

## Switzerland – home of Nestlé and today some Jerseys

In 1856, an American named Gail Borden invented sweetened condensed milk. Ten years later, two American brothers named Page settled down in Switzerland to establish a company in Cham under the name of the Anglo-Swiss Condensed Milk Company. A new industry was born in Europe.

By the early 1880s, the Anglo-Swiss company was churning out 25 million cans of milk a year. The Nestlé company however became a heavy competitor and by the end of 1905 the two arch-rivals were united in one company.

Bernhard Bøggild, a Danish dairyman, visited several European countries in 1885 including Switzerland, where he also visited the owners of the company in Cham. On Langrùthi, the farm belonging to George H. Page, he found a small herd of 20 Jersey heifers and two bulls, which Page had imported at great expense to Switzerland. (Source: Bøggild, 1886)

Archivist Albert Pfiffner reveals that the archive disposed of a few letters by Page from 1883 in which he mentions the farm Langrùthi (1880 to 1893), and sometimes in his letters he speaks about the Jersey cows in 'telegram-style'. (Source: Archives historiques Nestlé)

### Jerseys banned until 1995

Jersey cattle were banned as a breed in Switzerland until 1995. Only the ETH Chamau owned a Jersey herd numbering 40-50 animals, with which various issues were investigated experimentally.

However, Switzerland, home of the Brown Swiss breed, has been a major importer of Jerseys mostly from Denmark since the ban was lifted. The experimental project comparing Jersey cattle to other breeds has proved that the Jerseys perform well on the steep mountain slopes where they spend their summers.



The dairy products from the Alps are very popular and Jersey milk is well suited for cheese and butter production. The Jersey breed's high value milk has prompted many dairymen to either switch to Jerseys, or add some to their existing herds.

*"Schweizerischen Jerseyzuchtvereins was constituted in December 1999. There are approximately 8,600 Jerseys in Switzerland,*

*most of which are to be found in the canton of Bern and St Gallen in the eastern part of the country. Recently, a new Jersey association was formed in the east of Switzerland to encourage Jersey breeding and its first*

*president is Peter Sprecher from St Gallen."* (Derrick Frigot, 2010)

The World's Best Jersey Cheese 2010 was Jersey Blue made by Willi Schmid from Switzerland.

Country / Organisation	Switzerland	
First import of purebred Jerseys	1866 20 animals from USA 1985 50 animals from DK from 1995 too 2000 1459 animals from DK, DE, FR	
Name of the national Jersey association(s) – in home language and in English	Schweizerischer Jerseyzuchtverein Les éleveurs Suisse de Jersey Associazione Svizzera degli allevatori della razza Jersey Swiss Jersey cattle association	
Year of formation (possibly end year) of association	1999	
Date of 1 <sup>st</sup> herd book (1 <sup>st</sup> edition or earliest)	1999	
Size of Jersey population, latest figures (registered and total)	1. January 2010: 8991 animals	
% of the national dairy cattle population	Less than 1%	
Average herd size	5	
Average production		
Kg milk, fat and protein – 305 days	M = 5538 F = 5.36 % P = 3.88 %	
Breeding program with bull testing, yes/no	No	
And number of bulls tested per annum		
General management in your country (feeding, stalling, a. o.)	All kind of stalling and feeding systems present. From grazing too full mixed ration, with and without alpage in summertime.	
		
% of organic herds	?	
Use of sexed semen	About 10 %	
Names of the oldest herds		

