



Dairy industry and its development in the Entlebuch UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, Switzerland

Pius Hofstetter

Vocational School for Nature and Food, CH-6170 Schuepfheim (LU)

Starting position: In the UBE farmers have increasingly changed their livestock systems to beef production and their conservation system from hay to silage. Therefore small cheese factories have got less raw bovine milk. Some went out of business, jobs were lost in the region.

Objectives: In 2004 the project study "Entlebucher Milk" was initiated. The study advised the small cheese factory co-operatives to merge, to optimise milk logistics, to produce more soft, semi-hard cheeses or organic products and to merchandise them as branded products.

Dairy farmers should not abandon the production of "silage-free" milk and they ought to participate as shareholders in the added value of the cheese dairies.

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Main results

Facts and figures	Cheese factories [nos.]	Average supply with contract per annum [kg]
Cheese factory co-operatives 04/05	14	23,100,000
- producing other cheese specialities	8	1,850,000
Cheese factories in 2007/08	11	28,052,143
- producing 'Emmental AOC' hard cheese	9	17,371,079
- producing 'Sbrinz AOC' hard cheese	2	3,181,055
- producing milk specialities 08/09	12	~ 3,000,000



Conclusions

The study increased the need to look for solutions because of the inclusion of a comprehensive bottom-up approach.

The new cheese dairies seem able to generate competitive milk prices and to merchandise their specialities increasingly. Thus enabling farmers to benefit from the profit.

There will be great challenges to develop milk specialities (niche products) and to merchandise them.