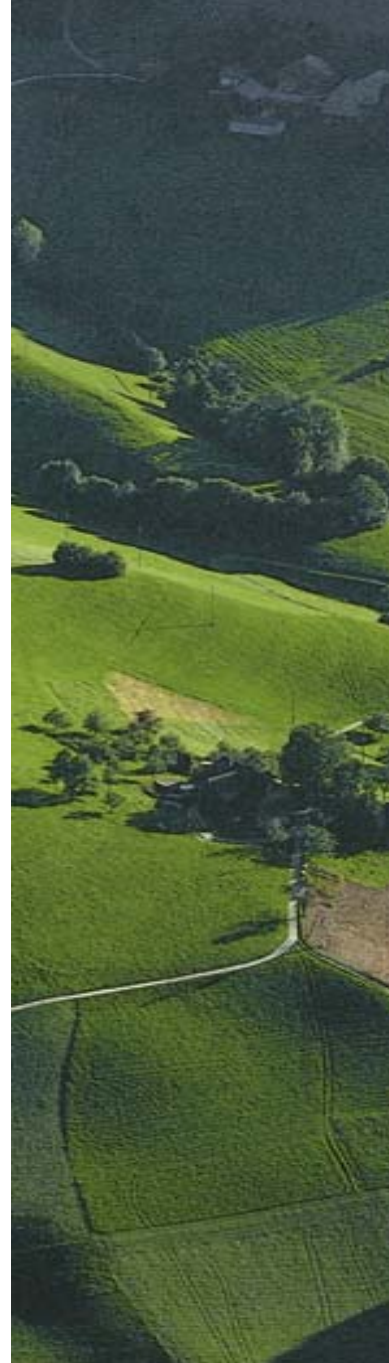


# New role for farmers in society

**Hansjörg Walter**  
**President of the Swiss Farmers' Union**



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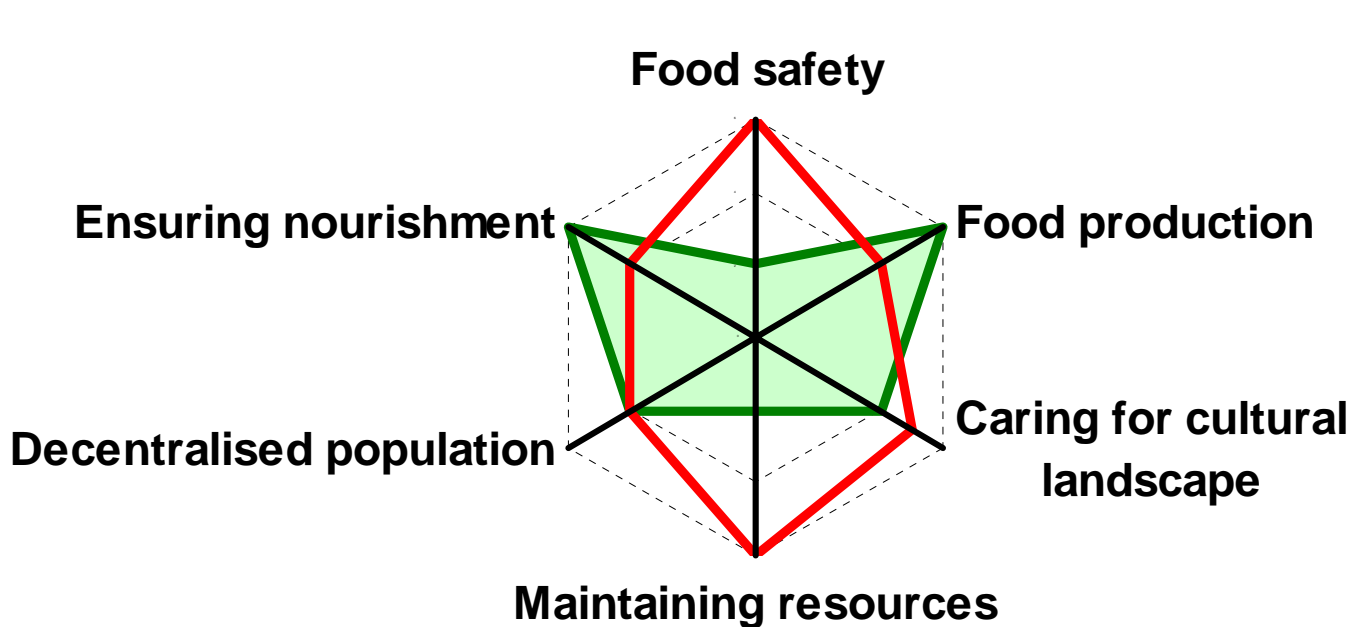
- **Changes over the last 15 years (aims, markets, expectations)**
- **Transformation of Swiss farming**
- **Role of Swiss farming today**
- **Looking towards the future**
- **Future challenges**
- **Unanswered questions**



# Changes over the last 15 years

- **Less important to ensure that there is a reliable supply of food**
  - **More emphasis on sustainable cultivation and animal wellbeing**
  - **Reforms required through liberalisation of world trade**
  - **Internal pressure**
- ☞ **New aims (Change in constitution)**
- ☞ **Different phases of reforms (2002 AP, 2007AP, ...)**

# Aims of agriculture



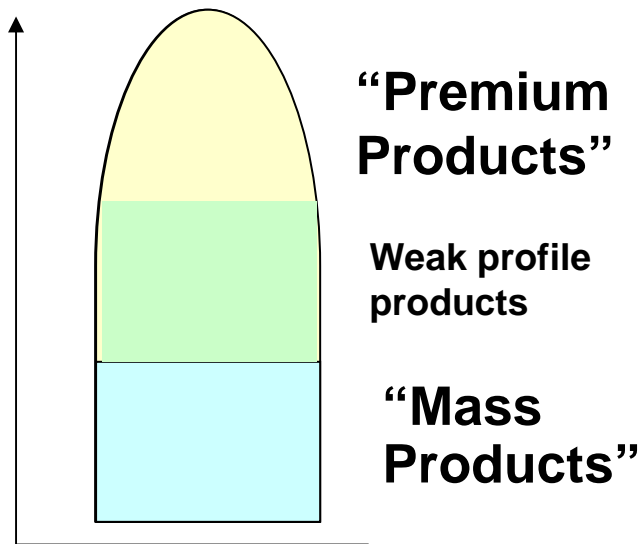
■ before 1990

■ after 1990

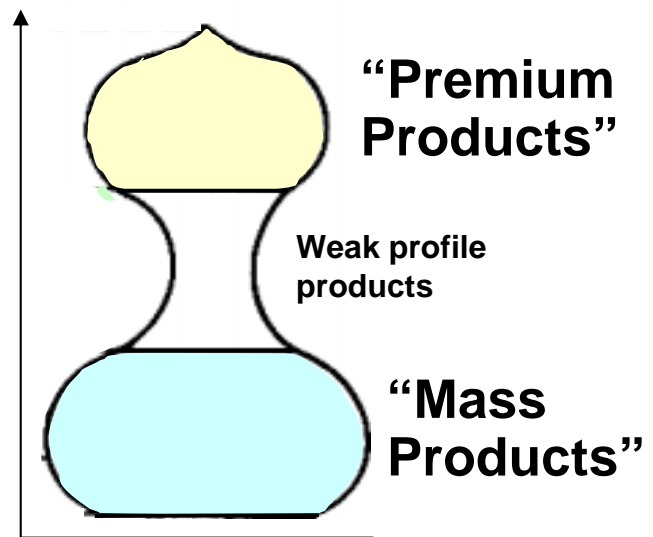
# Development of food markets

- Growing premium and cheap segments
- Greater extent of processing
- More convenience and functional food

Level of requirements



Level of requirements



# Expectations of the population

## • The population attaches importance to:

- Fair treatment of animals (97%)
- Environmentally friendly farming (97%)
- Production of healthy foodstuffs and a reliable supply of food (97%)
- Caring for the cultural landscape (91%)

## • A majority also consider the following important:

- Maintaining the farming way of life (66%)
- Populating remote areas (57%)

Source: Univox study 2004



# Transformation of Swiss farming

	today	Change since 1990
<b>Farming businesses</b>	<b>64 466</b>	<b>– 30%</b>
<b>Average productive land/business (ha)</b>	<b>16.5</b>	<b>+ 43%</b>
<b>Total area of productive land in use (ha)</b>	<b>1 064 874</b>	<b>0%</b>
<b>Area used biologically (ha)</b>	<b>109 090</b>	<b>+ 1000%</b>
<b>People employed</b>	<b>90 516</b>	<b>– 20%</b>
<b>Degree of self sufficiency (%)</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>– 6%</b>
<b>Agricultural production value (in billions of francs)</b>	<b>10.6</b>	<b>– 26%</b>

# Changes in Swiss farming

- **Ecologisation (98% of productive land meets ecological production standards)**
- **Professionalisation (businesses getting bigger)**
- **Specialisation (businesses concentrating on one or no more than a few sectors)**
- **Production / business / sales communities being built up**
- **Introduction and expansion of quality assurance systems and label schemes**
- **Occupying niche markets and producing specialities**
- **Sales promotion**

# Role of Swiss farmers today

## • Producers of

- extremely high quality, safe **Foodstuffs**  
(no GMOs, no hormonal growth enhancers)
- of **Swiss origin**
- produced in an environmentally friendly
- and animal friendly manner

## • Responsible, market-oriented entrepreneurs

## • Public service providers (e.g. creating a varied landscape, space where people can relax and have fun, basis for tourism)

## • Motors for the development of the countryside

## • Multifunctional service providers and managers

# Looking towards the future

## • At national level

- 2011 AP phase of reforms
- Government pressure to make savings
- Miserliness is widespread consumer mentality

## • At international level

- WTO negotiations (End of export subventions, abolition of internal support and border protection)
- Bilateral agreements (e.g. with the USA)



# Future challenges

- **Become more economical despite high cost environment and high expectations**
- **Become more competitive despite many legal regulations and limitations**
- **Obtain compensation for farming work despite national savings programmes**
- **Access interesting new markets abroad despite extensive competition**
- **Guarantee farming income and consequently long-term survival**

# Unanswered questions

- **Farmers' status is about doing a balancing act – falling prices and increasing requirements. What will happen if the pressure increases?**
- **What is the future significance of food from our own country?**
- **Should it be produced by family farm businesses?**
- **How important will farmland and a decentralised population be considered in the future?**
- **Are cooperative production methods of farming still a good thing?**
- **☞ The future brings great uncertainty for farm families**

# Thank you for your attention



Schweizerischer Bauernverband  
Union Suisse des Paysans  
Unione Svizzera dei Contadini

IFAJ Congress 2005

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**SWISS FARMERS WELCOME YOU.  
GUT, GIBT'S DIE SCHWEIZER BAUERN.**

