

Zeitschrift: Helvetia : magazine of the Swiss Society of New Zealand
Herausgeber: Swiss Society of New Zealand
Band: 16 (1951)
Heft: [6]

Artikel: Swiss farming [continued]
Autor: [s.n.]
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-942726>

Nutzungsbedingungen

Die ETH-Bibliothek ist die Anbieterin der digitalisierten Zeitschriften auf E-Periodica. 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. Das Veröffentlichen von Bildern in Print- und Online-Publikationen sowie auf Social Media-Kanälen oder Webseiten ist nur mit vorheriger Genehmigung der Rechteinhaber erlaubt. [Mehr erfahren](#)

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. La reproduction d'images dans des publications imprimées ou en ligne ainsi que sur des canaux de médias sociaux ou des sites web n'est autorisée qu'avec l'accord préalable des détenteurs des droits. [En savoir plus](#)

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. Publishing images in print and online publications, as well as on social media channels or websites, is only permitted with the prior consent of the rights holders. [Find out more](#)

Download PDF: 19.01.2026

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

weather was splendid, and as if by magic the trees were covered with flowers and the lawns wore a mantle of fresh grass. The pageant marched past under a pure blue sky, and the principal streets of the town were gaily decked with bunting. The spectators numbered somewhere around 200,000. All the Zurichers were out, except the sick and the newly-born babies. But they were not the only ones; the railways and thousands of motor cars had brought an unknown crowd of visitors.

One must admit that with 3,000 participants and many hundreds of horses and the pageant stretching along several miles, such a big gathering was justified. This long procession of costume groups marched on for two hours to the sound of the bands and in the shimmer of rich and multi-coloured uniforms and shining armour. This display was not only a very instructive summing up of several centuries of Zurich and Swiss history, but was, above all, a joy to the eyes, and it was regretted that in view of the amount of work required for the organization of such a spectacle, it could be enacted only once.

A SWISS INVENTION: THE RADIO IN RELIEF.

The radiosterophonic transmission system "Helvetic," invented in Geneva, has recently been presented to the public for the first time. It is the only system in operation which does not require two emitting sets and two receiving sets. The stereophonic reproduction gives all the tonal gradations, and transmits the different intensities and phases of sound reaching the left ear and the right ear of the listener as when standing in front of a stage. It gives an impression of realism which surpasses the one obtained by the present technique.

SWISS FARMING

(Continued)

The Farmer's Origin.

The Swiss people originated from various races feeling united by common history, democratic thinking, love for freedom, and economic problems. Hence, the individual members of the Swiss Nation differ by origin, language and religion. In the towns, the peculiarities of the Swiss are less prominent than in the country, although in the former, too, all the classes of the population cherish the old way.

The influence of the Celtic population, of the Helvetians and other races is particularly noticeable in French Switzerland. There, the immigrated Burgundians were ultimately assimilated and latinized by the Helveto-Romanic population. At a later epoch, however, the influence of Berne made itself strongly felt in those Cantons of western Switzerland. In the Canton of the Grisons the peculiarities of more ancient races are still present in the population, while the Canton of the Ticino has always been under the influence of Northern Italy. In the German-speaking Swiss Midlands the influence of the Alemanni has been preponderant. The Alemanni drove the Helveto-Gallic tribes back into the Alpine valleys although there, too, they succeeded in establishing permanent settlements. Thus, the Alpine region has become the abode of descendants of various races. There, among the dark-haired descendants of the primitive Swiss numerous flax-haired families may be found whose ancient past may be connected with German immigrations.

Peculiarities of Farmers.

In Swiss agriculture the family farm is a preponderant feature. Where farm-hands and farm-girls are employed they live with the farmer's family. His home,

family and village constitute the farmer's vital space. Increasing remoteness is apt to affect to an increasing extent the ways of life in village and farm. They are men of their own, reticent and often mistrusting towards all those who are not their neighbours and village-companions. The common feature peculiar to all farmers is their Christian faith, reliance in the Church, keeping of the given word, plain ways of life, satisfaction in their work, and thriftiness. Furthermore, they like to keep to their old ways and manners, and find pleasure in military service. Additional rural peculiarities are respect of knowledge and of wealth. Modifications in the peasant features are more likely to develop in the way contact between the farmyard and the traffic increases. This explains the great difference between the peasant population in the mountain regions and that of the Midlands. In the mountain regions, too, new ways of life have made their appearance here and there. Although the modern farmer tries to preserve as much of the old ways as is possible, there is a steady expansion of co-operative thinking, of the desire for education, expert knowledge and progress and of a businesslike and commercial frame of mind. In addition, the farmer's class consciousness is on the increase. All this, and his expanding participation in agricultural politics have become the basis and starting point of present-day agriculture.

Education of Farmers.

Throughout Switzerland the growing generation of the farmer population receives good schooling. The elementary school is the concern of the Cantons. The Federal constitution provides only for the elementary school to be State-owned, compulsory and free of charge. Attendance, in a general way, at the primary school is up to the age of fifteen, the age limit below which children may not be employed in factories. Instead of attending the primary school throughout, a great number of future farmers attend the secondary school or district school. In recent times, the majority of the Cantons set up training schools, so-called "Fortbildungsschulen," with compulsory attendance in part. These schools however, limit their courses to a restricted number of lessons a week. In the villages agricultural education is included in their syllabus. Hence, they form a sort of transition for the professional school.

The prosperity of the Swiss people is mainly based on the excellent professional education of the growing generation. In this, the youth in the country has its full share. The professional education of the Swiss farmers is, in the first instance, the task of the intermediate agricultural schools. These comprise the theoretical-practical schools, prevalently with two annual courses, and the winter school with two winter courses with prevalently theoretical teaching. In addition, there are various special schools and housekeeping schools. Many of these schools are very well equipped, and have highly experienced expert teachers required to own the diploma of the agricultural section training. Except for that University being the concern of the Confederation agricultural education is the business of the Cantons. Numerous lectures and courses organised by the Cantons and the agricultural associations are intended to add to the general expansion of expert knowledge. The same holds good in respect of professional tuition given by way of broadcasting.

The Cantons provide, as far as State-owned schools are concerned, four agricultural theoretical-practical schools, 37 winter schools, three for fruit growing, wine growing and horticulture, four dairy schools and 16 agricultural housekeeping schools. Moreover, there are four private professional schools receiving State subsidies. The demand has developed to such an extent in recent years that subsidiary classes have had to be opened in many cases.

Many agricultural teachers act simultaneously as farm advisers. In the majority of cases, these use cars

thereby saving time when making the round among the farmers.

In addition to finding for young men apprenticeship places in well-conducted farms, the Swiss Agricultural Association also organises apprentice examinations, as well as examinations for the master's certificate. The master's certificate and title is regarded by the farmers as a distinction of particular importance. The professional Press also contributes towards general knowledge. The papers have a very wide circulation and comprise 61 publications in the German language, 33 in French and five in the Italian language.

SWITZERLAND'S HELP TO WAR-DAMAGED COUNTRIES

The first work done by the "Schweizer Spende" in the winter of 1944-45 was in France, in Belgium, and in the Netherlands which at that time were not yet fully liberated. Immediately after the armistice the work was extended to Luxembourg, and later to Norway. In the middle of 1945 Italy and Austria—first only the frontier areas in both countries—were brought within the field of activity of the "Schweizer Spende." Conditions in Belgium and Norway rapidly improved. It was therefore possible for the "Schweizer Spende" to withdraw from those areas after only a few months, and Luxembourg, too, recovered quickly. In the Netherlands, on the other hand, relief work went on until 1946, and in France, Italy and Austria right up to the time when the "Schweizer Spende" was finally wound up. The last neighbouring country to be included in the programme of the "Schweizer Spende" in the spring of 1945-46, after some understandable opposition in Switzerland herself had been overcome, was Germany—and this was done in full agreement with the Occupying Powers. More distant countries in which the "Schweizer Spende" took an interest were Yugoslavia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Rumania, Greece, Albania, Bulgaria, and Finland. Great Britain was also helped, particularly as regards hospitalisation.

Of the 177 millions spent by the "Schweizer Spende" on relief abroad, 35.7 millions went to Germany, 29.5 million to France, 26.9 million to Austria, 22.6 million to Italy, 14.2 million to Poland, 12.8 million to the Netherlands, 11.2 million to Hungary, and 4.5 million each to Belgium, Yugoslavia and Finland.

The "Schweizer Spende" was never intended to be a permanent institution. When the last credit was approved in October, 1947, the Federal Assembly therefore decided that the organisation was to be wound up by 30th June, 1948. In a report dated 6th June, 1947, however, the Federal Council had already indicated the desirability of forming, as a successor to the "Schweizer Spende," a differently constituted central office, which would be in a position to unite the various relief organisations in an integrated whole, and which would have as its real basis, those same associations, which were in such close touch with the population. This recommendation of the Federal Council was in conformity with the views and wishes of the main Swiss relief organisations themselves, which had been the main instruments of the "Schweizer Spende," and which, in the light of their accurate knowledge of conditions regarded a cessation of relief activities as irresponsible. It was clear to them that it was their task, after the "Schweizer Spende" was wound up, to carry on the work in foreign countries and for foreign countries within a more modest framework and without state assistance, and they also all agreed that there must be some central body which would not only have certain technical functions, such as obtaining visas, making transport arrangements, etc., but the main duty of which would be

to co-ordinate Swiss aid to foreign countries and at the same time ensure that it retained its character as something above party, and representative of the whole of Switzerland. Thus, on 22nd August, 1947, after a series of preliminary discussions, the "Schweizer Europahilfe" (Swiss Aid to Europe) was founded. There participated in this act as founders, in addition to the "Schweizer Spende" itself, the relief organisation of the Evangelical Churches of Switzerland, the Swiss Workers Relief Organisation, the Swiss "Caritas" office and the Swiss Red Cross.

The aims of the "Schweizer Europahilfe" as indicated in its statutes are, first of all, the planning and co-ordination of Swiss relief activity; then, the representation of Swiss relief bodies when dealing with authorities and organisations; next, the grouping of technical functions when winding up relief schemes; and, finally, co-operation in the sphere of individual relief activity (hospitalisation, gift parcels, etc.). Unlike the "Schweizer Spende," the "Europahilfe" is organised on an entirely federal basis. Its business is done by an Executive Committee—whose members are, of course, honorary and by a secretariat, which is housed in Bern in the former offices of the "Schweizer Spende," and consists of only a few persons. The actual individual relief tasks are carried out, in accordance with the decisions and under the supervision of the Executive Committee, by the individual organisations belonging to the "Schweizer Europahilfe" with the staff and technical equipment at their disposal. Administrative costs can thus be reduced to a minimum. Expenditure of all common funds is subject to verification by the Federal Audit Department.

Since the "Schweizer Europahilfe" was founded, it has been joined by a number of other associations dealing with relief to war-damaged countries. At the present time, seven regular and fourteen associate members belong to it. The "Schweizer Spende's" membership ceased after its winding up was completed on 30th June, 1949.

The financial resources at the disposal of the "Schweizer Europahilfe" come partly from what was left by its predecessor, the "Schweizer Spende" and partly from the collections which have already been mentioned, of 1948 (6.4 million) and 1949 (2 million). Altogether there were 13.7 million francs available to the "Europahilfe" for relief work.

The work done by the "Schweizer Europahilfe" to date may be briefly summarised as follows. The proceeds of the 1948 collection, which was carried out within the framework of the United Nations world appeal, was devoted exclusively to aid for children and young people, and for expectant and nursing mothers. With the amount available to the "Schweizer Europahilfe" it was possible to give effective aid to some 20,000 children in 14 different countries. The help given consisted mainly of consignments of supplies to creches, children's homes, orphanages, schools, sewing-centres, refugee children's hostels and social welfare centres; and in supporting holiday colonies, children's preventoria, children's sanatoria, and hospitals, establishments for the care of delicate children, and workshops for youthful refugees; as well as in providing contributions for work in Switzerland itself, such as the hospitalisation of children, therapeutic courses and rest camps. Special mention should be made of the feeding of children in the Eastern Zone of Germany, help to crippled children in Poland, and many different forms of assistance to Italian organisations for the rehabilitation of neglected youth. Where circumstances allowed, care was taken not to send finished clothes, linen and shoes, but simply to provide the necessary material and utensils for making them. In that way, many inmates of camps and homes were given a most welcome opportunity of working and earning something.

In proportion to the size of population, most help was given to Austria, and then came Hungary, Poland, Finland, and Germany. I would like to stress the fact