

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 74 (2008)
Heft: [3]

Artikel: The "milky way"
Autor: [s.n.]
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-943622>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften. Sie besitzt keine Urheberrechte an den Zeitschriften und ist nicht verantwortlich für deren Inhalte. Die Rechte liegen in der Regel bei den Herausgebern beziehungsweise den externen Rechteinhabern. [Siehe Rechtliche Hinweise.](#)

Conditions d'utilisation

L'ETH Library est le fournisseur des revues numérisées. Elle ne détient aucun droit d'auteur sur les revues et n'est pas responsable de leur contenu. En règle générale, les droits sont détenus par les éditeurs ou les détenteurs de droits externes. [Voir Informations légales.](#)

Terms of use

The ETH Library is the provider of the digitised journals. It does not own any copyrights to the journals and is not responsible for their content. The rights usually lie with the publishers or the external rights holders. [See Legal notice.](#)

Download PDF: 17.05.2025

ETH-Bibliothek Zürich, E-Periodica, <https://www.e-periodica.ch>

The "milky way"

Milk achieved its central place in Swiss identity thanks to the government's milk promotion strategy in the 20th century, according to a new history book. Published on the centenary of the Federation of Swiss Milk Producers, "Milk for all" is available in German and French and recounts in images how milk was elevated from the position of basic foodstuff to national drink. "Milk for all" also explains why Switzerland once controlled a sector that it is liberating today. After 15 years of falling prices, the cost of the drink is currently at a high.

Switzerland is firmly associated at home and abroad with cows, cheese and chocolate – all of which share a common denominator: milk. But it was only in the 20th century that milk assumed a central place in the daily life of the Swiss, as well as importance in national politics.

In the lead up to the First World War, the social climate in Switzerland was tense and fluctuations in the price of milk caused dissatisfaction among the poor. At a time when many families had trouble putting bread on the table, the authorities felt it prudent to regulate the milk sector. In 1916 Bern gave the central union of Swiss milk producers the mandate to supply the country. Farmers, dairies, cheese dairies – who until then had been competing against each other – transformed themselves into instruments of market regulation. There was therefore a political consensus that the population should be able to drink milk every day. The distribution network was put in place according to public service logic.

The images in the book say a lot about the evolution in the standard of living and consumption habits of the Swiss. With the advent of pasteurisation in the 1950s, the selling of milk underwent a revolution. Milk suddenly became a conservable product thanks to carton packaging. By the middle of the 20th century, advances in technology were affecting the whole milk sector. Cows were "improved" and village dairies replaced with large central collection and distribution points, while cheese dairies organised resistance against industrialisation.

In a system designed to ensure general supply, the question of oversupply eventually became an issue. Up to the First World War milk was very rare and hence there was no need for advertising. By contrast after the war there was excessive production and it became necessary to advertise.

"Drink milk!" is the message of a billboard dating from 1922, the same year that the milk industry cre-



Tasting stands helped promote milk as the national drink

ated a "propaganda centre". This was the beginning of a far-reaching campaign which included tasting stands, posters, newspaper adverts and films – all promoting the benefits of milk and aimed at making it the national drink. Starting in the 1930s, milk was distributed at schools and in the army, and was offered to the public at festivals and even on train platforms. The slogan "Strong men drink milk" was seen throughout the country in the 1960s. But the notion of giving milk to schoolchildren began to be criticised. Some doctors said milk intake was bad for children's appetites.

In the past, Switzerland judged it necessary to regulate a sector which is today going through liberalisation. The production, processing, sale and consumption of milk were controlled and rationed by the state during the two World Wars. At the end of the 1970s the government introduced a quota system, which meant closer control over milk production. In 2003 the Swiss parliament decided to abolish the quota system in stages. The Swiss milk market will be fully liberalised by 2009.

from swissinfo

Schlechtes Wetter

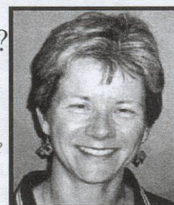
*Gestern durch den Wald ging ich im Regen
einem ungewissen Ziel entgegen,
sah, bevor sie tot zu Boden fielen,
tausend Tropfen mit den Blättern spielen,
die sich lustig mit dem Winde zausten
und voll Übermut gewaltig brausten.*

*Wie sie in der frischen Nässe blinkten
und von allen Seiten mich umringten,
ward die Seele mir so frisch und weit,
so voll Regenwetterlustigkeit,
dass ich in das Rauschen unbewusst
sang ein Frühlingslied aus tiefster Brust –
Heut' im Tagblatt hab' ich dann gelesen,
dass das Wetter gestern schlecht gewesen...*

W. Langewiesche

FAERNWEH? HEIMWEH? WICHTIGI GSCHAEFTSTERMIN?

Looking for a travel consultant with over 22 years of experience in the industry that will meet your needs and with whom you can communicate in (Swiss)-German, French or English?
Looking for a travel consultant that travelled the world and can advise out of town experience knowing a lot of destinations personally?
Looking for someone to organise your trip back to Switzerland or Europe to visit the 'rellies' as well as your holiday, business, group and special event trips?



Try me!!

Daniela Suter

UNITED TRAVEL HAMILTON
275 Barton Street/PO Box 19263
HAMILTON

Ph: 07 838 1100/Tollfree: 0800 756 789

Fax: 07 834 2032

Email: daniela@uth.co.nz


United Travel