
Press Release

If meat, then Swiss meat

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Swiss consumers are as convinced as ever of the quality of their domestic meat products. Despite an almost one-kg decline in per-capita meat consumption, the overall share of Swiss meat products in 2009 showed a marked increase compared to 2008.

All in all, meat consumption in Switzerland decreased by 1.8%, down from 53.35 to 52.38 kg per person. The only type of meat to gain was veal, of which each Swiss citizen consumed 3.23 kg a year on average. Of that total amount, 98.6% came from inland production whereas the corresponding figure for beef lay at 85.4% (2008: 80.8%) and for pork at 93.7% (2008: 90.0%). If the consumption of beef and pork showed a slight decline, that of poultry meat remained constant. Or as Heinrich Bucher, Managing Director at Proviande, commented: "The Swiss in general remain convinced of the quality of the domestic meat supply and of the cost-benefit ratio".

In 2009, inland production of beef and pork was considerably higher than the previous year. The total in number of heavy livestock slaughtered rose in Switzerland by 4.2% to 387,000, an increase mainly the result of a significantly higher number of cows slaughtered (up + 9.7%). And the reason for that high difference, compared to the previous year, is because exceptionally few cows were sent for slaughter due to the situation on the Swiss milk market in the years 2007 and 2008. The production of slaughter cattle in 2009 was only 0.1% higher than in 2008. Pork production went up by 3% while mutton and lamb meat production fell slightly (down 0.5%).

Nowadays, a large proportion of meat is consumed in the catering business or "out and about". The meat most frequently eaten away from home was either pork (25.4%) or beef (22.8%) – percentages which have remained stable for years. Both kinds of meat play an important role beyond the usual consumer group categories. The consumption of poultry meat also increased in 2009 as compared to the previous year and there are signs that veal dishes are gaining in importance in the Swiss catering business. "The popularity of this price-sensitive meat is growing", said Mr Boucher. "Indeed, its share of overall total has increased since 2007. And now a good 10.7% of all meals consumed contain veal".

Surveys have shown that the quality of the meat served by the catering business is assessed as "excellent". "Generally speaking, people questioned in the course of the surveys were more

satisfied with the meals served in 2009 than in 2008", Mr Bucher confirmed. Moreover, the cost benefit ratio is also seen as 'excellent'. This is all to the credit of the professionalism along the entire supply chain – from the farmers to the meat traders and from the kitchen chef to the service personnel".

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