

Brown Swiss News

The European Brown Swiss journal

www.brown-swiss.org



**EUROPEAN
BROWN SWISS
CONGRESS**

23-25 SEPTEMBER 2026
RECINTO FERIAL LUIS ADARO
GIJÓN, ASTURIAS
ESPAÑA

**BROWN
SWISS**
MORE THAN MILK

European Brown Swiss Congress 2026

The 2026 European Brown Swiss Congress will take place from September 23rd to 25th in Gijon, Asturias, Spain.

Registration are open with a preferential rate until July 1st.

Full program and registration are available here :

<https://www.brown-swiss.org/event-details-registration/european-brown-swiss-conference-2026-2>

Don't miss the opportunity to join this inspiring moment.

Summary

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BROWN SWISS AMBASSADOR

In the western France, EARL des Petits Arcis relies on Brown Swiss to combine performance and sustainability

In the Maine-et-Loire region (France), Flavien Martineau runs a performing dairy operation. Introduced in 2019, the Brown Swiss breed gradually replaced Holsteins and now makes up the entire herd.

A high-performing Brown Swiss herd
The herd consists of 100 Brown Swiss cows, producing 950,000 liters of milk annually, delivered to LSDH milk factory. With an average production of 10 026 lg of milk 4.24% F and 3.68 % P, the farm also stands out at national level: it ranked 3rd for milk solids (776 kg of F+P) and 4th for milk volume in 2025.

Beyond volume, milk valorization is a key strength. Between April 2024 and March 2025, the average milk price reached €496 per 1,000 liters, including a €41 bonus, mainly linked to milk components.

“The Brown Swiss allows us to produce rich milk while maintaining strong and durable animals,” explains Flavien. *“Beyond milk quality, their easy-going temperament and longevity are real strengths.”*

A controlled feeding strategy to optimize margins

The feeding ration is based on a balanced mix of maize silage (37.6 kg), grass silage (16.9 kg), and fodder beet (5.3 kg), supplemented with rapeseed meal and minerals. Additional concentrate is supplied through the milking robot.

As a result, feeding costs are kept under control at €209 per 1,000 liters, including €117 for concentrates. The margin over feed cost reaches €312 per 1,000 liters, or €7.7 per cow per day.

These figures highlight strong technical and economic management in the context of volatile input prices.



An advanced genetic strategy

All female calves are genotyped, with sexed semen used on the top third of the herd. The lower third is bred using beef sires, mainly Belgian Blue. Breeding objectives are clear: improve feet and legs, maintain production while securing milk components, and optimize udder quality.

The farm is also involved in the French breeding program “BGS Creation”, with several cow families monitored and animals recognized at the national level such as Origan RIGOLOTE VG85, dam of the bull TIRAMISU (Rocky) born on the farm.

Discover more about the herd in the 1 breed Brown Swiss webinar replay available here : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YWaMhc7VUic>

Farm overview

70 ha including:
23ha maize silage, 10 ha barley and 37 ha grassland
950 000 L of non-GMO milk delivered
2 milking robots
1 label poultry house



FRANCE



Brown Swiss: Positive indicators in a challenging dairy context

Held last March, the BGS general assembly provided an opportunity to review the situation of Brown Swiss in France. And in a context of declining dairy herd numbers, the breed is holding its ground remarkably well.

Over the past ten years, herd numbers have remained stable, even showing a slight increase of +0.2%. A noteworthy performance, especially as the overall French dairy herd has declined sharply (-19.2%) over the same period. Today, there are 22,473 Brown Swiss dairy cows, more than 17,000 of which are enrolled in official milk recording.

Production figures are also on the rise. In 2025, average milk yield increased by +290 kg, reaching 8,301 kg, with strong components (4.3% fat and 3.7% protein). With 644 kg of F+P kgs produced, the breed confirms its position among the top performers, just behind Holstein.

The same positive trend can be seen in reproduction. Total artificial inseminations (AI) increased by +12.6% between 2016 and 2025. In 2025 alone, 44,430 AIs were recorded, the majority in pure breeding (31,442, up +5.5% year-on-year). Beef crossbreeding remains significant (25.2% of AIs), led by Belgian Blue, Yperios 95 and Charolais.

Another key development is the growing use of sexed semen, now accounting for 31% of inseminations. At the same time, female genotyping is becoming a standard tool on farms, with nearly 3,200 born females genotyped in 2024.

Encouraging signs that confirm the strength and attractiveness of the Brown Swiss breed in French dairy farming.

3 new exciting bulls for this April proof run

Exciting news for this April proof run for the BGS line-up available worldwide through Synetics Export : Velours is our new top GZW DE, Vertige PP is the French homozygous polled bull and Verone is the new top type bull ! The base change shows the breed follows the right path by improving all traits :

YEAR	Pop	ISU	INEL	P‰	F‰	MILK
2026	2018-2020	-4,9	-3,5	-0,16	-0,16	-51

TYPE	UDC	BWC	FLC	UDH	FERTI	LGV	MS	
	-0,18	-0,13	-0,10	-0,11	-0,00	-0,12	-0,06	-0,05

Brown Swiss genomic bulls

-**Velours** (S. Saphir) is our new top GZW DE bull at 139gGZW. He is also #3 ISU at 195, available sexed, BB A2A2, adapted to robot milking ! He is an impressive dairy sire with +157 7kg milk, +0,10% fat, +0,08% protein, very good fitness, well balanced cows.

-**Verone** (S. Palmer) is our new type bull, #3 type at 2,3 total type index, with 2,4 Rump, 2,4 F&L and 1,1 udder with a correct milk proof at +591 kg and impressive contents at 0,13% protein and 0,34% fat, BB A2A2, high fertility, available sexed.

-**Vertige PP** (S. Tornero P) is FOR SURE the bull you don't miss, the first French **homozygous polled** from BGS Program ! This Tornero P (still #1 ISU !!) son, BB A2A2, high milk, contents and fitness, positive teat length can fit every where !

-**Vivaldi** (S. Vanilla) launched in December is #3 GZW foreign bull in Germany/Austria ranking at 136, with a balanced profile, high fat% and wide rumps. From a VG Optimal cow, he is BB A2A2 and available sexed.

-**Tornero P** (S. Ramses) is still #1 ISU at 215, and now #1 polled available sire in the USA at 156 PPR ! Still alive, available sexed, top production health and fertility.

-**Vasco** (S. Snoopy) remains #2 ISU with 197 with still an outstanding milk proof at +2055 kg, well inherited from his sire Snoopy. He is BB A2A2 and available sexed.
-United (S. Sting) is #3 ISU at 193, still available only conventional in a limited way. He is 1037 ITE !

Brown Swiss daughter proven bulls

-**Rastaroket** (S. O Malley) is now proven with 148 daughters in his proof. He still shows correct milk with high protein and fat, nice looking cows with good frames, rumps and nice udders. He is still alive, available sexed, and his sexed semen is actually very fertile. Very nice daughters are being spotted in Switzerland where he had been very widely used as genomics, showing now a +1247 GZW.

-**Optimal** (S. Sinatra) remains one of the best proven worldwide with now 2235 daughters in his proof. At 167 ISU, 1404 GZW CH, 132 GZW DE, 937 ITE, he cannot be missed ! How many proven sires are that high for milk, SCS, fertility and udder ? He is one of a kind, if you haven't used him yet, it is still possible ! Optimal is alive and available sexed !!



Dam of Velours, Tolosa G+ 82



Vertige PP



Milk production of Brown Swiss continues to rise sharply in Germany

The past year, 2025, brought another very pleasing increase in milk production for Brown Swiss farms in Germany, with the highest increases among all dairy breeds in the key states of Bavaria and Baden-Württemberg. While Brown Swiss cows in Bavaria, under milk control, increased their milk production by 135 kg compared to the previous year, placing them far ahead of the competition, the increase in Baden-Württemberg for Brown Swiss was even more impressive at 195 kg. Over the past three years, Brown Swiss in Bavaria have increased their milk production by almost 500 kg! This is remarkable considering that Brown Swiss cattle are predominantly found in disadvantaged grassland areas, often on organic farms.

On average, the more than 100,000 Brown Swiss herd-book cows in Germany produced 8,297 kg of milk last year, with 4.22% fat and 3.62% protein. Just how high the genetic potential of Brown Swiss actually is was demonstrated by the Schmaus breeding farm in Baden-Württemberg, which, with its 80-plus Brown Swiss cows, achieved a remarkable 15,258 kg of milk with 4.26% fat and 3.70% protein!

This increase in performance is due not least to the consistent, structured, and successful breeding programs in Germany that produce high-performing young genomic bulls with excellent fitness and a distinctly functional conformation.

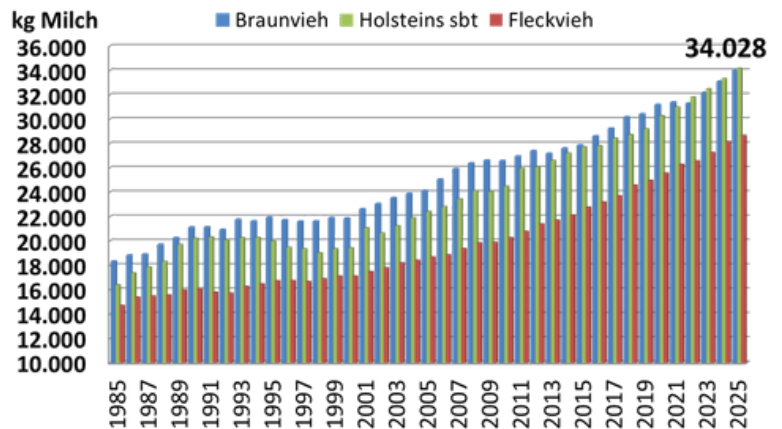
The productive life and lifetime production of cows are also increasing

One of the outstanding strengths of the Brown Swiss cow has always been its exceptional longevity and lifetime production. This makes dairy cows economically viable and generates income for farmers. In Germany, Brown Swiss cows once again significantly increased both their longevity and lifetime production last year. As the following graphs show, the lifetime production of culled Brown Swiss cows in Bavaria has risen significantly over the years, reaching 34,028 kg of milk in 2025. Holstein cows are on par with Brown Swiss in terms of milk yield, but significantly lower in terms of fat and protein content. Fleckvieh (Simmental) cows also score significantly lower in both performance metrics.

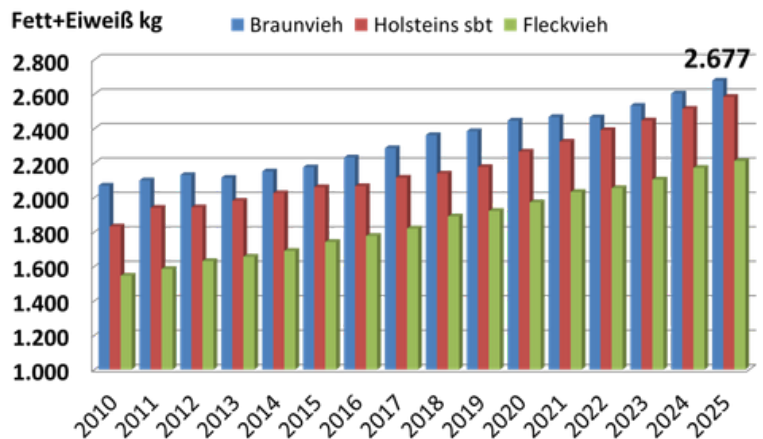
This significant increase in lifetime production is due, on the one hand, to an overall rise in performance potential, and on the other hand, to a longer productive life. Through selective breeding, cows are becoming more robust and healthier, and therefore remain in the barn longer. This is clearly illustrated in the latest graph. Brown Swiss cows in Bavaria, and thus also in Germany, live by far the longest and produce milk for the longest period compared to Holsteins and Fleckvieh. This trend is increasing, and Brown Swiss cows in barns have never been older than they are today in at least 50 years!

Dr. Franz Birkenmaier

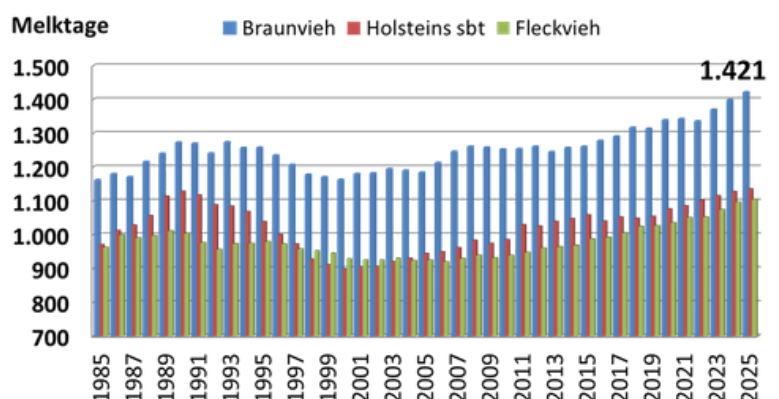
Average lifetime production of culled cows in Bavaria



Average lifetime production of culled cows in Bavaria, measured by fat and protein (kg)



Average productive life of culled cows in Bavaria





Brown Swiss: Profitability and Show Success in Harmony

Recent show successes underscore the versatility of the RBW breeding program: In addition to the Junior Champion title won by a Boxer P daughter at the anniversary show in Weilheim, Nathan Tina, owned by Fuchs GbR (Argenbuehl), secured the Reserve Champion Junior title at the German National Show in Bavaria. It was also noteworthy that the class of 100,000 kg cows at the German Brown Swiss Show was dominated by breeding cows from Baden-Wuerttemberg. The judge ranked SBS Nixe ahead of SBS Laela, owned by Michael Schmaus (Rot an der Rot), followed by the Vavigo daughter Ariana, owned by Martin Rehm (Ochsenhausen).

Despite the development of a strong focus on show breeding, the breeders from Baden-Wuerttemberg impressively demonstrated what is essential for the breed: longevity and profitable cows with simultaneously high functional conformation.

Overall, Brown Swiss showed a breeding improvement of 0.7 GZW points and 20 kg of milk in the main publication of the breeding value estimation in April 2026.

The top positions in the Brown Swiss ranking remain unchanged: Orkan (152 GZW) is followed by the high-performing and conformationally strong Derby son **Delano** (151 GZW). Furthermore, Dacapo sons continue to dominate the top rankings. With **Darby** (149 GZW, Dacapo x Vance), **Duncan P*S** (147 GZW, Dacapo x Virus P), and **Dacia** (146 GZW, Dacapo x Vollmacht), the RBW breeding program has also produced significant representatives of this bloodline.

Nationally and internationally, bulls that combine high milk yield with positive protein percentages are in high demand. **Olymp** (143 GZW) is a top sire who combines these traits exceptionally well and also sets standards in conformation.

Holiday (141 GZW), a son of Hotshot, also contributes favorable component percentages to the breeding program and additionally impresses with an outstanding persistence breeding value (123) and very good udder health.

Papageno (144 GZW) is a new addition to the top list. Bred by Daniel Kling (Rot an der Rot) from Piccard Zapzarap, this son of Parsival impresses with high milk yield and balanced component percentages. His dam, Zapzarap, has calved for the second time and achieved 12,984 kg of milk in her first lactation. In addition to his high production potential, Papageno particularly excels in fitness: he improves fertility, milk flow, and udder health. The linear profile shows a good ratio of body length to chest width as well as an optimal hock angle.

Also new to the top list is **Calamar** (140 GZW, Calibur x New York), bred by Dr. Stefan Birkenmaier. Calamar impresses with his high persistence (126) and improves milkability (115). His special characteristic is udder conformation (121): a high udder floor, firmly attached fore udder, and optimally positioned teats meet the requirements of all milking systems.

The results of the breeding value estimation for the **daughter-proven bulls** are also positive for the full brothers **Nabucco** (135 GZW) and **Nathan** (132 GZW), who clearly surpass the threshold for the top 50 daughter-proven Brown Swiss bulls. Nabucco's daughters exhibit a strong topline and optimally positioned pelvises. **Bernado** (Bloomlord x Dane) made a significant jump of 8 GZW points to 131 GZW, and his daughters demonstrate high milk yield with very good udder quality.

Conclusion

The current developments in Brown Swiss breeding clearly show that profitability and conformation quality are not mutually exclusive.

Show successes continue to underscore the quality of breeding work but gain particular importance when they are combined with functional traits such as longevity, health, and consistent performance. In particular, the progress in fitness and the targeted use of polled genetics demonstrate that the Brown Swiss breeding program is consistently geared towards practical needs.

For farms that prioritize robust, long-lived, and economical cows, Brown Swiss remains an extremely attractive and future-proof breed.

Waldsee Brown Swiss Day 2026

Mark your calendars now – the 14th Waldsee Brown Swiss Day will take place on Sunday, October 25, 2026, at the RBW Marketing Center South in Bad Waldsee. With 100 cows, this livestock show will be one of the largest Brown Swiss shows in Germany in 2026. A young breeders' competition for children up to 11 years old is also planned. Visitors will elect the 8th Brown Swiss Queen. Companies from the agricultural sector will present their latest products in the exhibition area. Brown Swiss Day begins at 9:30 a.m.

7th RBW Sale Night on November 28, 2026

For the 7th time, the Baden-Wuerttemberg Cattle Breeders' Association (RBW) will host a top genetics auction at the RBW Marketing Center South in Bad Waldsee. Sixty catalog numbers will be offered at the RBW Sale Night on Saturday, November 28, 2026.

FarmersBid will also offer an online platform for the auction in 2025!

GERMANY

RBG Memmingen - Fresh Genetics with a Focus on Polled Genetics



We are pleased to offer our farmers seven new Brown Swiss sires: **AG APOLLO, AG TINDER P, AG AMICELLI, AG BULLDOG, AG VERNOX, AG RUBICON P and AG SERVUS P.**

New auxiliary trait for our Brown Swiss breeders

A new auxiliary trait that is particularly important to us is the ratio of body width to body size. Large cows are not automatically wider or more productive; however, they often present challenges in daily management, longevity, and efficiency. Therefore, we have introduced the index "BRB – KH" within our breeding focus. Sires with positive values transmit relatively more width than size and thus promise improved functionality.

Genomic young sires

AG Apollo (AG Aragon x AG Valentino) impresses with a milk yield of +1,286 kg and a total merit index of 140. He also shows a very good beef value (108) and optimal fitness traits (117). His daughters are expected to stand out through long productive life (116), good production increase (110), excellent udder health (108), and outstanding fertility (108). In type, he achieves an overall udder score of 112, with particular strengths in fore udder length (110), rear udder width (110), and longer teats (110).

AG Amicelli (AG Ampere x Canyon) presents itself with a total merit of 124 as a true fitness specialist in the current program. He excels in longevity (117), excellent persistency (110), and outstanding fertility (120). In addition, he scores with fast milking speed (113) and excellent claw health (112). In conformation, his progeny show a strong feet and legs structure with refined hocks (112) and adequate angulation (104). His breeding profile is completed by high-attached udders and longer (101) and thicker teats (112).

AG Bulldog (Barolo x Dior) delivers +900 kg milk with neutral components. In conformation, he transmits a solid feet and legs structure with clean hocks (109), steep pasterns (106), and high heels (107). In the pelvic area, he shows excellent traits: length (111) and width (112). With an udder score of 117, he stands out particularly for udder quality. His daughters will have long fore udders (112) as well as high (111) and wide (107) rear udders.



AG DISCO dam ILAYDA (3rd calf), presented the udder champion of the young cows at the German Brown Swiss Show last March.



AG VESPER dam FRANZI (3rd calf) presents herself as a medium-framed, large cow with the best udder.

AG Vernox (AG Vanilla x AG Verdi) impresses with very good components (+0.27% fat; +0.02% protein). His daughters are expected to show high longevity (110) and very good udder health (110); calves will also stand out with a vitality score of 117. In type, he proves to be a true all-rounder with a total score of 116. He transmits sufficient body width (rump width 110) as well as udder capacity (rear udder width 114). His daughters will stand on a strong feet and legs structure (112) with tight pasterns (116) and exhibit high-attached udders (110; rear udder height 115), a well-attached fore udder (115), and longer teats (106).

A wide selection remains available among the existing genomic sires – the right bull for every cow.

Strong milk transmitters exceeding +1,000 kg milk include **AG Sidney (+1,143 kg)** and **AG Roxy PP (+1,149 kg)**. In addition, AG Sidney produces long-lived (119), udder-healthy (119) cows with strong chest width (116), rump width (110), and optimal muscling (114).

Fitness is crucial for productivity and cow health, as it forms the basis for high milk yield, rapid recovery after calving, and long lifespan. **AG Coldplay (120), AG Sidney (120), AG Viskas P (117), and AG Roxy PP (114)** show outstanding fitness values. In addition, AG Coldplay transmits pronounced muscling (114), strong chest (109) and rump width (115), as well as tight pasterns (112) and high heels (116).

A firm and high-attached udder is essential for a long productive life in dairy cows. The trend shows continuous improvement in udder quality. To meet these requirements, **AG Viskas P and AG Coldplay** excel with 123 and 122 points, respectively. Close behind are **AG Vantan, AG Disco, AG Roxy PP, and AG Sidney**, all scoring above 110 points. Another highlight of AG Viskas P is his transmission of long productive life (119), strong rump width (118), excellent udder depth (119), and rear udder height (118).

Feet and legs are crucial for mobility and health, forming the basis for long-term performance and longevity.

For this, farmers can rely on **AG Roxy PP (114), AG Vantan (109), AG Sidney (108), and AG Coldplay (108)**. AG Vantan also stands out with excellent persistency (128), very good udder health (111), and outstanding transmission of pelvis (113) and udder traits (119).

GERMANY

RBG Memmingen - Fresh Genetics with a Focus on Polled Genetics



AG RUBICON P - Grandmother Ulla P (1st calf), is also the mother of AG Seven P.

Polled sires

AG Tinder P (Tornero P x Piero), the only son of Tornero P, impresses with a high milk yield of +1,087 kg, an excellent beef value (115), and outstanding fitness traits (117). He transmits high longevity (111), very good persistency (108), and strong fertility (116). His daughters show adequate chest width (106) and rump width (109), standing on refined hocks (105) with sufficient angulation (109). Rear udders will be wide (112) with longer teats (106), while fore udders show ideal length (109).

AG Rubicon P (AG Vitobi P x New York)

transmits a solid milk yield of +873 kg. He also excels with long productive life (117), persistent lactation (112), and very good udder health (112). In feet and legs, he stands out with strong pasterns (114) and high heels (115). With an outstanding udder score of 125, he transmits high-attached udders (119) with a strong central ligament (109). The fore udder will also be firmly attached (110)

AG Servus P (Salitos P x AG Bison), the only son of Salitos P, impresses with a high milk yield of +991 kg. His daughters are expected to show good persistency (108), and calves will exhibit high vitality (113). In conformation, he is very balanced and transmits long (117) and wide (112) rumps. In the udder, he excels with long fore udders (111) and longer (105) and thicker (102) teats.

AG Roxy PP and AG Viskas P remain key components of our polled breeding program. They impress with excellent fitness traits and strong feet and legs. In type, they also show pronounced body depth, sufficient rump width, and high-attached udders.

Proven sires – High milk production guaranteed

Bernado (Bloomlord x Dane) impresses as a daughter-proven sire with +1,031 kg milk. His daughters reflect this with a 100-day yield exceeding 3,000 kg milk. In fitness, he excels with outstanding persistency (120) and excellent udder health (112). His type transmission leaves nothing to be desired: progeny show sufficient chest width (109) and body depth (114), long (108) and wide (112) rumps, as well as firmly attached (109) and long fore udders (123). In addition, they exhibit wide rear udders (110) with a strong central ligament (108).

AG Boris (AG Bison x Vassli) also impresses with an excellent 100-day yield of 2,900 kg milk in his daughters. With a paternal calving ease of 112, he shows a positive tendency for use on heifers. He also transmits fast milking speed (115), and his calves are characterized by high vitality (112). In conformation, he stands out with pronounced chest width (105), good body depth (110), as well as long (108) and wide (107) rumps with optimal slope (102). The fore udder is long (112), and the rear udder shows adequate width (112).

Pasadena and AG Alprin remain integral parts of our program. They excel with high milk yield and strong fitness traits, particularly persistency and very good udder health. In type, they are characterized by a strong feet and legs structure and balanced udder traits.

RBG Memmingen offers above-average genetics in all categories and wishes you continued success in selecting the right sires. The special program further expands the range of bulls available. Further information can be found at www.rbgmm.de. For any questions, the mating advisors and sales team of RBG Memmingen are at your disposal.



SPAIN

Yogurt, Brown Swiss and Health: Lessons from a Pilot Study in Gipuzkoa

Within the Etorkezuna Eraikiz initiative of the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa, the YoGOE4Life project tackled a simple but rarely answered question: how can we use modern tools to demonstrate the real nutritional value of a high-quality local food? The product chosen was the natural yogurt of Goenaga Esnekiak, made from milk produced by their own Brown Swiss herd.

A herd with an unusual genetic profile

Goenaga Esnekiak is no ordinary dairy farm. Their herd has been systematically genotyped for years, and today 95% of the animals are A2A2 for beta-casein and BB for kappa-casein — a combination that can only be achieved through sustained directed selection. The A2A2 variant is increasingly associated by consumers with gentler digestibility, while BB kappa-casein has solid scientific backing: higher protein content, firmer coagulation and superior performance in dairy processing — all directly relevant for a yogurt of firm, traditional texture.

The approach

Over fourteen days, twenty women aged 45 to 62 — in full perimenopause, a metabolically sensitive life stage too often overlooked in nutrition research — wore a continuous glucose monitor while eating one yogurt a day, isolated from other meals. The Glucovibes app simultaneously logged food intake, physical activity, sleep and stress. The consortium was completed by the Cheese Institute, the Asmoz Foundation and Goenaga itself.



What was observed

The natural yogurt barely shifted the participants' blood glucose: the post-meal curve remained flat, with an average peak of around 103 mg/dl and minimal variation from baseline. Across the fourteen days, the women spent more than 95% of the time within the healthy glucose range. The result is consistent with what the scientific literature has been describing about fermented dairy: its protein-fat-matrix combination slows absorption and produces a smooth metabolic response.

What it means for the Brown Swiss community

Beyond the specific finding, the project matters to our Federation because of what it represents: a family farm that chose Brown Swiss precisely for its dairy genetic profile, and that has built a herd in which virtually every animal carries the two alleles most valued by the quality-driven dairy industry. It is a clear example of how the breed's distinctive value — fewer litres per cow, but milk with characteristics that the quality market recognises — can now be backed up with measurable evidence generated on the food itself.

Honest limitations

The consortium openly acknowledges that this is a small pilot, with no control group and a sample too limited to draw generalisable conclusions. The study did not compare Goenaga's yogurt with other yogurts, nor did it isolate the effect of A2A2 milk from that of the yogurt matrix as such.

What it does offer is something genuinely valuable: a replicable methodology that other local producers can use to characterise their foods by combining compositional analysis, knowledge of the production system, social context and real-world metabolic measurement in people.

Practical takeaways

Alongside the monitoring, the project's nutritionists shared simple, evidence-based advice with the participants: pair carbohydrates with quality protein and fat, eat in the right order (fibre first, carbs last), include strength training — particularly important during perimenopause to prevent sarcopenia — protect sleep, and favour minimally processed foods. Natural yogurt fits effortlessly into this pattern.

Looking ahead

YoGOE4Life invites a clear next step: larger samples, different population groups, comparisons with industrial products, and a wider range of local foods. For the European Brown Swiss community, the underlying message is encouraging: when a breed is chosen for the quality of what it produces rather than the volume, modern tools now exist to tell that story — and to help the consumer understand it.

Article prepared by Gumersindo J. de la Riera, Technical Director of ARAPAR (Spanish Brown Swiss Breeders' Association), based on the official YoGOE4Life Justification Report (Etorkezuna Eraikiz, Gipuzkoa, 2024).





SWITZERLAND

Breeding goal 2031 – TMI sets the direction

Brown Swiss is a relevant dairy breed. Their advantages convince many breeders. The Total Merit Index (TMI) indicates the direction that Braunvieh Schweiz is pursuing. The Original Braunvieh is on the right track with increasing herd book numbers and perfectly embodies the interplay between milk and meat. Brown cattle are suitable for every farm.

TMI BS from April 7, 2026:
50 % performance, 35 % fitness, 15 % conformation

GZW neu	Merkmal
100%	Relative weights, total
25%	Milk yield
8%	Fat yield
2%	Fat content
9%	Protein Yield
6%	Protein content
3%	Persistence
2%	Longevity
6%	Somatic cell counts
6%	Mastitis resistance
18%	Fertility
3%	Feet & Legs
10%	Udder
2%	Stature (neg)

GZW OB:
30 % Milch, 35 % Fitness, 15 % Exterieur, 20 % Fleisch

GZW	Merkmal
100 %	Relative weights, total
8 %	Milk yield
5 %	Fat yield
2 %	Fat content
11 %	Protein Yield
4 %	Protein content
3 %	Persistence
10 %	Longevity
4 %	Somatic cell counts
4 %	Mastitis resistance
14 %	Fertility
5 %	Pelvic
4 %	Feet & Legs
6 %	Udder
20 %	Beef Index



Breeding goal 2031 Brown Swiss
 Walser's Salomon STELLA



Breeding goal 2031 Original Braunvieh
 Giger OB Baschi Milkyway

Swiss milk recording 2025

Braunvieh claims 121'319 controls and 97'380 standard controls. The Original Braunvieh, incl. ROB can show 16'185 controls, which correspond to an increase of 126 controls, almost 0.8 % in relation to the previous year.

55 % of the brown cows completed their lactation in the mountain area, which is stable compared to last year. For 26.9 % of the cows at least one weighing was made on an alp. The output of adult cows in the valley area without alpine pasture is 8'264 kg of milk for the year.

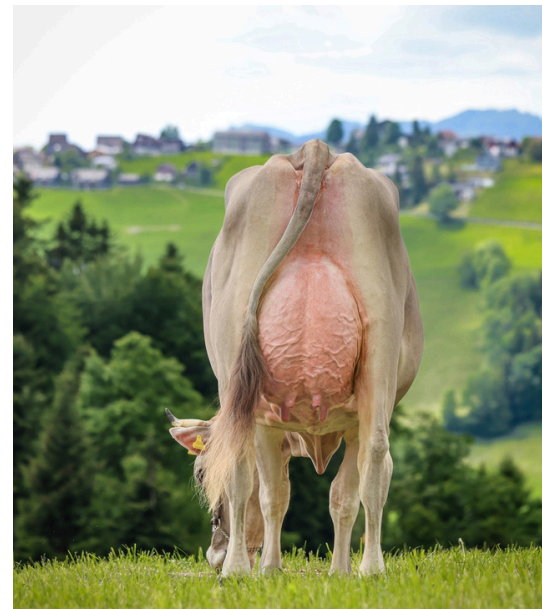
Braunvieh gesamt	Calendar year		Change to previous year
	2025	2024	
Ø Standard lactation of all BS-cows:			
Milk kg	7'297	7'292	+5
Fat kg	294	295	+1
Fat %	4.03	4.04	-0.01
Protein kg	253	251	+2
Protein %	3.47	3.44	+0.03
Nature equivalent points	84	84	=
Persistency %	84	83	+1
Days Open	138	137	+1
Somatic cell counts	104	103	+1
Ø Milk kg 4. ff lactation valley			
	8'264	8'218	+46
Ø Milk kg OB incl. ROB			
	5'957	5'984	-27

Economy Star

To receive the Economy Star award, high requirements must be met in terms of performance, udder health and fitness. This award is given from the second lactation and 384 cows climbed this hurdle last year.

Conditions for the Economy Star:

- Milk yield:
- 2.lact. min. 8'000 kg in midland and 7'500 kg in mountain area
- >3. lact. min. 9'000 kg in midland and 8'500 kg in mountain area
- Protein content: min. 3.60 % in midland and 3.50 % in mountain area
- Cell counts: max. 60'000
- Persistency: min. 90 %
- Days open: max.90 days





SWITZERLAND

Breeding value estimation calving performance 2.0



Around 20 years after the last major revision, the breeding value estimation for birth traits has been completely revised. In addition to the change to the single-step method, the model and the definition of the traits were also updated.

Top-bottom comparison:

The bulls with the highest (top) and lowest (bottom) breeding values (10%) were selected. The proportions of normal and live births were calculated based on the birth reports of the offspring of these bulls. The top 10% of bulls were selected based on the highest breeding values, and the bottom 10% based on the lowest breeding values.

Figure 1. Proportion of light/heavy births for top/bottom bulls (BS)

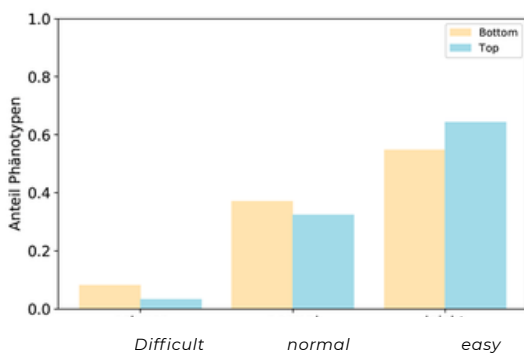
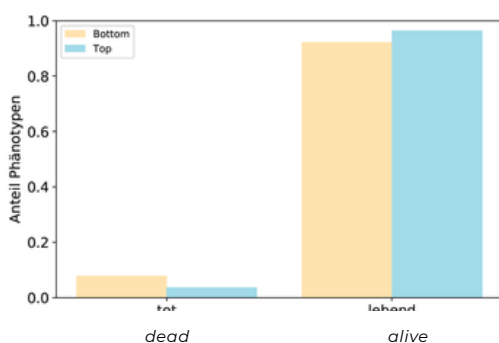


Figure 2. Proportion of live/dead births for top/bottom bulls (BS)



Despite Adjustments – Good Stability

Andreas Kocher, Braunvieh Switzerland

The April breeding value estimation is used both to adjust the baseline and to introduce new breeding values or update existing ones.

In April 2026, the base adjustment was 15 kg milk, 0.01% fat, 0.01% protein, and 2 points for udder, among others. In addition, the Total Breeding Value (TBV) and the Milk Index (MI) for Brown Swiss (BS) were introduced with a new weighting. Mastitis resistance is now calculated using the Single-Step breeding value estimation method. For calving traits, a completely new pipeline was created. This means that for the breeding values “Normal calving – sire” and “Normal calving – daughters”, larger changes occurred in addition to the switch to the Single-Step method. A new data cut from the TVD (agate) is now used, and the model was changed from a sire model to an animal model. This allows the maternal influence to be considered. Special products such as SeleXYon and SpermVital are now also included in the breeding value estimation. Furthermore, the haplotypes BH39 and BH40, as well as three male haplotypes Spata16, QRICH2, and WDR19, were published. All of them are listed in the herdbook regulations.

Optimal remains the benchmark

With 275 additional daughters, Optimal fully confirms his strong breeding values. The switch to the Single-Step method for mastitis resistance resulted in only minor changes, so his high level remains stable. With 1,079 kg milk, 123 somatic cell count, 109 mastitis resistance, and 125 fertility, he remains number 1 based on TBV among progeny-tested AI bulls. His breeding value production increase of 108 highlights the strong performance of Optimal daughters. SYR Aristo Arif remains unchanged in second place with 1,372 TBV. His strength continues to be outstanding production traits. With 92 additional daughters, his protein percentage increased to +0.22%.



Hofmatt BS Benji Bonita 1. Lakt. proj.: 7808 kg 4.37% 3.61%, LBE 81/79/81/84/86/82 Z/E: Hanspeter Kaufmann, Nottwil

His daughters also perform very well in functional traits such as somatic cell count 113, mastitis resistance 109, and fertility 104.

A new bull completes the podium: Scherma Noro Guy. He confirms his high genomic values and enters at third place with 1,366 TBV. With 852 kg milk, a positive protein content, and excellent fitness traits, he meets all requirements of a top progeny-tested bull. Thanks to his intensive use as a young sire, he already has 249 daughters. With somatic cell count 119, mastitis resistance 113, and fertility 112, he shows excellent fitness values.

Schwegler's BS Brice Benji is also classified for a second use. As one of the few Brice sons, he enters with an excellent milk breeding value of 1,231 kg. This ET-free bull impresses with indifferent contents and fertility, as well as very good conformation. However, special attention should be paid to somatic cell count and mastitis resistance in mating decisions.



Bild HR. Lauper Holeyte's Guy HEDI, CH 120.1728.8613.3, 1. L. proj. 10554 kg, 3.05% F, 3.90% E, LBE 81/83/86/84/83/81 B/E: Martin Holenstein, Stein SG



Bild: H.R. Lauper
Baida Lakt proj.: 5793 kg 3.71 % 3.75 %, LBE:
84/83/85/87/85/85
Z/E: Züchter Arnold Glatthard, Schattenhalb

Original Braunvieh (OB): small changes and two new bulls

With 238 additional daughters, Omar further increases his milk breeding value to 577 kg. He lives up the slogan "milk and meat", and with an index meat of 126, he completes a strong result. Killy, Orlando, and Donald follow closely behind in the next spots.

Everyone was eagerly awaiting the first results about bull Rasimus. The son of bull Rugel from the Vice Miss Swiss Expo 2024, Harley Humana, already showed many outstanding daughters at various shows. His result is convincing in conformation, fitness traits, and components, and is rounded off by a positive index meat.

As another addition to the OB-program, Menovin was classified with kappa casein BB.

The son of bull Morin impresses in milk yield, fitness, conformation, and index meat.

His strong milk production comes from his mother Gorner Goldi, who produced 10,120 kg of milk in 5 lactations.

Outlook for April 2027

Next year, two final two major changes in the transition to the Single-step breeding value estimation are expected. Longevity and fertility will also be converted to the Single-Step breeding value estimation. Fertility, in particular, is a very important trait for Brown Swiss breeders. In addition, a new trait within the fertility index, early maturity, will be ready for introduction.

In the future, the longevity breeding value will be based on nine life stages. The weighting of the individual life stages is currently under analysis prior to its introduction in April 2027.

TBV (Net Merit) – Brown Swiss

Trait	Weight
Milk yield	25%
Protein yield	9%
Protein content	6%
Fat yield	8%
Fat content	2%
Persistence	3%
Longevity	2%
Somatic cell count	6%
Mastitis resistance	6%
Fertility	18%
Feet and legs	3%
Udder	10%
Rump height (negative)	2%

MI (Milk Index) – Brown Swiss

Trait	Weight
Milk yield	50%
Fat yield	16%
Fat content	4%
Protein yield	18%
Protein content	12%

TBV(Net Merit) - Original Braunvieh

Trait	Weight
Milk yield	8%
Fat yield	5%
Fat content	2%
Protein yield	11%
Protein content	4%
Persistence	3%
Longevity	10%
Somatic cell count	4%
Mastitis resistance	4%
Fertility	14%
Basin	5%
Feet and legs	4%
Udder	6%
IFV (meat Index)	20%

MI (Milk Index) – Original Braunvieh

Trait	Weight
Milk yield	31%
Fat yield	16%
Fat content	4%
Protein yield	40%
Protein content	9%

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