

# Mailbag

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## The waning of an idyll – the last dairy farmer in the village



Farmer Burren would be well advised to rethink his strategy in view of the never-ending glut of milk. Various options are open to him, one of which would be to combine the dairy business with tourism. All visitors to the Alps today like the idea of being a direct customer through agri-tourism.

WILHELM TSCHOL, GERMANY

If a litre of milk only costs one franc in the shops, nobody can be expected to make a profit. It is a disgrace that the government does not raise prices and increase customs duty at the border. Isn't it the government's job to protect our country and citizens? In America there is Walmart which operates on the same basis as the EU – if price pressure is applied for long enough, smaller competitors will soon shut up shop! I hope small Swiss farmers find a way of preserving their livelihood and continue with their healthy approach to livestock farming. Something must be done to get out of this mess. I also hope the Swiss people appreciate what they will lose if they do not start supporting the local economy and local farmers.

E. KUNKLER, CANADA

In France, dairy farmers face the same situation, causing many problems. Those faring best have returned to a system where producers supply consumers directly with associations such as Amap. I am sure this solution will also be given an opportunity in Switzerland. Good luck to you!

BARBARA DEMOULIN, FRANCE

For part of the year we live in Bruggnascio near Airolo. This village only has one farmer left, and we buy our milk directly from the farm – for one Swiss franc per litre. Perhaps we are imagining it but we find this milk much better than the organic milk at the Coop, for example. Last summer we could not wait for the cows to come back from the alpine pastures. I don't understand why this kind of milk does not get a quality label for which people like us would be willing to pay more. Why do we spend two francs on a good beer and 20 francs on good wine but only one franc on high-quality milk?

DIETER SCHELLING, SWITZERLAND

## An explosive business. Swiss weapons exports under fire



I believe any export of weapons contravenes Swiss neutrality and humanitarian principles. Then when I read what a small percentage these export products actually make up, I am more than a little perplexed as to why so much importance

is attached to this export sector. I am personally opposed to the export of weapons in general.

RENATA NEUWEILER, GREECE

Mrs Chantal Galladé's views are interesting. Unfortunately, the general hypocrisy over Switzerland's economic activities on the international stage and their direct impact on the people in crisis-torn countries are overlooked. If "Any blood-stained market is unworthy of humanitarian Switzerland and unacceptable," we would like to see Mrs Galladé show greater commitment to combating the real criminal activities controlled from Switzerland, which are the real causes of the blood spilled – oil trading, the agro-chemical industry and the banking activities of the financial centres of Geneva and Zurich, etc. These activities are the real causes of economic inequality, political tension, the destruction of the environment and the factors behind conflict where only one type of weapon is prohibited or where weapons of Swiss origin are used.

ALEXANDRE MEDAWAR, LEBANON

## CSA elections in 2017

There was a lack of clarity concerning the article "Vote for the new Council of the Swiss Abroad" (CSA) in the last issue of "Swiss Review". The answers to the questions "How and by whom are the delegates abroad elected?" and "Who can vote abroad?" led to misunderstandings.

The situation is as follows. The delegates abroad are elected by the umbrella organisations in the various countries or, where these do not exist, by the Swiss societies. Both entities can extend the electorate to non-society members. In such cases, the societies can organise direct elections – by post or electronically – if required. Membership of a Swiss society is therefore not absolutely necessary unless required by the organisations responsible for running the election.

We also wish to point out that the Council of the Swiss Abroad adopted the inclusion of the following recommendation on the electorate in its guidelines at its last meeting: "The CSA recommends that all Swiss Abroad registered on an electoral roll are permitted to take part in the elections." This is a recommendation that the societies can implement if they wish but is not mandatory. The CSA's aim here was to take a step towards opening up the electoral base. The societies nevertheless remain free to decide who can take part in the elections within the scope of the guidelines.

The guidelines and further information on the elections can be found at:  
<http://aso.ch/en/politics/csa-elections-2017>.