

INTERPROFESSION DU GRUYÈRE MAGAZINE

# l'oiseau



## ANNUAL REPORT 2023

OF THE INTERPROFESSION DU GRUYÈRE

LE GRUYÈRE

No 66 - June 2024

# CONTENTS

## EDITORIAL

03 PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## ANNUAL REPORT

- 04 GENERAL SITUATION
- 06 QUANTITY MANAGEMENT
- 07 MARKET EVOLUTION
- 08 PROTECTION AND DEFENCE OF THE BRAND
- 09 QUALITY OF LE GRUYÈRE AOP
- 11 AWARDS FOR LE GRUYÈRE AOP
- 13 MARKETING
- 28 EVENTS IN 2023
- 30 MANAGEMENT BODIES OF  
INTERPROFESSION DU GRUYÈRE
- 33 INTERPROFESSION COMMITTEE
- 34 OUTLOOK FOR 2024



## GRAPHICS

- 04 REPARTITION OF THE GRUYÈRE AOP CONSUMPTION DURING 2023
- 05 SALES 2022-2024
- 06 TOTAL PRODUCTION 2000-2023
- 07 COMPARISON OF SALES
- 10 COMPARISON OF QUALITY BY CIVIL YEAR
- 16 COMPARISON OF PRODUCTION (CASEIN MARKINGS)
- 17 EXPORTS 2022-2024
- 18 COMPARISON OF GRUYÈRE AOP YEARLY EXPORTS
- 19 COMPARISON OF GRUYÈRE AOP EXPORTS FROM JANUARY TO MARCH
- 30 COMPARISON OF STOCK EVOLUTION (END OF MARCH 2024)
- 32 COMPARISON OF STOCK EVOLUTION EXCLUDING ALPAGE (END OF MARCH 2024)
- 35 RECAPITULATION OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE TOTAL PRODUCTION POTENTIAL FOR LE GRUYÈRE AOP PER CHEESE DAIRY AND PER CANTON FOR 2024

## IMPRESSUM

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# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

## 2023, A PIVOTAL YEAR

**Calm after the storm, really? A pivotal year, definitely! 2023 was a year full of danger, which required us to get back on track after suffering the consequences of somewhat hasty decisions and unpredictable conflicts.**

I concluded last year by stressing that the strength of an organisation lies in its ability to show resilience and unity in stormy weather... We had to move from words to deeds, and this was done on several fronts:

- First and foremost, the market, with the admirable efforts of players on the ground faced with overstocking, an unfavourable economic climate and catastrophic exchange rates. The superior quality of Le Gruyère AOP and its "irreplaceable" status helped to avoid delisting and a further drop in production volumes.
- A committee seminar in January, followed by a delegates' seminar in April on the theme of sustainability. Everyone was highly motivated and committed to highlighting the many strengths of our industry in this area. Several dedicated working groups, open to IPG members, have been hard at work ever since.
- A "Meet the industry" training/information offer, with the opportunity to experience first-hand what happens on the farm, in cheese dairies and at traders' premises. A moderate success in terms of attendance, but excellent feedback from participants. All that remains now is to get back to work, which is planned for next autumn.



- Strengthening the management team by appointing a Secretary General to support the management team from 2024. This will allow us to anticipate the departure of the Director in 2025 by bringing new skills and fresh blood into the administration.

We can therefore look forward to the future with optimism for two main reasons:

- Le Gruyère AOP is staying the course well, against all the odds, thanks to its many qualities. Despite the unfavourable circumstances, the quantity produced today is equivalent to that before COVID, and the market is gradually recovering.
- The IPG is alive and active, and the commitment of its many members in the industry is a pleasure to see. In fact, you only have to take a little interest in the IPG and how it works, and follow the training courses on offer, to realise what a privilege it is to work for this magnificent product.

Major challenges still await us in the future. We will be able to face them successfully, as we have been able to do for a quarter of a century now. But this success belongs first and foremost to you, the milk producers, cheese-makers and refiners—all of you who ensure it every day through the quality of your work at every level.

Long live Le Gruyère AOP!

**PIERRE-IVAN GUYOT**  
*President of the Interprofession*

# GENERAL SITUATION

## A YEAR OF CONTRASTS

2023 was a year of consolidation in the life of Le Gruyère AOP. Following the quantity increases at the end of 2021 and the price changes in September 2022, a degree of stability was needed. This was made all the more difficult by the geopolitical situation, which worsened with the growing crisis in the Middle East. Vagaries in the exchange rate also clouded the picture. Bolstered by the financial reserves created during the good sales years, Interprofession du Gruyère was able to act to support market players while maintaining the promotional pressure need to guarantee sales of Le Gruyère AOP both in Switzerland and abroad. Thanks to these efforts, we were able to limit the impact of the downturn, with record consumption figures in Switzerland, while at the same time keeping within the average figures for the decline seen among all Swiss cheeses abroad. Overall, volumes are at pre-Covid levels. The efforts made by the IPG should also be seen in the context of those made by the industry as a whole, since a 10% reduction in production was necessary to adapt to sales and to clean up stocks, especially in terms of tiering. In fact, there is an excess of aged cheese, while the volume of young cheese is well below target.

All measures are being taken to ensure that this situation returns to normal during the first half of 2024, although the IPG and its sector cannot influence international conditions or unfavourable exchange rate trends. The aim is to return to a stable overall price level, while ensuring that everyone involved earns a decent wage. In this respect, it is worth noting that for every kilo of milk processed into Le Gruyère AOP, around 94 centimes were paid to the milk producer. This indicative figure has not fallen despite certain pressures.

## STRENGTHENING THE INDUSTRY

Following adoption of the Quantity Management Regulation in 2022, 2023 provided an opportunity to discuss the implementation of its main amendments:

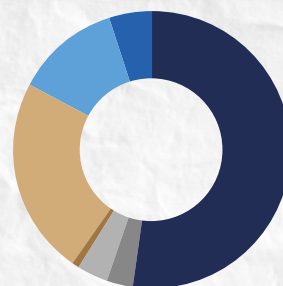
- Every cheese factory must be supplied by at least 5 producers;
- One milk producer must not represent more than one third of the cheese dairy.
- The maximum limit for a milk producer must be 1.3 million kg of milk, all allocations combined;
- One milk producer cannot have more than two milk buyers;
- Some of these conditions do not apply to small milk producers and small cheese factories.



Existing situations are regarded as being entitled to an exception if they comply with the specifications.

In this respect, the committee worked with the Ruralis office to carry out a complete review of the specifications and ensure that everyone's interpretation of each article is the same. The commented version has been made available to the whole industry. With regard to the specifications, the Committee also reaffirmed its support for the basic rules, which guarantee that all AOP cheeses will be distinguished by not processing milk older than 24 hours. Le Gruyère AOP stipulates 18 hours. On this basis, the Committee has written to the OFAG to express its opposition to any change in the specifications for Emmentaler, which would compromise the quality of the product and, consequently, the Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée. At a time when all our European

## REPARTITION OF THE GRUYÈRE AOP CONSUMPTION DURING 2023 IN TONNES



Switzerland	16'377 t.
Local Reserve	1'030 t.
Processed cheese	1'066 t.
Industry	280 t.
EU	7'261 t.
USA	3'840 t.
Others	1'491 t.
<b>Total</b>	<b>31'345 t.</b>



competitors are tightening their standards, it would be incomprehensible to lower them. Emmentaler can find a solution to its problem by applying for recognition as a PGI.

In order to avoid the industry having its high-quality day-to-day work spoiled, at the end of 2023 the Assembly of Delegates decided to use a tracer culture (CCO) from the 2027 calendar year onwards which will allow the veracity of Le Gruyère AOP to be authenticated in all its forms. The Assembly also ensured funding for the use and control of this CCO in order to guarantee its legal security.

## RESISTANCE TO SUPERMARKET LABELS

Interprofession du Gruyère had to fight off two requests from supermarkets, one from Coop to include Le Gruyère AOP in the Prix Garantie (Guaranteed Price) category. The other was from Migros to include a nutriscore on the packaging. In both cases, the strength of the specifications meant that these changes could be avoided. A product as well-known as Le Gruyère AOP has no place in the Prix Garantie segment. What's more, it is not overpriced. In supermarkets, it is priced at between 18.50 CHF/kg and 19.00 CHF/kg for mild Le Gruyère AOP— a healthy balance between the farm gate price and consumer price. Entering the "Prix Garantie" segment would be unwelcome pressure from retailers at a time when they claim to be committed to fair prices.

The nutriscore, also supported by consumer associations, is a misguided idea for providing information on healthy nutrition. The hidden algorithm behind this label takes no account of the quality of Le Gruyère AOP cheese or its additive-free production and preservation. Above all, it does not consider the short production chain. Le Gruyère AOP will remain in the red segment of this indicator regardless of what producers do, even though it is a high-value product. With this in mind, the IPG has supported the motion by the Council of States aimed at preventing this indicator from becoming compulsory.

## TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE AND PROFITABLE INDUSTRY

While the market was one of the main preoccupations of the IPG's bodies throughout the year, two major projects were launched: one involving the launch of a sustainability project and the second on the distribution of added value. The first theme is very important in view of the social, economic and environmental aspects involved. The aim is not to reinvent the wheel but to draw inspiration from existing sustainable models and apply them to the Le Gruyère AOP sector, with the guiding principle being respect for the specifications and quality of Le Gruyère AOP.

The aim of the second theme, added value, is to use case studies to identify the inputs that have the greatest economic impact on the profitability of Le Gruyère AOP production, from the cowshed to the 5-month-old cheese leaving the cellars.

These two issues will keep the IPG's governing bodies busy over the next few years.

## DEFENDING THE BRAND GLOBALLY

Work continued to defend the brand, culminating in the IPG's presence at the annual congress of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) in Tbilisi, Georgia, with a presentation of the Le Gruyère case in the USA. During the oriGIn Statutory General Assembly in Geneva in September, a large delegation visited the Maison du Gruyère.

Now 25 years old, Interprofession du Gruyère continues to defend and promote Le Gruyère AOP in Switzerland and around the world, while continuing to serve consumers who appreciate its quality and flavour.

# QUANTITY MANAGEMENT



## TOTAL PRODUCTION IN 2023: 30,173.71 TONNES

### RESTRICTION

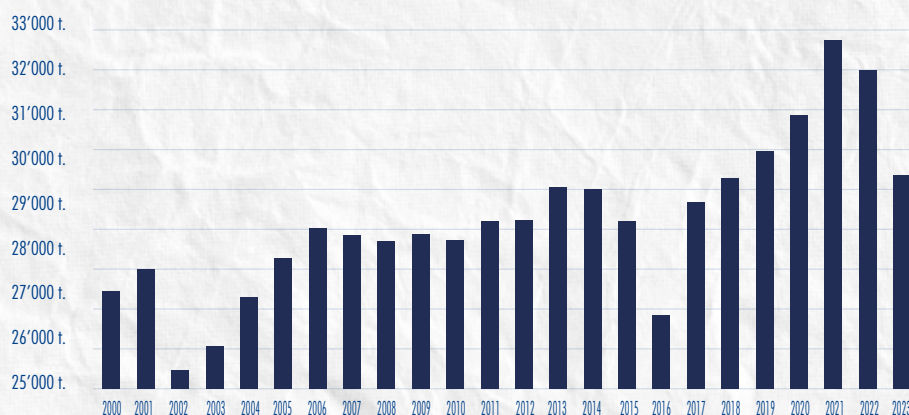
Unfortunately, 2023 began with a 4% restriction. Over the course of the year, production gradually fell, eventually reaching a restriction of 10% of the new 2023 basic quota. These measures were necessary in view of the international situation and large stocks.

## QUANTITY MANAGEMENT REGULATIONS

The Planning Committee held several meetings to propose a system for applying the new quantity management regulations.

For the 2023-2032 increase scheme, a linear 1% was allocated to the entire sector. Additionally, individuals who meet the criteria defined in appendix 1 of the quantity management regulation are eligible for "investment aid". Several applications have already been processed.

## TOTAL PRODUCTION 2000-2023 IN TONNES



2000	27'234.6 t.	2004	27'224.2 t.	2008	28'564.4 t.	2012	29'068.3 t.	2016	26'780.8 t.	2020	31'608 t.
2001	27'893.8 t.	2005	28'148.4 t.	2009	28'749.1 t.	2013	29'871.7 t.	2017	29'512.9 t.	2021	33'434.8 t.
2002	25'443.2 t.	2006	28'883.1 t.	2010	28'567.1 t.	2014	29'833.2 t.	2018	30'099.0 t.	2022	32'739.5 t.
2003	26'021.7 t.	2007	28'710 t.	2011	29'051.1 t.	2015	29'048.7 t.	2019	30'755.4 t.	2023	30'173.7 t.

# MARKET EVOLUTION

Throughout 2023, the market unfortunately declined. A total of 31,345 tonnes were purchased by delighted consumers, which is 300 tonnes less than in 2022.

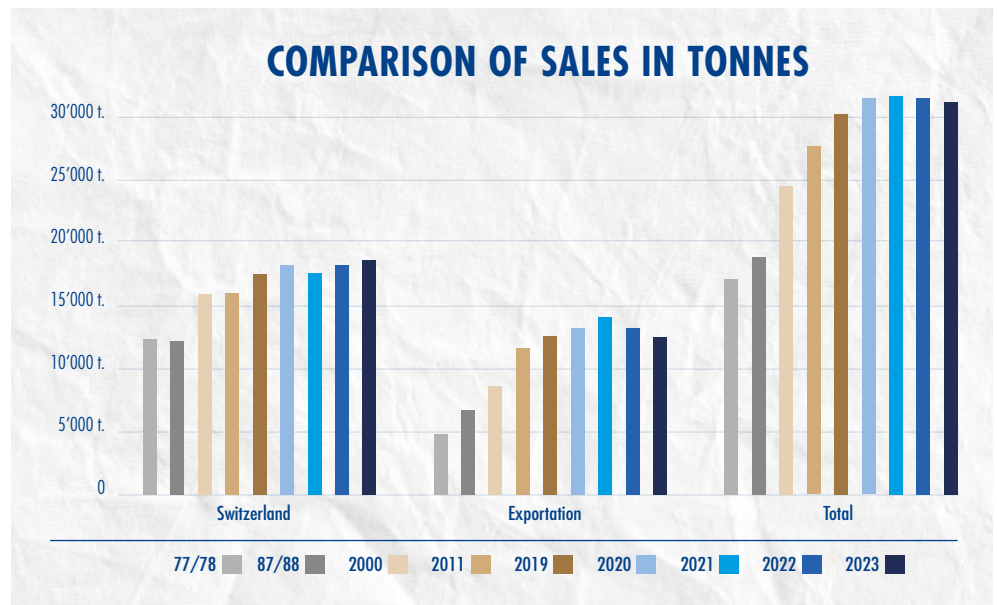
## FOREIGN MARKET

The first three months of the year were disappointing but there was a recovery in the second half.

- In the European Union, just over 200 tonnes were lost compared with 2022, mainly in France and Belgium.
- Outside the European Union, the poor figures at the start of 2023 could not be made up by the end of the year.

Overall, however, export figures are higher than in the pre-Covid period.

On international markets, the price increase and the



unfavourable exchange rate may have made Le Gruyère AOP a little less affordable for certain inflation-sensitive consumers in these international markets.

## DOMESTIC MARKET

Luckily, local consumers remain loyal to Le Gruyère AOP as purchases in Switzerland hit a new record of 18,754 tonnes.



# PROTECTION AND DEFENCE OF THE BRAND



**Given its national and European protection, Le Gruyère AOP has a good legal foundation. This situation is not the same everywhere in the world.**

## LABELLING

In order to build Swiss, European and even global protection on a solid foundation, the labelling standards stated in the specifications must be applied. It is these provisions that support consumers in their purchasing decisions. Behind the Le Gruyère AOP Switzerland brand is a promise about the quality, values and sales method of this noble cheese. It also ensures a perfect match between marketing work and work on the sales front. This is why any label or packaging that includes the brand must be validated by the IPG under the supervision of the OIC. While the situation in Switzerland is satisfactory, there is room for improvement internationally. Furthermore, and according to the specifications, no other label should appear on the packaging. It is thanks to this work on positioning that Le Gruyère AOP Switzerland is among the brands in which Swiss consumers have the most confidence, as mentioned in several recent studies. This vital aspect has been further consolidated as part of the complete review of the specifications.

To this end, Interprofession du Gruyère has supported the work carried out by the Swiss AOP/IGP Association to prevent the Nutriscore from being made compulsory on packaging. The Nutriscore would give consumers a less than credible indication by undermining the strength of the brand.

## PROTECTION OF LE GRUYÈRE AOP THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

In the European Union, Le Gruyère AOP enjoys full protection. What's more, thanks to mutual recognition with the French Le Gruyère IGP, any misuse of the Le Gruyère name or misrepresentation of the product is directly attacked by either Interprofession du Gruyère, the Federal Office of Agriculture, the Institute for Intellectual Property, the French Le Gruyère IGP Syndicate or, ultimately, the National Institute of Origin and Quality (INAO). This means that on the European continent, the situation for Le Gruyère AOP is very clear, benefiting both the production sectors and

consumers, who know exactly what they are buying when they see a cheese labelled Le Gruyère AOP Switzerland.

Outside the European Union, the situation differs from country to country, with Le Gruyère AOP enjoying full protection in some countries, such as Great Britain, South Africa, Colombia and even Georgia. The situation is more complicated in the American region. In the United States, Le Gruyère AOP Switzerland enjoys the protection of a renewed figurative trademark, which is a clear indication for consumers wishing to buy a Swiss cheese benefiting from this designation.

Despite certain uncertainties regarding protection, Interprofession du Gruyère takes action, through its lawyers, whenever it finds false or partly false information in shops or on websites. These actions are often successful. When it takes legal action, it usually joins forces with the French Le Gruyère IGP in order to share the costs but also to build a stronger case.

In any case, the two interprofessions hope that each negotiation of bilateral agreements signed by the European Union and Switzerland will improve the protection of Le Gruyère AOP throughout the world. To this end, they rely on the activities of the OriGIn Association, which works in different parts of the world to promote the protection of geographical indications. OriGIn held its biennial meeting in autumn 2023 in Geneva. The meeting was very well attended by both member associations and government representatives. Interprofession du Gruyère was active in this context, welcoming a large delegation of participants to the Maison du Gruyère at the end of the meeting. The IPG Director also attended the world congress of the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), which was held in June 2023 in Tbilisi, Georgia. This provided an opportunity to reaffirm the importance of protecting trade names throughout the world, despite the decisions of the American Court of Justice.

# QUALITY OF LE GRUYÈRE AOP



## TAXATIONS AND CONTROLS

An initial qualitative assessment is carried out around 3 months after production, when the refiner takes charge of the product leaving the cheese dairy cellars.

At 4.5 months, in accordance with the specifications, each batch of Le Gruyère AOP is subject to an inspection process known as *taxation*. This is the basis of the flawless traceability linked to the casein brand. The *taxation* is carried out by a Committee made up of an inspector or *taxateur* from Interprofession du Gruyère and an expert from among currently practising cheesemakers.

## APPEALS AGAINST TAXATION

The procedure may be subject to an appeal, i.e. a new examination by an Appeals Committee. This is made up of two representatives of refiners and a cheesemaker. Its result is irrevocable. This way of proceeding guarantees the objectivity required for the qualitative observation of Le Gruyère AOP sold on the market. Before leaving the cellars for good, Le Gruyère AOP undergoes a final assessment by the refiner-vendor.

This process ensures the flawless quality of Le Gruyère AOP and Le Gruyère d'Alpage AOP to the delight of consumers from all walks of life.

28 appeals against taxation were lodged.

## QUALITY BONUSES

This aspect is promoted by Interprofession du Gruyère through the payment of quality bonuses, which have reached around 5.8 million Swiss francs. This support for quality is important to everyone: the cheese dairy company, the cheese maker and the refiners.

## QUALITY

Quality of Traditional and Organic Le Gruyère AOP

- Percentage of IB: This has increased slightly. It amounts to 3.53%
- Percentage of IA: 95.89% of cheese wheels were classified as IA quality, with the proportion of 19 or more points being 66.12%.

Note that the provisions on qualitative restrictions for production year 2023 relate to 56 tonnes from 8 traditional cheese dairies. This can quickly destabilise a batch.

Quality of Le Gruyère d'Alpage AOP

Weather conditions over mountain pastures play an important role.

- Percentage of IB: 8.67%
- Percentage of IA: 91.32%, with 62.40% at 19 points or more

This excellence is due to the professional work of everyone involved, from dairy production, through cheese processing to refining.

This daily commitment is also encouraged by the various advisory bodies, including Caséi, Arqha and Agroscope. It is also necessary for training to continue so that future generations will always have a desire to be independent in the service of quality and tradition, in order to ensure the diversity of flavours.

With the aim of preserving the authenticity of national specialities, Interprofession du Gruyère actively participates in the work of Liebefeld Culture AG, hoping to move as soon as possible to the facilities in Posieux, Grangeneuve.

In more problematic cases, recourse may be made to the Quality Commission, whose activities are covered in the chapter on the bodies of Interprofession du Gruyère.



## CHEMICAL ANALYSIS, WATER AND FAT CONTENT

Systematic checks are carried out on each batch to determine its chemical composition. Appeals were lodged against 31 analyses.

Note that the checks cover more than 2,000 batches annually. Compliance with the contents required by the specifications is required over an average of 6 months. The aim of these checks has been met on the whole.

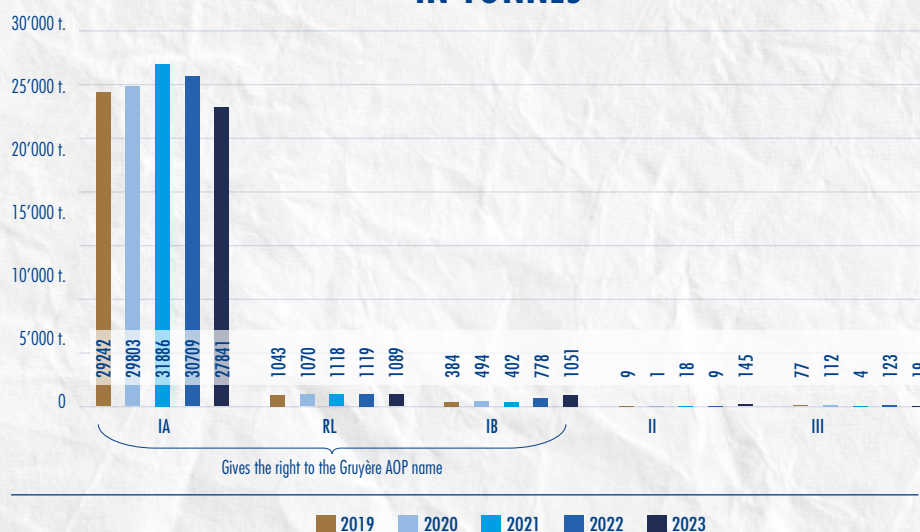
## SPECIFIC TESTS

Interprofession du Gruyère carries out tests on the hygienic and bacteriological quality of the cheese. In 2023, tests to verify the absence of pathogenic, phytosanitary and veterinary products were continued.

They confirmed that the measures put in place can guarantee the compliance of Le Gruyère AOP placed on the market with the legal requirements in this area. It is important for the consumer buying Le Gruyère AOP that the product is free of additives as well as naturally lactose-free and gluten-free.

In this respect, the sector notes the good collaboration, each in its own area of responsibility, with the various control bodies, including the OIC and the various services of the States concerned.

## COMPARISON OF QUALITY BY CIVIL YEAR IN TONNES



# AWARDS FOR LE GRUYÈRE AOP IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COMPETITIONS

Le Gruyère AOP achieved a great deal in 2023 by winning numerous national and international cheese competitions. These awards testify to the appreciation and recognition of the quality of Le Gruyère AOP throughout the world. They reinforce the image of the quality of this noble cheese, which is linked to respect for tradition, nature and know-how. Finally, they are a reward for the daily work and efforts of all those involved in the industry.

Interprofession du Gruyère would like to congratulate the 2023 winners. Thanks to very high-quality milk, remarkable production and refining, they demonstrate the success of the Le Gruyère AOP sector.

## NEUCHÂTEL CANTON CHEESE OF EXCELLENCE



Stéphane Menoud and Edouard Philipona

At a tasting event for a jury of figures from political, journalistic, culinary and professional circles, Le Gruyère AOP made by Stéphane Menoud from Fromagerie des Chaux and matured by Elsa Group Mifroma SA came in first among the ten Le Gruyère AOP cheeses presented. Following this victory, Le Gruyère AOP by the Chaux-du-Milieu Cooperative, chaired by Edouard Philipona, will be promoted and referenced for a year by the Neuchâtel cantonal promotion organisation.

## FRIBOURG COUNCIL OF STATE SELECTS ITS CHEESE OF EXCELLENCE



On behalf of the Council of State, President Jean-Pierre Sigen designated the two State cheeses for 2024. In fact, the canton of Fribourg selects its Le Gruyère AOP and its Vacherin Fribourgeois AOP at the same time in order to retain the spirit of the true Fondue Moitié-Moitié. As a result,



Benoît Deforel and Michel Fahrni

throughout 2024, Le Gruyère AOP by Benoît Deforel from Fromagerie of Sâles, matured by Elsa Group Mifroma SA, will be the cheese promoted during political meetings.

## VAUD COUNCIL OF STATE'S CHEESE OF EXCELLENCE



At the end of its weekly meeting on 1 November, the Vaud Council of State was given a blind tasting of three Le Gruyère AOP cheeses painstakingly preselected from among fifteen samples. After a deliberation, the choice of the Vaud government's cheese of excellence fell on Le Gruyère AOP from Fromagerie du Haut-Jorat, produced by René Pernet and matured by Fromco SA. Le Gruyère AOP from Fromagerie du Haut-Jorat, chaired by Marc-Antoine Bigler, like all its competitors, scored an average of more than 19 out of 20 points in the 2022 assessments.



René Pernet and Marc-Antoine Bigler



## WORLD CHEESE AWARDS

4,502 cheese specialties from 43 countries were gathered in Trondheim (Norway) on 30 October 2023 for the 35th World Cheese Awards. After tasting, the jury of cheese experts, buyers, retailers and journalists awarded Le Gruyère AOP 10 gold medals, 11 silver medals and 7 bronze medals.

### GOLD MEDALS

- Thierry Piller, Fromagerie La Brévine, matured by Emmi Group SA
- Philippe Geinoz, Fromagerie Les Sagnettes, matured by Margot Fromages SA
- Anthony Pittet, Fromagerie Bouloz-Porsel, matured by Lustenberger + Dürst AG
- Julien Coigny, Fromagerie Penthéraz, matured by Margot Fromages SA
- Marc Mesot, Fromagerie Châttonnaye, matured by Cremo SA
- Frédéric Pasquier, Fromagerie Echarlens, matured by Elsa Group Mifroma SA
- Alain Jungo, Fromagerie Strauss, matured by Cremo SA
- Vincent Guillet, Fromagerie Rossens, matured by Elsa Group Mifroma SA
- Michael Spycher, Fromagerie Fritzenhaus, matured by Gourmino AG
- Adrian Scheidegger, Fromagerie Niedermuhren, matured by Cremo S.A

### SILVER MEDALS

- Julien Yerly, Fromagerie Villars-sur-Glâne, matured by Cremo SA
- Pius Hitz, Fromagerie Vorderfultigen, matured by Gourmino AG
- Florian Spielhofer, Fromagerie Sonvilier, matured by Elsa Group Mifroma SA
- Daniela Weber, Fromagerie Düdingen, matured by Cremo SA
- Pierre-Alain Uldry, Fromagerie Pont-la-Ville, matured by Elsa Group Mifroma SA
- Didier Bovet, Fromagerie Corcelle-le-Jorat, matured by Elsa Group Mifroma SA
- Vincent Tyrode, Fromagerie L'Auberson, matured by Margot Fromages SA
- Adrian Scheidegger, Fromagerie Niedermuhren, matured by Cremo SA

- Vincent Tyrode, Fromagerie L'Auberson, matured by Margot Fromages SA
- Julien Jungo, Fromagerie Planfayon, matured by Cremo SA
- Julien Yerly, Fromagerie Villars-sur-Glâne, matured by Cremo SA

### BRONZE MEDALS

- Markus Sturny, Fromagerie Lanthen, matured by Cremo SA
- Julien Yerly, Fromagerie Villars-sur-Glâne, matured by Cremo SA
- Michael Hanke, Fromagerie Combremont-le-Petit, matured by Gourmino AG
- Alain Jungo, Fromagerie Strauss, matured by Cremo SA
- Christophe Suchet, Fromagerie Bonnefontaine, matured by Lustenberger + Dürst AG
- Pius Hitz, Fromagerie Vorderfultigen, matured by Gourmino AG
- Markus Sturny, Fromagerie Lanthen, matured by Cremo SA

## MONDIAL DE LA FONDUE

Fondue lovers from all over the world gathered in Tartegnin (VD) on 18 November 2023 for the fourth Mondial de la Fondue, the fondue world championships. Each participant had the opportunity to present his or her own fondue creation, made with a minimum of 50% Le Gruyère AOP.

Damien Raemy, Master Cheese-maker in Corbières, was the overall winner in 2023. He won over the jury, made up of Swiss and international personalities, with a 'traditional' fondue made with a blend of Le Gruyère AOP and Vacherin Fribourgeois AOP.

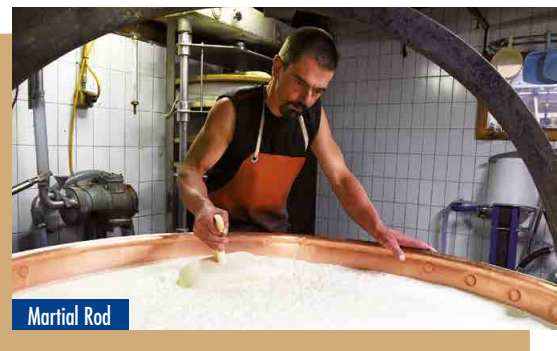


Damien Raemy

## OLMA – ALPINE CHEESE COMPETITION

Every October, the alpine cheese competition takes place as part of OLMA, the Swiss agricultural and food fair in St. Gallen. Le Gruyère AOP stood out by winning the competition and placing two other Le Gruyère AOPs in the top 10.

- Le Gruyère d'Alpage AOP by Martial Rod, Alpage La Moësettaz and matured by Fromage Le Gruyère SA, was the big winner in the hard cheese category for 2023.
- Le Gruyère d'Alpage AOP by Pierre-André Barras, Alpage Le Groins and matured by Coopérative fribourgeoise des producteurs de fromages d'Alpage, won 5<sup>th</sup> place.
- Le Gruyère d'Alpage AOP by Nicolas Remy, Alpage Les Groins du Milieu and matured by Coopérative fribourgeoise des producteurs de fromages d'Alpage, came 7<sup>th</sup>.
- Le Gruyère d'Alpage AOP by Jacques Ruffieux, Alpage Tissiniva and matured by Coopérative fribourgeoise des producteurs de fromages d'Alpage, won a diploma.



Martial Rod

# MARKETING



## GENERAL OVERVIEW

Interprofession du Gruyère's marketing activity is unusual in that it involves promoting the Le Gruyère AOP Switzerland brand and the product in every possible way, but not direct sales. That is left to market players. However, the IPG's marketing department has to do everything it can to make their task easier. All the projects implemented aim to improve the visibility and reputation of the brand, while at the same time promoting the intrinsic qualities of Le Gruyère AOP, based on its flavour and an ancestral history rooted in its terroir.

It is largely thanks to this diversified but consistent work that we were able to maintain a wide distribution of Le Gruyère AOP, both in Switzerland and around the world, in the difficult market conditions of 2023. To crown this work, two independent studies placed Le Gruyère AOP in the top 10 brands most appreciated and trusted by consumers. Here, the IPG brand rubs shoulders with the giants of supermarket distribution and the great powers of information technology and social media. Targeted investment can give a brand undeniable strength, making it easier to establish a presence in the market. This is the approach we need to pursue over the next few years, because it is ultimately the consumer and the market that drive the development of Le Gruyère AOP production.

## NATIONAL PROMOTION

National advertising campaigns promoted Le Gruyère AOP throughout the year, targeting 30–59-year-olds but also making the brand known to younger people, choosing media favoured by the 18–29 age group.

The national media plan put forward an adaptation of the AOP commercial to accompany the national weather forecast on television for the first three months of 2023. This campaign recorded a gross figure of over 100 million

contacts. The summer was punctuated by major events such as Athletissima in Lausanne, Weltklasse in Zurich and the World Athletics Championships in Budapest. Le Gruyère AOP raised its profile on television, reaching over 16 million viewers with advertising before and after these athletics meetings.

In September, Le Gruyère AOP was supported by a 2-week poster campaign in Switzerland's 12 largest cities. A total of 702 strategic locations (in railway stations and busy streets) generated more than 24 million contacts.

At the beginning of November, a 2-week campaign on Swiss television broadcast the new "Le Goût" [The Flavour] advert. This ad reveals the flavour of every moment in life. A total of 1,125 adverts were broadcast and seen by almost 7 million people. To reach 18–29-year-olds, the new ad was also relayed on YouTube. The campaign lasted 4 weeks and was a great success, with more than 1.9 million views of the entire video and close to 10,000 clicks on our website. In December, the "Le Goût" advert was also seen by 130,000 young people, as it was shown in 76 cinemas in Switzerland, with a strong emphasis on German-speaking Switzerland.

During 2023, Le Gruyère AOP appeared in several local, regional and national newspapers and magazines related to farming, gastronomy and local produce. To promote our delicious Le Gruyère AOP recipes, a digital campaign on Instagram and Facebook, as well as Google search engines, generated more than 63,000 clicks on the Recipes tab of our website.

Le Gruyère AOP was promoted throughout the year in coordination with the Association pour la promotion des AOP-IGP and Switzerland Cheese Marketing (SCM), particularly during the famous spring and autumn fairs, as well as through advertising campaigns carried out by the two associations.



As part of Goûts et Terroirs and the Fondue promotional day organised by Gastro Vaud in early December, Le Gruyère AOP sponsored radio promotions that highlighted the brand and the event.

Throughout the year, working with Vacherin Mont d'Or, Etivaz AOP and the Terravin brand, lessons about Le Gruyère AOP are taught in the various hotel schools located in the canton of Vaud. This activity, supported by the authorities of this same canton, is a way of introducing these different products to students from all over the world. In addition to this activity, Le Gruyère AOP actively works to promote Vaud's involvement in open cellars, the Mondial du Chasselas and of course the traditional discovery of Vaud's mountain pastures.

The exclusive tourism collaboration between Zermatt and Le Gruyère AOP, which has lasted for more than 20 years, allowed visitors to travel on electric buses sporting the colours of Le Gruyère AOP at the Zermatt tourist resort. Le Gruyère AOP is also present in the form of posters at Täsch station, which travellers must pass through to reach Zermatt. In a nod to this partnership, Le Gruyère AOP was involved in the fondues served at the Zermatt Unplugged music festival at the beginning of April.

Le Gruyère AOP supported local tourism and the various events that took place during the year in Gruyères, including the Fête du Fromage, the Festival des Arts et du feu, the National Day and the Christmas market.

Broadcast on the regional television channels Canal 9, Télé and Canal Alpha, the programme *1115 il était une fois le gruyère* this year paid tribute to gastronomy with a season dedicated to chefs. In a convivial atmosphere, several cheesemakers from the industry joined the chefs to present, with passion and professionalism, the various ways in which Le Gruyère AOP can be used to great effect in the kitchen.

Le Gruyère AOP is closely linked to the Maison du Gruyère. Indeed, two members of the marketing staff are involved in its marketing committee and in the Museography Committee for the purpose of setting up a future exhibition at the new Maison du Gruyère. By welcoming people every day, this site is an important ambassador for the "Le Gruyère AOP Switzerland" brand. The Ponts-de-Martel site also plays its promotional role. Note that many cheese dairies are available to host schools throughout the year. Renovations and new buildings were promoted, such as the Auberson cheese dairy with its visitors' gallery.

## INTERNATIONAL PROMOTION

In 2023, Interprofession du Gruyère, together with the Switzerland Cheese Marketing (SCM) organisation, maintained its relations and consolidated its investments in various countries. The sales promotion programme of the *Loi sur l'agriculture* (Farming Law), with specific activities carried out according to the co-financing rules published by the OFAG (Federal Office for Agriculture). Le Gruyère AOP maintained its promotional activities to support and increase sales of Le Gruyère AOP, while collaborating actively and in agreement with the trading companies. These investments were made in countries that show potential for growing sales of Le Gruyère AOP.

Media placement for the international market as a whole was coordinated with the Mediamix agency.

## FRANCE

In France, food prices had risen by more than 14% by the end of December 2023. The selling price of Le Gruyère AOP rose by an average of 11% over the year. Despite these unfavourable conditions for the food trade, volumes of Le Gruyère AOP rose by 2.7% in 2023, to a total of 1,657 tonnes (source: TSM).

Faced with this tense trading situation in supermarkets, promotions were increased to provide the best possible support for demand. In agreement with retailers, Interprofession du Gruyère organised more than 250 days of special Le Gruyère AOP events in supermarkets and traditional outlets.

For maximum point-of-sale visibility, a field-marketing campaign was carried out in 40 targeted departments: More than 610 hypermarkets were visited by merchandisers, enabling specific Le Gruyère AOP advertising to be installed in the cut and fresh-packed sections. In the traditional channel, Le Gruyère AOP promoted discovery tastings of Le Gruyère AOP Réserve and Le Gruyère d'Alpage AOP in October at 140 cheese shops in and around Paris.

Awareness of Le Gruyère AOP was raised among French consumers and a number of communication activities were put in place, including a digital poster campaign targeted as close as possible to the act of buying in hypermarkets and shopping centres, generating 92 million contacts, and an advertising campaign in the general press, which totalled 66 million contacts.



## GERMANY

In Germany, the cheese market was strongly influenced by the weak economic situation (recession) and by inflation, which only fell slightly. A strong reluctance to buy food products is weighing on all quality cheeses. Sales by the slice, in particular, fell by 1%. German consumers are buying more low-priced, German-brand food products, especially in discount shops.

The price of Le Gruyère AOP increased several times in 2023, partly as a result of the unfavourable exchange rate. Many promotional activities were undertaken, particularly at the point of sale, to encourage consumers to buy our cheese. 163 tasting days were organised, as well as two promotions at cheese-cutting counters, generating a total of 1.1 million contacts.

Each promotion was communicated by direct marketing to 10,000 consumers by email. Social media posts, banners on websites, product articles and advertisements in the specialist press all helped to draw attention to the respective promotions, thereby raising awareness of Le Gruyère AOP in Germany.

Special activities with prizes for consumers, such as freshpack Le Gruyère AOP labels, offered the chance to win a pair of skis from the Swiss AK brand in the colours of Le Gruyère AOP and Swiss cheeses. In addition, sales support was offered to wholesalers with cheese cutters and fondue pots featuring the Le Gruyère AOP brand. A mix of exclusive content and recipe ideas attracted attention and ensured that the Le Gruyère AOP brand became ever more deeply rooted in the collective consciousness.

## BENELUX

In Belgium, the volume of the cheese market shrank by 2.4% owing to high inflation. Consumers bought cheese less frequently and in smaller quantities. In value terms, given the rise in prices, the cheese market grew by 12.2%. The marketing mix of Interprofession du Gruyère was mainly aimed at recruiting new consumers. In supermarkets and hypermarkets, we regularly ran point of sale promotional campaigns. In addition to the tasting events, a sample of 72,000 twenty-gramme sticks of Classic Le Gruyère AOP was added to consumers' online orders, enabling us to reach a different target group. For cheese shops, a training master class was organised on the subject of the flavour wheel and refining. In the shops, the Le Gruyère AOP & honey operation helped to boost sales.

Le Gruyère AOP was present at the Christmas Village in Liège, with a chalet-restaurant offering the Fondue Moitié-Moitié, which served more than 8,000 fondues. On the new media front, to dispel certain clichés associated with Le Gruyère AOP on the Belgian market, SCM Benelux and Interprofession du Gruyère ran a digital campaign combining education and humour, using a segmentation marketing strategy. Belgian comedian Freddy Tougaux carried out an in-depth investigation spanning 5 episodes with a somewhat offbeat tone.



## ITALY

As a result of rising raw material costs, Italian households faced a sharp fall in purchasing power, with inflation at 12.4%. In a generally negative year, Le Gruyère AOP maintained its volumes, still recording small sales volumes with an increase of +22% on the previous year. Le Gruyère AOP starred in a number of activities at Italian retail outlets. More than 85 promotional actions took place across the country, accompanied by 279 in-store promotions, supporting sales of our cheese. A national campaign to boost sales, with 10,500 jars of honey offered for every 250 grams purchased, involved 150 sales outlets. Various Le Gruyère Alpage AOP promotions throughout the year positioned Alpage as a superior quality product.

The specific activity enabled 50,000 freshpacks to be labelled with the Le Gruyère AOP brand and logo, improving visibility on cheese counters crowded with competing products. Michelin-starred chef Luigi Taglienti was invited to interpret the product with a video recipe broadcast on social media, reaching over 1.1 million impressions, followed by an outdoor campaign in the centre of Milan, reaching 28 million contacts.



## SPAIN

The Spanish economy grew by 2.5% in 2023, with an average inflation rate of 3.5%. Extensive media coverage helped to position Le Gruyère AOP with consumers. Among point-of-sale activities, SCM Ibérica carried out more than 520 tastings events in the country. Supported by various competi-



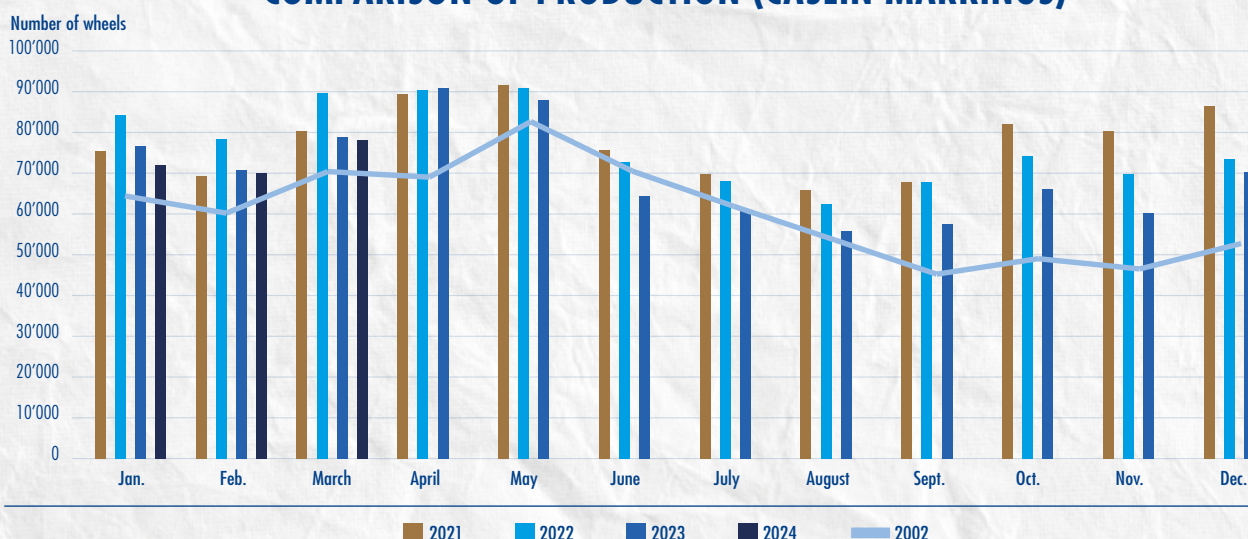
tions, more than 600 sales outlets gave consumers the chance to taste the product. More than 60,000 tastings were offered through the Swiss Cheese Box container. In addition to the promotions, Le Gruyère AOP was also present at the Chalet Suizo by Quesos de Suiza restaurant on the slopes of the Sierra Nevada. Among the trade shows, involvement in Gourmet in Madrid brought us into contact with over 100,000 visitors. The 10 Barcelona Experience by Le Gruyère AOP campaign offered a top-of-the-range experience in which 10 Barcelona restaurants included 10 tapas made with our cheese on their menus.

## UNITED KINGDOM

With the economy going into recession in the second half of the year, the UK remains a priority market for the product, which was presented at 5 trade fairs throughout the country, 18 consumer fairs and events, and new foodie events such as the Ragley Game Fair and the Bolton Food Festival, with 500,000 contacts.

Interprofession du Gruyère presented a lively concept aimed at young consumers in a food truck bearing the Le Gruyère AOP brand at 10 outdoor food and music festivals. Le Gruyère AOP was used and named on the menu in the VIP areas at the Manchester City FC vs. Young Boys matches. Supported by promotions among wholesalers, including 1,000 independent retailers, we maintained our sales in the UK. Training trips to the production area and a global print and digital advertising campaign completed the strategy.

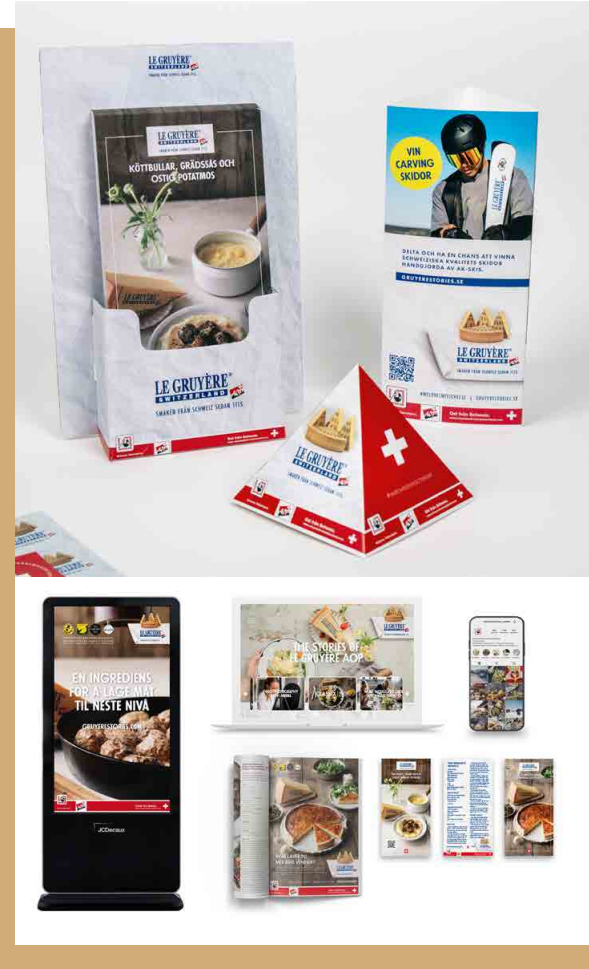
## COMPARISON OF PRODUCTION (CASEIN MARKINGS)



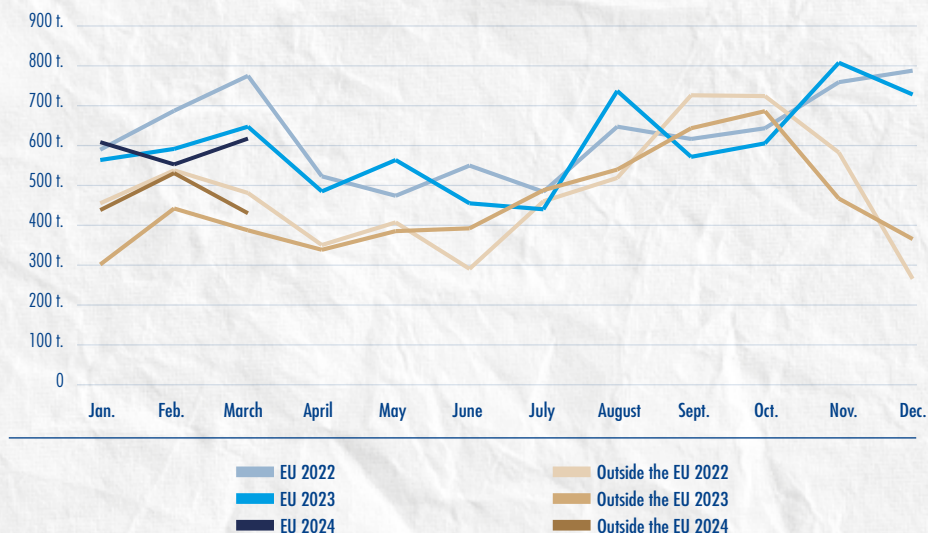


## NORDIC COUNTRIES

The Nordic countries are beginning to show signs of post-pandemic stabilisation, despite high inflation. Projections suggest that these countries are on the road to recovery, with rising household spending and investment, and falling inflation, pointing to gradual strengthening of our sales. The Le Gruyère AOP campaign delivered remarkable results, demonstrating a significant increase in brand indicators with a 19% rise in awareness. The campaign strengthened Le Gruyère AOP's reputation, with consumers strongly associating the product with quality, authenticity, satisfaction and reliability thanks to an attractive narrative and a strong brand image on selected media channels. A balanced mix of traditional and digital media, including consumer press, digital signage and video, helped to reinforce the brand. Point-of-sale activities, particularly tastings, reached an impressive 99,000 contacts in the Nordic countries. In synergy, marketing efforts in the field, shop visits and competitions brought Le Gruyère AOP closer to consumers. In-store visual campaigns also generated almost 48 million impressions. Supported by an advertising strategy, Le Gruyère AOP achieved over 39 million impressions of banner ads and 14.8 million impressions of in-store print ads, demonstrating the strong presence and acceptance of our product in the Nordic markets.



## EXPORTS 2022-2024 IN TONNES



## USA

Record sales were achieved in the United States, once again making the American market the most important export market for Le Gruyère AOP. The US is one of the world's leading cheese importers. Le Gruyère AOP is distinguished by its great diversity, which meets the demands of American consumers. Emphasis was placed on promoting Le Gruyère AOP through dedicated promotional campaigns in the specialist press. Interprofession du Gruyère supported product promotion in the US with a substantial investment budget, enabling the brand's reputation and protection to be raised on a long-term basis. A new promotional and press relations structure dedicated to Le Gruyère AOP in the US carried out promotional activities in the form of master classes for professionals, buyers and consumers.

## CANADA

Canada is an important market for Le Gruyère AOP, despite the quotas imposed. Promotional projects based mainly on a tasting plan were carried out in supermarkets in agreement with the trading companies. Interprofession du Gruyère developed and distributed seasonal digital campaigns throughout the region. Brand promotion was supported locally with a media plan combining conventional and digital press.

## SOUTH KOREA & JAPAN

Japan and South Korea are gateways to Asia. Generally speaking, Asians favour specific references such as imported cheese, and Le Gruyère AOP in particular. Interprofession du Gruyère supported brand promotion through communication and continually invested in print and digital media. Product promotion was encouraged through targeted tastings.

## AUSTRALIA

In Australia, Le Gruyère AOP is the driving force behind Swiss cheeses, and demand continued to grow. Le Gruyère AOP was constantly supported by promotional and communication activities in the retail trade, as well as the brand's presence at the Good Food and Wine Show.

## OTHER MARKETS

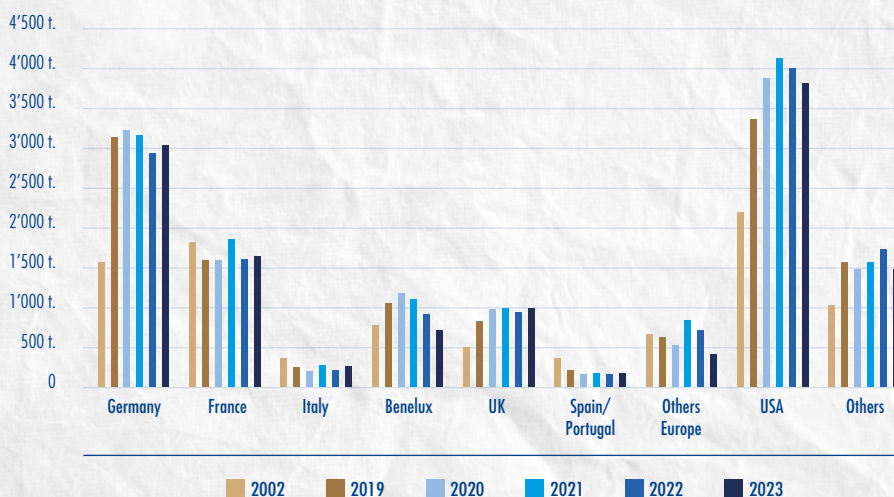
For markets such as South Africa, Brazil, the United Arab Emirates, Israel, Mexico, Poland and Ukraine, Interprofession du Gruyère operated on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the trading companies that offered development potential for Le Gruyère AOP. The recipients of financial resources for prospecting these markets were the trading companies. The measures supported and managed by Interprofession du Gruyère were divided into two main groups: Consumer marketing, through advertising, public relations activities, POS activities, i.e. tastings at points of sale; or during trade or consumer fairs.

The entire sector is dedicated to producing a quality product, and all the marketing activities are pointless if the quality that the consumer seeks is not found in the final product. For the future success of our brand, the challenge is to maintain this strategy in order to increase our international market share.

## SPONSORSHIP

The promotional activities of Gruyère AOP are supplemented by sponsorship. These various partnerships aim to increase the visibility of the brand nationally and internationally, while establishing the product at the various event venues.

## COMPARISON OF GRUYÈRE AOP YEARLY EXPORTS IN TONNES



Total 2001:	9'775	(EU 6'608)
Total 2002:	9'303	(EU 6'064)
Total 2003:	9'407	(EU 5'948)
Total 2004:	10'280	(EU 6'147)
Total 2005:	10'600	(EU 6'794)
Total 2006:	11'186	(EU 6'719)
Total 2007:	10'886	(EU 6'917)
Total 2008:	11'779	(EU 7'205)
Total 2009:	10'974	(EU 7'346)
Total 2010:	11'967	(EU 7'501)
Total 2011:	11'670	(EU 7'673)
Total 2012:	11'527	(EU 7'568)
Total 2013:	12'207	(EU 7'757)
Total 2014:	12'376	(EU 8'063)
Total 2015:	11'956	(EU 7'307)
Total 2016:	12'106	(EU 7'551)
Total 2017:	11'787	(EU 7'480)
Total 2018:	12'800	(EU 7'689)
Total 2019:	12'684	(EU 7'722)
Total 2020:	13'258	(EU 7'872)
Total 2021:	14'168	(EU 8'427)
Total 2022:	13'293	(EU 7'518)
Total 2023:	12'592	(EU 7'291)



Canmore in Canada and Minneapolis in North America. The brand benefited from substantial television visibility during this season with an audience of more than 690 million listeners for more than 3,271 hours of TV broadcasting. For the first time, the Davos stage took place at the end of the day in early January. It attracted a huge crowd of spectators, and the atmosphere was just right, with a drone show and DJ for the occasion. The World Cup was held for the first time in Goms (Vallée de Conche) for a weekend of sport and festivities. The Hot Fondue, half Le Gruyère AOP and half Raclette AOP, specially prepared for the occasion, was a big hit with spectators in the Valais, as was the exclusive culinary collaboration with Comté for the Les Rousses stage in January 2023.

## EUROPEAN ATHLETICS

As part of its partnership with the European Athletics Federation, Le Gruyère AOP positioned itself as a major sponsor at major European athletics championships such as: European Athletics Indoor Championships in Istanbul; European Athletics Team Championships in Silesia; Spar Crosscountry European Championships in Brussels; European Athletics Championships U-23 in Espoo and U-20 in Jerusalem. These events gave the brand excellent visibility on television, with more than 190 million cumulative viewers. The brand's presence was amplified at the various competition venues and VIP restaurants with the product.

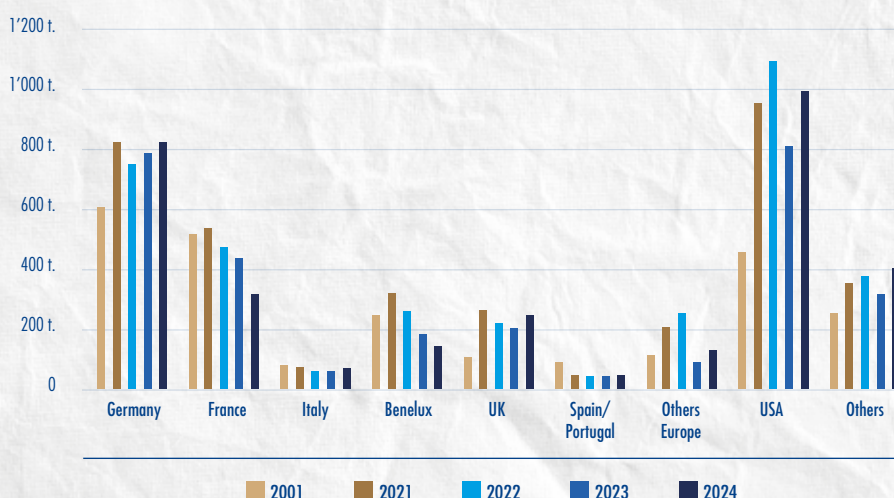
## CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING

The Presenting Sponsor contract with the FIS (Fédération Internationale de Ski) gives Le Gruyère AOP an exclusive presence on the slopes, in the finish area, the partners' village and the VIP zone on the fifteen or so cross-country skiing World Cup stages. These stages are spread across countries such as Scandinavia, Switzerland, Germany and Italy. This World Cup season also included stops at

## ATHLETISSIMA & WELTKLASSE

The brand maintains its commitment to athletics by sponsoring several world-class events such as Athletissima and Weltklasse, which are major stages in the Diamonds League athletics championship. Athletissima took place at the end of June in Lausanne, where the best athletes in the world were able to compete in front of more than 13,000 people. The Weltklasse international competition in Zürich attracted

## COMPARISON OF GRUYÈRE AOP EXPORTS FROM JANUARY TO MARCH IN TONNES



Total 2001:	2'461	(EU 1'752)
Total 2002:	2'421	(EU 1'563)
Total 2003:	2'401	(EU 1'524)
Total 2004:	2'588	(EU 1'492)
Total 2005:	2'409	(EU 1'693)
Total 2006:	2'602	(EU 1'734)
Total 2007:	2'497	(EU 1'742)
Total 2008:	3'024	(EU 1'816)
Total 2009:	2'367	(EU 1'813)
Total 2010:	3'066	(EU 1'906)
Total 2011:	2'814	(EU 1'849)
Total 2012:	2'796	(EU 1'881)
Total 2013:	3'293	(EU 2'020)
Total 2014:	2'979	(EU 1'915)
Total 2015:	3'170	(EU 1'998)
Total 2016:	2'820	(EU 1'906)
Total 2017:	2'645	(EU 1'745)
Total 2018:	3'163	(EU 1'994)
Total 2019:	3'097	(EU 1'916)
Total 2020:	3'552	(EU 2'093)
Total 2021:	3'563	(EU 2'260)
Total 2022:	3'516	(EU 2'048)
Total 2023:	2'922	(EU 1'798)
Total 2024:	3'169	(EU 1'775)



25,000 spectators at Letzigrund. Le Gruyère AOP was present at these two major events in the VIP areas and with a tasting stand. Spectators are always delighted to find their favourite cheese.

## CURLING

Le Gruyère AOP was the leading sponsor of the last European Curling Championships for men and women, which took place in Aberdeen, Scotland in November. With a highly visible presence in the stadium, the brand shone on the various media broadcast-ing the competition. The two Swiss national teams did us proud by reaching the finals, which saw Scotland for the men and Switzerland for the women win the gold medals. The Gruyère AOP European Curling Championship enabled the brand to offer tournament visitors, as well as the customers of partner hotels, a taste of the product.



## EUROSPORT

In order to highlight the various partnerships such as cross-country skiing, curling and athletics, Le Gruyère AOP broadcasts many advertisements during these competitions on the Eurosport group sports channel. This channel relays our advertising in Switzerland and in 50 European countries. The Le Gruyère AOP brand generated over 138 million contacts in 2023.

## SWISS ATHLETICS FEDERATION

Since 2008, Le Gruyère AOP has been linked to the Swiss Athletics Federation through the Mille Gruyère youth middle-distance running project. More and more Swiss athletes are excelling at international level, including household names like 800-metre runners Audrey Werro and Lore Hofmann or long-distance specialist Jonas Raess. These

athletes all have one thing in common: they started their careers in the 1000-metre at Mille Gruyère. In 2023, the regional stages of the Mille Gruyère brought together more than 5,715 children aged 8 to 15. In order to highlight this collaboration, a partnership has been concluded with Athle.ch. This platform is very active in Switzerland and creates tailor-made content for Le Gruyère AOP during the various athletics meetings which is then rebroadcast on digital channels.

The Gornergrat Zermatt Marathon took place on 1 July 2023. Le Gruyère AOP was on hand along the route to reward the 2,500 brave runners.

## GOTTÉRON

Since 2023, the partnership with HC Fribourg-Gottéron has considerably boosted visibility thanks to the purchase of advertising space at the ice centre, positioning our brand significantly on television screens. Now a fixture inside the rink, with fondue stands, dishes showcasing Le Gruyère AOP and other forms of visibility, our support is being rolled out across the complex. The 2023-2024 season saw the ice rink at full capacity and a high level of satisfaction with the fondues served in the various restaurants.



## GIANT X TOUR

Our commitment to the Giant X Tour continued in 2023 with an increased presence at the competitions. A not-to-be-missed event of the winter season, these friendly, demanding competitions, supervised by experienced staff, are always a success with athletes aged 14 to 25.

## SWISS CANYON TRAIL

The Swiss Canyon Trail has become a benchmark for runners. This event, which is echoed beyond our borders, allows Le Gruyère AOP to show its nutritional benefits during

refuelling. As Le Gruyère AOP is attached to the name of the event on all communications, our visibility is optimal all year round.

## PALÉO FESTIVAL

Our Hot-Fondue stand has become a tradition at the Paléo Festival, with 250,000 visitors over 6 days. By 2023, 7,322 festival-goers will have been able to enjoy a Hot-Fondue with Le Gruyère AOP and receive a souvenir that will create a strong link between young people and the brand.



## FAIRS AND EVENTS

Le Gruyère AOP ensures its strategic presence at the various main fairs held across the country. Thanks to its presence at the Foire du Valais, Goûts et Terroir in Bulle, Automnales in Geneva, BEA in Berne, LUGA in Lucerne, OLMA in St-Gall, over 1.2 million visitors had the opportunity to taste Le Gruyère AOP. Working with the association for the promotion of AOP-IGP and Switzerland Cheese Marketing, Le Gruyère AOP occupies a major place during these events, in particular with fondue and a beautiful exhibition of the different kinds of Le Gruyère AOP.



## MERCHANDISING

Merchandising includes a range of just under 100 items of various uses in the brand's colours. These are sold over the counter on the official website and distributed on a case-by-case basis at events supported by Le Gruyère AOP Switzerland. To continue our commitment to the environment and the local economy, we make a major effort to ensure that all our products are sourced in Switzerland or Europe. This approach implies a smaller but qualitative production, favouring the durability and versatility of each promotional item.



## NEW MEDIA

The increasing digitisation of communication over the past five years has changed the way consumers interact with brands. More and more people are using digital channels to search for information, engage and make purchases. In order to respond to this evolution, Le Gruyère AOP is constantly adapting its communication by investing in relevant digital channels with the active presence of the brand on five popular social media platforms: Instagram, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok and, since 2023, Snapchat. These platforms, along with the website, offer the Le Gruyère AOP Switzerland brand the opportunity to stay connected with its consumers both in Switzerland and internationally.

Given the significant increase in content, in 2023 Le Gruyère AOP entered into partnerships with three Swiss agencies: Numéro 10, Donuts and MediaMix, as well as with two international agencies: WWG in Germany and Junapr in the USA. These partnerships will enable the creation and distribution of high-quality interactive content tailored to the specific needs of national and international markets (United States, France, Germany, Benelux, United Kingdom).

## WEBSITE

With 421,465 visitors recorded in 2023 (+314% compared to 2022) from 207 different countries, the website is at the heart of Le Gruyère AOP's digital communication. In 2023, a number of initiatives were launched to enhance the attractiveness of this platform, including the regular creation of content such as news, recipes and podcasts. Furthermore, particular attention has been paid to ensuring that data management complies with the new Data Protection Act (nLPD). At the same time, development work has been carried out on the online shop, with the introduction of a new voucher module and optimisation of the user interface to provide a smoother, more user-friendly shopping experience.

## INSTAGRAM

In 2023, Le Gruyère AOP continued its major investments in social media, such as Instagram in particular. With 12,030 followers (+24% compared to 2022) at the end of 2023, Le Gruyère AOP is the most followed Swiss cheese brand on this platform. Although a significant portion of its followers are in Switzerland and Europe, the majority of them are in the United States, where Le Gruyère AOP is attracting increasing interest. These efforts have focused on publishing organic content and international advertising campaigns. A total of 118 creations were released during the year, reaching 20.9 million users and gaining 2,230 new followers.

## FACEBOOK

Facebook may be ageing, but the platform remains an important axis of communication for Le Gruyère AOP. In fact, it offers a unique opportunity for Le Gruyère AOP to reach baby boomers and Generation X. This trend is also reflected by our statistics, which show that the typical profile on this media is a person of around 65 years old, female and living in Switzerland. This is important information to bear in mind when creating content. Recipes, as well as articles related to the sector, were favoured because they are very popular with this audience. This content was therefore used for national and international advertising campaigns that reached 52 million users (+66% compared to 2022) around the world. 104,000 of them showed interest by searching the web for additional information after seeing one of these ads.

## TIKTOK

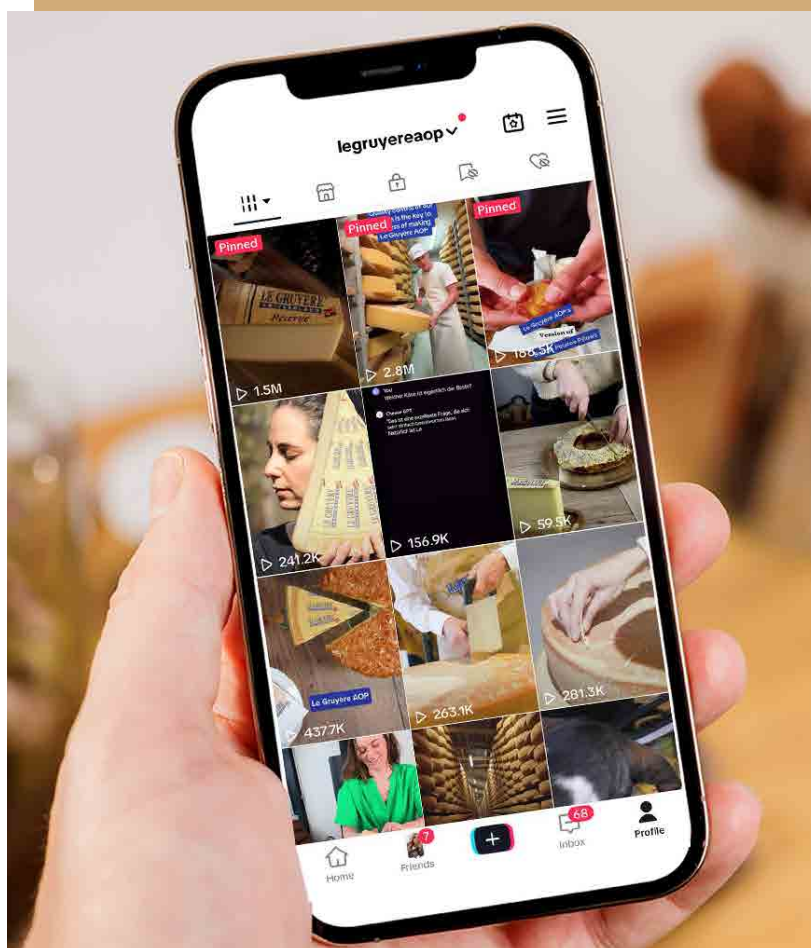
In order to effectively reach Generation Z, Le Gruyère AOP took the initiative to establish itself on the TikTok platform in October 2022. TikTok offers modern technology and a vast user base. The strategy initially targeted the US audience with the deployment of youth and educational content, and since 2023 TikTok-specific content has also been developed for the Swiss and German markets. This additional offering has been well received by the TikTok community, as evidenced by the year-end 2023 figures: the page generated 24.4 million views (equivalent to 30,500 hours of streaming) and gained 21,043 new subscribers.

## YOUTUBE

This platform offers an interesting tool for the brand by combining modern technology with a gigantic user base. Le Gruyère AOP mainly used this platform to launch large advertising campaigns. However, organic content is also published to strengthen user engagement and expand the community. The combination of advertising campaigns and organic content has enabled Le Gruyère AOP to generate 6.2 million views (+12% compared with 2022) equivalent to 34,464 hours of streaming and to gain 1,452 subscribers in 2023.

## SNAPCHAT

Since 2023, Le Gruyère AOP has been present on Snapchat with content developed specifically for the Swiss audience. This platform is particularly popular with teenagers because of its fun features such as filters and stickers. Over the course of the year, video content and a filter were developed. The filter, which invites users to take a photo with a virtual wheel of Le Gruyère AOP cheese, was a great success, accumulating 343,534 uses over the year.



👉 Entdecken Sie die Magie des Reifungskellers von Mifroma in Ursy (FR): ein einzigartiger Ort, der ... En voir plus



Le miracle de la cave de Mifroma à Ursy (Fribourg)

Envoyer un message

## COMMUNITY MODERATION

The Le Gruyère AOP virtual community reached a new milestone by exceeding 53,000 subscribers through the various digital media. This far-reaching community consists of consumers and brand protectors. These passionate members are proud of the many awards won by players in the sector and keen to protect Le Gruyère AOP against counterfeits. They are also very interested in how the product is made, where it is sold and how it can be enjoyed. To moderate the 460 daily interactions in 2023, the Interprofession is supported by the Junapr agency, which is responsible for English-language moderation. The aim is to provide a point of contact for the community, responding quickly and comprehensively to all questions and concerns. The Le Gruyère AOP virtual community is a major asset for the brand, allowing it to stay in direct contact with loyal customers and obtain valuable feedback.

## TRAVEL AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

In 2023, Interprofession du Gruyère organised a number of public relations events and hospitality activities for players in the industry and at the Maison du Gruyère, enabling almost 130 people to be welcomed on 8 trips. Visits by small delegations of sales representatives (USA, UK, Benelux) and journalists (Spain, France, Brazil and UK) focused on the key players in the industry: milk producers, cheese makers, Alpage cheese makers and refiners who, as every year, gave a warm welcome to Le Gruyère AOP lovers. In search of excitement and discovery, these visitors benefited from days of immersion in the industry, returning enriched with knowledge and experiences to share with their customers. The Maison du Gruyère, a flagship showcase that also benefits from communication measures and support for Le Gruyère AOP, houses the headquarters of Interprofession du Gruyère. Collaborative measures have been put in place with the Maison du Gruyère, in particular to set up the new Maison du Gruyère.





# THE TASTE OF NATURE.

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# EVENTS IN 2023

## 25 NOVEMBER 2022 TO 26 MARCH 2023

FIS – Cross-Country Skiing World Cup, Europe

## 31 DECEMBER 2022 TO 8 JANUARY 2023

FIS Tour de Ski 2022, Switzerland, Germany, Italy

## 15 TO 17 JANUARY 2023

Winter Fancy Food Show, Las Vegas (USA)

## 4 TO 5 FEBRUARY 2023

Swiss Indoor Athletics Championships, Macolin

## 11 FEBRUARY TO 25 MARCH 2023

Giant X Tour, Switzerland

## 25 FEBRUARY TO 5 MARCH 2023

Salon de l'Agriculture, Paris (France)

## 25 FEBRUARY TO 5 MARCH 2023

Salon du Fromage et des Produits Laitiers, Paris (France)

## 5 MARCH 2023

10 Kilomètres de Payerne

## 2 TO 5 MARCH 2023

European Athletics Indoor Championships, Istanbul (Turkey)

## 16 TO 26 MARCH 2023

Homemade Label - Discovering Spring, French-speaking Switzerland

## 1 TO 2 APRIL 2023

World Women's Curling Championship, Ottawa (Canada)

## 26 APRIL TO 23 SEPTEMBER 2023

Mille Gruyère, Switzerland

## 28 APRIL TO 7 MAY 2023

LUGA, Lucerne

## 28 APRIL TO 7 MAY 2023

BEA, Bern

## 19 APRIL TO 24 MAY 2023

BCN Tour, Neuchâtel region

## 2 TO 3 JUNE 2023

Mondial du Chasselas, Aigle

## 3 TO 4 JUNE 2023

Migros Hiking Sound, Lac-Noir

## 15 TO 17 JUNE 2023

Sierre Blues Festival, Sierre

## 23 TO 25 JUNE 2023

Good Food and Wine Show, Sydney (Australia)

## 25 TO 27 JUNE 2023

Summer Fancy Food Show, New York (USA)

## 29 AND 30 JUNE 2023

Athletissima, Lausanne

## 1 JULY 2023

Gornergrat Zermatt Marathon

## 5 TO 9 JULY 2023

Dupaski Festival, Romont

## 22 JULY 2023

Gruyère Trail Charmey, Charmey

## 18 TO 23 JULY 2023

Paléo Festival, Nyon

## 21 TO 23 JULY 2023

Good Food and Wine Show, Perth (Australia)

## 29 TO 30 JULY 2023

Swiss Athletics Championships, Bellinzona

## 29 JULY TO 29 AUGUST 2023

Les Journées des Alpes Vaudois, 8 mountain pastures of the Jura Vaudois

## 7 TO 10 AUGUST 2023

European U20 Athletics Championships, Jerusalem (Israel)

## 14 TO 20 AUGUST 2023

International Folklore Festival of Fribourg, Fribourg

## 16 AUGUST TO 13 SEPTEMBER 2023

Groupe E Tour, Fribourg region

## 30 TO 31 AUGUST 2023

Weltklasse, Zurich

## 30 AUGUST TO 2 SEPTEMBER 2023

Francomanias, Bulle

## 1 SEPTEMBER 2023 TO 10 APRIL 2024

Fribourg-Gottéron, Switzerland

## 9 TO 10 SEPTEMBER 2023

Swiss U16 & U18 Athletics Championships, Frauenfeld

## 9 TO 10 SEPTEMBER 2023

Swiss U20 & U23 Athletics Championships, Lausanne

## 22 TO 24 SEPTEMBER 2023

Cortège de la Fête des Vendanges, Neuchâtel

## 29 SEPTEMBER TO 8 OCTOBER 2023

Foire du Valais, Martigny

## 7 TO 11 OCTOBER 2023

Anuga, Cologne (Germany)

## 19 TO 23 OCTOBER 2023

SIAL, Paris (France)

## 26 TO 28 OCTOBER 2023

World Cheese Awards, Trondheim (Norway)



## 27 TO 29 OCTOBER 2023

Good Food & Wine Show, Brisbane  
(Australia)

## 28 OCTOBER TO 5 NOVEMBER 2023

Zuger Messe, Zug

## 1 TO 5 NOVEMBER 2023

Salon Goûts et Terroirs, Bulle

## 2 NOVEMBER 2023

Malakoffs World Championship, Lausanne

## 8 TO 9 NOVEMBER 2023

Vully Blues Festival, Praz

## 10 TO 19 NOVEMBER 2023

Les Automnales, Geneva

## 11 NOVEMBER 2023

Swiss Final of Bocuse d'Or

## 18 TO 25 NOVEMBER 2023

Le Gruyère AOP European Curling Championships, Aberdeen (Scotland)

## 23 TO 26 NOVEMBER 2023

Winter BBC Food Show, Birmingham (UK)

## 24 NOVEMBER 2023 TO 17 MARCH 2024

FIS – Cross-Country Skiing World Cup,  
Europe and North America

## 30 NOVEMBER TO 2 DECEMBER 2023

Pintes Ouvertes, Vaud

## 10 DECEMBER 2023

Spar European Cross-Country Championships, Brussels  
(Belgium)

## 16 DECEMBER 2023 TO 23 MARCH 2024

Kids Nordic Tour,  
Switzerland

## 21 DECEMBER 2023

Joyeux Noël du Gruyère,  
Fribourg-Gottéron

## 30 DECEMBER 2023 TO 7 JANUARY 2024

FIS Tour de Ski 2023,  
Switzerland, Italy

# MANAGEMENT BODIES OF INTERPROFESSION DU GRUYÈRE

**Given the work taking place on various fronts on the future of the sector and market developments, the management bodies of the IPG held a large number of meetings.**

## BUREAU

The bureau met 14 times, usually on the morning of a regular committee meeting.

Main tasks:

- Preparation of committee meetings;
- Management of administration staff;
- Appointment of the General Secretary;
- Pinte des Vernes:  
A change of architect occurred during the process. Aubert Architectes SA was chosen to continue the project.

## MARKET COMMITTEE

The market committee met 12 times, usually on the morning of regular committee meeting.

Main task:

- Monitoring of market developments

Based on the cockpit's analyses, a proposal was made to extend the 10% cut in production due to excessive stock, especially in the more mature age classes. It also requested support for the development of these cheeses, of which there is excessive stock.

## COMMITTEE

The committee held 14 meetings, at least once a month, in the form of a seminar.

Main tasks:

- Current events;
- Preparations for the Delegates' Meetings with the adoption of the tracer culture (CCO) at the end of the year
- Sustainability:

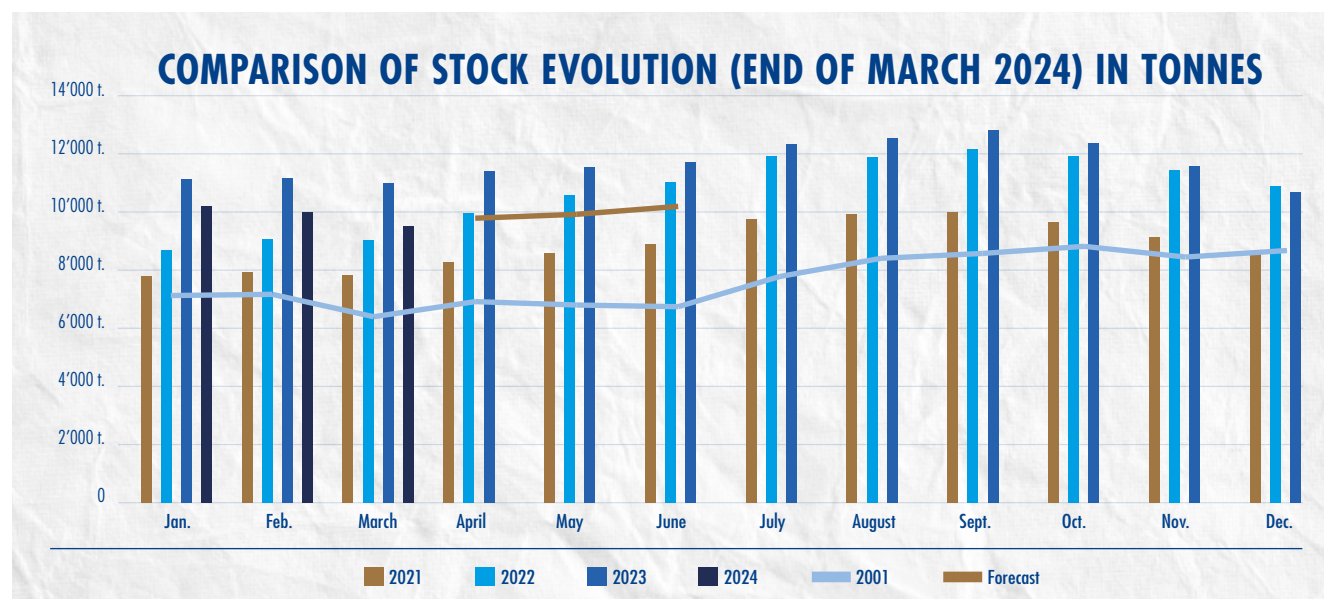
Work on sustainability issues continued in collaboration with Soliance Alimentaires (Triesse Gressard).

## COMMITTEE SEMINAR

Committee members met for two days in January.

Tasks:

- Sustainability:  
This was the main theme of the seminar. The aim was to study action sheets for implementing the various projects studied, according to a validated order of priority. These action sheets were produced by the various transitional working groups that came out of this sustainability project. These groups met 13 times.





## ASSEMBLY OF DELEGATES

The assembly of delegates held three meetings. In fact, it held both annual meetings in addition to a seminar on sustainability held on 4 April 2023.

21 June 2023:

- Approval of accounts and annual report;

22 November 2023:

- Approval of the budget;
- Approval of the 2024 quantity;
- Amendment to the good practice guide:  
An amendment was accepted to points 49 and 50 concerning the Le Gruyère d'Alpage AOP quota.
- Quantity management regulations:  
An amendment to Article 15 on recognising the reference quota of Le Gruyère d'Alpage AOP was accepted
- Authentica Culture of Origin Certification (CCO):  
The CCO was accepted with an implementation starting 01.01.2027, as was an increase in the LPG contribution of 4cts/kg of Le Gruyère AOP. The purpose of this tracer culture will be to limit fraud.

## ALPAGE COMMITTEE

This committee held three meetings, which focused on:

- Quality;
- Quantity

The sector welcomed three new mountain pastures:

- Les Huguonins
- Le Perrex
- Les Portes d'Enhaut

## ORGANIC COMMITTEE

This body held two meetings.

The committee noted that market demand is not as strong as it has been for the past five years. However, following the decision taken when planning the renovation of the Châtel-St-Denis cheese dairy, a new tank for organic Le Gruyère AOP came into service in 2023 with a double restriction as provided for in the regulations.

## MARKETING COMMITTEE

This committee held two meetings:

- Presentation of current and future projects;
- Update on the various campaigns in Switzerland and abroad

## PLANNING COMMITTEE

This committee held 7 meetings.

The main topic was the implementation of the new quantity management regulations.

## THE QUANTITY MANAGEMENT APPEAL BOARD

No appeals were lodged in 2023.

## QUALITY COMMITTEE

This committee held two meetings. A delegation from the committee met on 5 occasions to intervene at various cheese dairies when there were quality problems. This delegation may vary according to regions and cheese buyers in order to maintain a certain neutrality.

## ADDED VALUE AND COST COMMITTEE

Supported by Agridea and Soliance Alimentaires, this committee met 6 times. The aim is to analyse the inputs and other cost sectors which have the greatest economic influence on the structures producing Le Gruyère AOP, whether on farms, in cheese dairies or in refining centres.

## TECHNOLOGY WATCH COMMITTEE

This committee was also set up on the basis of conclusions drawn from the Triesse Gressard (Soliance Alimentaires) survey. It met on 5 occasions, including external visits. It analyses all the technical and technological developments that could be used in the sector in strict compliance with the specifications and product quality.

### Sustainability:

The action sheets defined at the committee seminar and split into themes at the delegates' seminar were dealt with in transitional working groups, in order to provide a precise framework for the sustainability project, which will be developed in greater depth during 2024.

## INTERPROFESSION DU GRUYÈRE

### President

Pierre-Ivan Guyot chairs the various bodies.

### Vice-President

Didier Roch

### Management

- Philippe Bardet, Director
- Marc Gendre, Vice-Director

### Scientific assistant

Lucie Horvath:

She is responsible, among other things, for looking after and coordinating the technology watch committee. She also prepares statistical reports for management and the committee. It supports the implementation of sustainability and training actions.

### Marketing sector

- Marie L'Homme:

Manages national promotion activities and provides support for certain sponsorships.

- Catherine Merian:

Provides support in the various areas of Switzerland Cheese Marketing and accompanies visits to the sector.

- Guillaume Berset:

Responsible for fairs and for supporting various events.

- Gaspard Cuenot:

In charge of all social media, digital promotion and publication management.

- Denis Kaser:

In charge of international activities.

### Quality/Quantity sector

- Thierry Bize:

Endorses labelling proposals from the sales sector.

- Christophe Magne:

Supports quantity management.

These two people carry out the monthly taxation to ensure that high-quality Le Gruyère AOP arrives on the various stalls both in Switzerland and abroad.

### Secretariat

- Christine Grandjean

- Julie Sudan who is also assisting Ms Horvath in setting up the "Meet the industry" training courses.

### Accounting

- Magali Vuichard

- Karine Pharisa

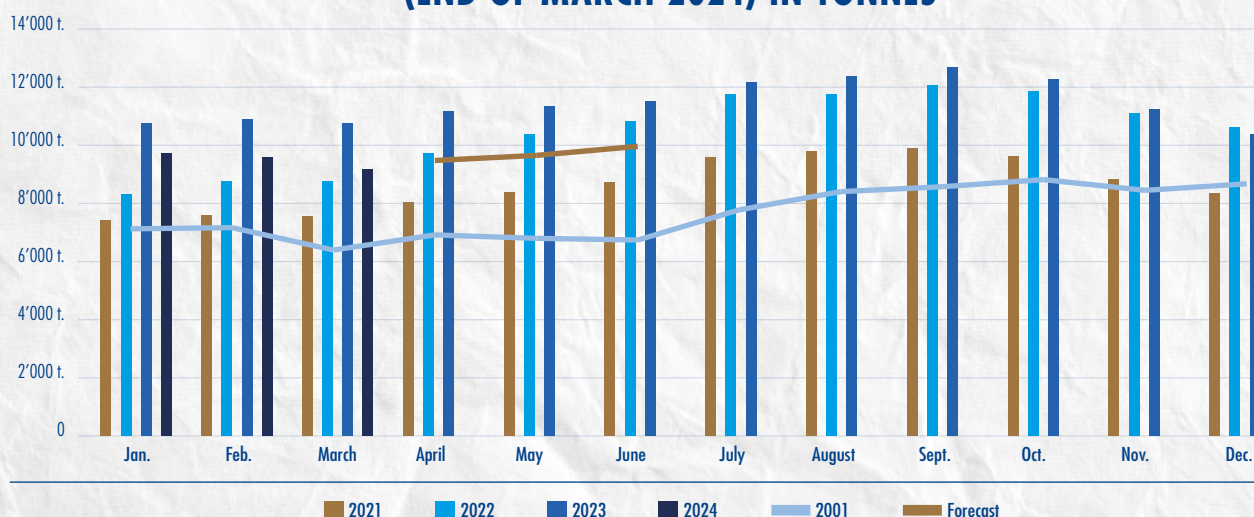
### Dépôt

- Jean-Claude Grandchamp

- Gérald Jaquier

The whole team is proud to be able to contribute to the success and promotion of Le Gruyère AOP.

## COMPARISON OF STOCK EVOLUTION EXCLUDING ALPAGE (END OF MARCH 2024) IN TONNES



# INTERPROFESSION COMMITTEE

Committee members as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024

## PRESIDENT

Pierre-Ivan Guyot\*, Boudevilliers

## PRODUCERS

Romane Botteron, La Sagne (replaced by Bernard Varin on 01.01.2024)

Didier Roch\*, Ballens

Nicolas Savary, Sâles (Gruyère)

Pascal Surchat, Blessens

## CHEESEMAKERS

Jean-Daniel Jäggi, Grandcour

René Pernet\*, Peney-le-Jorat

Adrian Scheidegger, Niedermuhren

Nicolas Schmoutz, Mézières FR

## CHEESE REFINERS

Jean-Marc Collomb, Fromco SA, Moudon  
(replaced by Christian Zürcher on 01.01.2024)

Gilles Margot\*, Margot Fromages SA, Yverdon

Jean-Charles Michaud, Mifroma SA, Ursy

Ralph Perroud, Fromage Gruyère SA, Bulle  
(invited until 15.08.2024)

Gérald Roux, Fromage Gruyère SA, Bulle  
(invited until 16.08.2024) (replaced by Kevin Vonlanthen on 01.01.2024)

## GUESTS

Lawyer Jean-Pierre Huguenin, Boudry

Daniel Koller, PSL<sup>1</sup>, Bern

Roland Sahli<sup>2</sup>, Gourmino AG, Lenzburg

François Mieville<sup>3</sup>, Fromarte, Berne

# Vice-President

\* Members of the Bureau

<sup>1</sup> Milk Producers' Coordinator

<sup>2</sup> Maturers' Coordinator

<sup>3</sup> Cheesemakers' Coordinator

# OUTLOOK FOR 2024



**In 2024, the management bodies of Interprofession du Gruyère will apply the conclusions of the Soliance Alimentaires survey, while remaining attentive to the evolution of sales and prices of Le Gruyère AOP. This work will be carried out in the basis of the principles previously defined, which are:**

## QUANTITY

- The management and planning tool (cockpit) in a spirit of transparency and trust, with the aim of achieving qualitative growth. → This tool is important at a time of market uncertainty and a stock situation in which the proportion of the different maturing processes is unbalanced, with too large a volume of aged Le Gruyère AOP.
- Implement the 10-year campaign plan adopted by the assembly of delegates on 31.05.24, which provides for changes in quantities and investment aid within a specific framework.
- Put in place a regulation to apply the new rules of the RGQ to be produced, as specified in the general statement.

## QUALITY

- Analyse the evolution of the distribution of fat and protein in milk, in order to guarantee high quality in the production of Le Gruyère AOP.

- Analyse the evolution of production and installation techniques in relation to the quality of Le Gruyère AOP. → Collaboration with the research and advisory bodies Agroscope, Argha and Caséi, as well as international experience are required. This work is carried out by the technology watch commission and the quality committee.

## PROFITABILITY

- Establishment of the specific areas to be dealt with by the value-added/costs committee. This committee is supported by Agridea and Soliance.

## CLIENT

- Reinforce the image, strengths, distinctive features and history of Le Gruyère AOP. → The issue of craftsmanship and sustainability will have to be studied in each group, looking in particular at what makes the difference within a profession in the AOP sector compared to generic production.
- Analyse and define what we want to convey to the client and consumer. Le Gruyère AOP has a very good brand image that will still need to be consolidated.
- Use the initial results regarding sustainability to pass them on to customers.

## BRAND AND MARKETING

- Pursue the clear strategy of promoting the brand by applying it to the various marketing actions. → The strategy is based on the general and marketing best practice guide and the specifications.
- The aforesaid specifications will be made available to the sector.
- The defence of the brand will continue.
- Communication using real images from the sector will be reinforced across all media and more particularly new media.

## FUTURE OF IPG

- Set up a risk analysis system for the IPG.
- Promote and encourage the identification of members with the sector to which they belong. → Each member of the sector promotes the Le Gruyère AOP Switzerland brand.
- Continuation of in-house training in the sector.
- Appointment of a new Director following the appointment of the General Secretary

Interprofession du Gruyère intends to perform these tasks to ensure that Le Gruyère AOP evolves in the interest of consumers, while ensuring a healthy distribution of the economic added value to all the people involved in producing this noble cheese on a daily basis.

## RECAPITULATION OF THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE TOTAL PRODUCTION POTENTIAL FOR LE GRUYÈRE AOP PER CHEESE DAIRY AND PER CANTON FOR 2024 (WITH TURNOVER)

Canton	Villages			Bio			Villages + Bio			Alpages			All		
	Quantities (Kg)	(%)	Nbr	Quantities (Kg)	(%)	Nbr	Quantities (Kg)	(%)		Quantities (Kg)	(%)	Nbr	Quantities (Kg)	(%)	Nbr
FR	14'818'312	50.85	78	528'923	33.18	5	15'347'235	49.93		208'981	37.65	36	15'556'218	49.72	114
VD	8'074'368	27.71	36	388'104	24.34	3	8'462'472	27.53		325'524	58.65	22	8'787'996	28.08	59
NE	2'891'401	9.92	15	240'255	15.07	2	3'131'656	10.19					3'131'656	10.01	15
JU	689'529	2.37	3	161'878	10.15	1	851'407	2.77					851'407	2.72	3
JUBE + al.1	864'664	2.97	5	121'410	7.62	1	986'074	3.21		20'516	3.70	3	1'006'590	3.22	8
BE	877'678	3.01	7	153'711	9.64	1	1'031'389	3.36					1'031'389	3.30	7
Other cantons	925'509	3.18	7				925'509	3.01					925'509	2.96	7
Total	29'141'461	100.00	151	1'594'281	100.00	13*	30'735'742	100.00		555'021	100.00	61	31'290'763	100.00	213

\* Cheese dairies producing Bio: 12 cheese dairies producing both Traditional and Bio Gruyère AOP plus 1 dairy producing only Bio.



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