

Swiss agricultural products

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Swiss coal supplies.- (Lausanne). Before the war, Switzerland had many coal suppliers, among whom were Germany, France, Belgium, England, Poland, the United States and Russia. Germany has always been Switzerland's most important supplier, furnishing half her requirements. At present, Germany is Switzerland's sole supplier, as other countries have one after another suspended deliveries owing to international events. By virtue of the Germano-Swiss economic agreement now in force, Germany supplies Switzerland with 200,000 tons of coal each month, which represents about 75% of normal consumption. The remaining 25% has to be salvaged by rationing, especially the heating of living premises, public places, offices and workshops. As a result, for the present winter, the population has only received 25 - 30% of the coal supply normally required for heating purposes before the war.

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SWISS AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS.

It may seem a little out of place just now when Switzerland, lacking sources of food supplies, is obliged to intensify her agricultural production, to recall that it is ten years since the Office for the Propaganda of Swiss Agricultural Products was founded.

In 1931, however, it was the fashion in this country, largely owing to snobbishness, to buy all kinds of fruit and vegetables, whether home or foreign grown. It was therefore necessary to educate the customer's tastes, to teach him to appreciate the best products of the soil which are not necessarily the most expensive. The Office for Propaganda has fulfilled its task with skill and courage and has achieved excellent results. It has, for example, caused Swiss grown apples and other orchard fruits, much appreciated abroad, to be better known at home. It has encouraged consumption of sweet cider and non-alcoholic fruit juices; it has given new impetus to the tinned fruit and vegetable industry; it has also caused Swiss honey, which has particular qualities, to regain the popularity it deserves and, without ceasing to enjoy strawberries from Lyons and Italian asparagus, the Swiss consumer has been made aware that these same delicacies are also produced in the Canton of Valais. This Office has also encouraged the use of the potato, by vulgarizing the processes of drying and ensiling it, the manner in which it may be preserved in cellars and by teaching housewives the thousand and one ways in which it may be prepared.

The Office for Propaganda has also participated in many fairs and expositions, defending the interests of Swiss agriculture which, like Swiss industry, has specialized in the production of quality goods.

It is however in favor of wine that the Office's propaganda has proved most useful. It can be said that Swiss wine possesses the same characteristics as the country which produces it: for it is one and diverse. Each valley, each lakeshore or sunny hillside produces its own particular variety, much appreciated abroad. And yet, all Swiss wines, even the most heady, preserve a particular dry quality which confers upon them special tonic and diuretic properties.

Famous doctors have recommended moderate but regular consumption of Swiss wine. In summer, for instance, wines produced on the shores of the Lake of Zurich are most refreshing. Those of Neuchatel are sparkling and more heady. Other varieties resemble Rhine or Moselle wines and are as delicate.

Those who have tasted the bouquet of Vaudois wines never forget it. In the Rhone Valley, in the upper part of the Canton of Valais, rich, heady table and dessert wines, both white and red, are found; Valais wines are readily recognizable and other countries have tried to imitate them - but in vain - by acclimatizing Swiss vine-stocks to their soil. There are also Ticinese wines, which present some characteristics of Italian varieties, and the wines of the valleys south of the Grisons.

Besides these reputed varieties, there is another which the Office for Propaganda has popularized under the name of Swiss wine; it has an excellent flavor and is obtainable at low prices. It is a good quality wine and much liked.

The Federal Council recently published the following proclamation to encourage Home Produce:

Our country is going through one of the most difficult phases of its long and honourable history. Our peace has been maintained for us. The ever progressing limitation of imports, however, makes it increasingly urgent for us to devote ourselves to the struggle for daily bread on our own soil. We must, in order to be able to entrust the supply of our daily needs to our native soil and the strength of our hands and hearts, make spiritual and material preparations. To this end the cultivation of cereals and vegetable must be further extended and for this we need more arable land.

The farmers deserve the gratitude and appreciation of the whole nation for the efforts up to the present. The future tasks, however, far exceed the powers of our farming estates. These tasks can only be accomplished successfully with the co-operation of every Swiss citizen and by the use of every inch of Swiss soil. The just distribution and rational use of foodstuffs and consumption goods demand the highest sense of social responsibility and will to co-operate, as well as all the abilities of every Swiss citizen. In laying aside our individual wishes and worries, in constructive co-operation with all fellow citizens, we shall bear witness to the true Swiss spirit. Swiss people ! During many decades of peaceful prosperity we have become accustomed to a high standard of living, which was the happy result of a healthy social and economic development. The prerequisite of this high standard, however, was undisturbed trade relations with the whole world. As the exchange of goods has naturally become more and more difficult as the war progresses, restrictions in our mode of life have become inevitable. We shall have to expect even more severe limitations. These will be easier to bear as a result of official control of consumption and also of maximum home production. But to this end, discipline and support from all classes of the nation are imperative. Swiss people ! You will be asked to work hard and to make many sacrifices, but the certainty that the great problem can be solved if we all co-operate loyally, allows us to take a confident view of the future. We expect of every Swiss citizen that he will prove himself fully capable of meeting the tasks of the hour. Wherever citizens are called upon to achieve the seemingly impossible, be it in the Armed Forces, at the plough or at the bench, they will respond with open hearts and willing hands.

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SWISS BROADCAST.

May we remind members that Switzerland has changed her clocks to "Summer-time" again, that means that the New Zealand time will be only 10 hours ahead of Swiss time and the daily broadcast from Switzerland can still be heard on wave length 48.66 from 4.45 p.m. to 5.40 p.m. whereas the monthly broadcast can be received on wave lengths 20.64 and 26.31 on every first Sunday of the month beginning at the same time as the daily broadcast.

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THANKS.

The undersigned wish to express their most sincere thanks and appreciation for the special function arranged in their honour at the Overseas League Rooms, Auckland, on Saturday, the 2nd of May.

In their speeches of goodwill, so aptly expressed by Messrs. Steyer, Guntren, and Steiner of Waihou, we both felt that our work from 1935 to 1941 has not been in vain and is appreciated by all our compatriots. This is a fine tribute and we can assure you, gives us immense satisfaction. If our efforts have been fruitful and resulted in closer harmony and friendship among Swiss in this fair land of New Zealand, then we are both satisfied and feel happy.