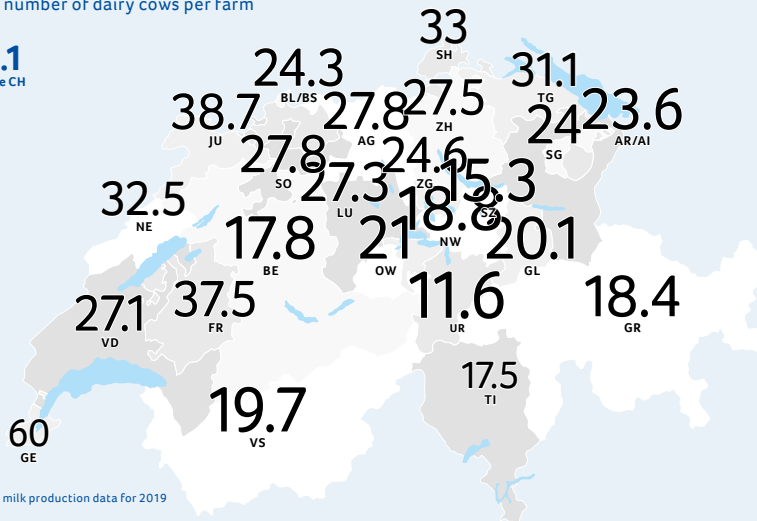


Source: BLW milk production data for 20192019

**Small, family-run dairy farms are characteristic of Switzerland and ensure optimum care for dairy cows**

Average number of dairy cows per farm

**26.1**  
Average CH

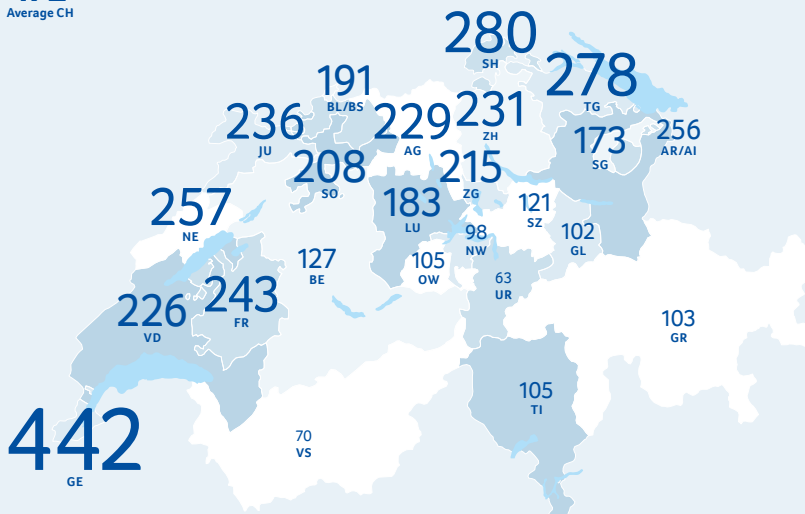


Source: BLW milk production data for 2019

**The quantities produced are small compared to the rest of Europe, but farm managers are highly professional**

Milk marketed per farm and per year in thousands of kg

**172**  
Average CH



Source: BLW milk production data for 2019

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Cow calves 2019

- 1 Bella
- 2 Sina
- 3 Fiona
- 4 Tina
- 5 Anna
- 6 Nina
- 7 Lisa
- 8 Bianca

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Cow calves 2020

- 1 Corona
- 2 Bella
- 3 Fiona
- 4 Sina
- 5 Diana
- 6 Nina
- 7 Viola
- 8 Hanna

---

Bull calves 2019

- 1 Max
- 2 Leo
- 3 Bruno
- 4 Moritz
- 5 Peter
- 6 Peter
- 7 Anton
- 8 Sämi

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Bull calves 2020

- 1 Leo
- 2 Max
- 3 Fritz
- 4 Bruno
- 5 Sepp
- 6 Emil
- 7 Peter
- 8 Sämi



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landwirtschaft.ch  
ip-lait.ch  
agristat.ch  
agroscope.admin.ch  
agridea.ch  
ucdavis.edu



Further publications:

Schweizer Milchwirtschaft in Zahlen 2019/20  
(The Swiss dairy industry in figures 2019/20)

Ist Milch schädlich oder sind das alles nur Mythen?  
(Is milk harmful or is this just a myth?)

Market situation report

Milk price monitoring

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