

# 2023



07

Agriculture  
and forestry

Neuchâtel 2023

## Agriculture and food

Pocket Statistics 2023



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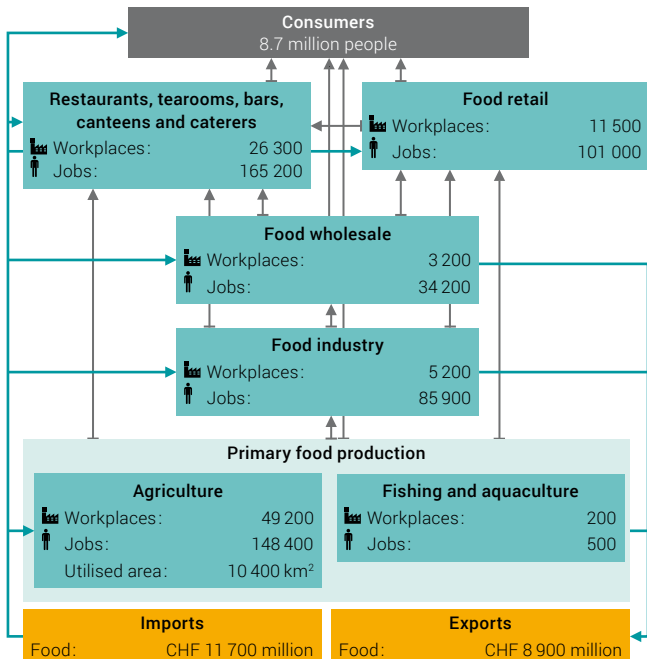
### Data relating to the graphs can be found at:

[www.statistics.admin.ch](http://www.statistics.admin.ch) → Look for statistics → 07 – Agriculture and forestry → *Farming*

[www.statistics.admin.ch](http://www.statistics.admin.ch) → Look for statistics → 07 – Agriculture and forestry → *Food*

# 1 Overview

## The food supply chain in Switzerland, 2020



— domestic food flows

— food flows with the rest of the world

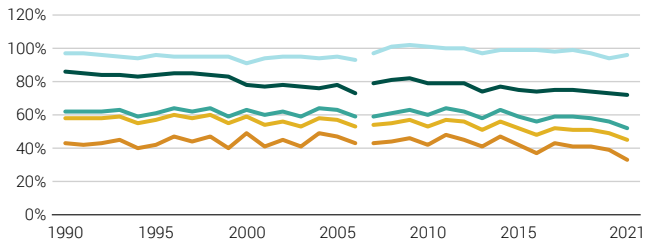
Sources: FOCBS – Foreign trade statistics;  
FSO – STATENT, STATPOP, Farm structure survey

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## 2 Context

### Self-sufficiency rate, 1990–2021

#### By usable energy



— gross foodstuffs of animal origin — net foodstuffs of animal origin<sup>1</sup>  
 — gross total foodstuffs — net total foodstuffs<sup>1</sup> — foodstuffs of plant origin

<sup>1</sup> excluding animal production based on imported feed  
 new calculation method since 2007; 2021 (provisional)

Source: Agristat – Food balance sheet

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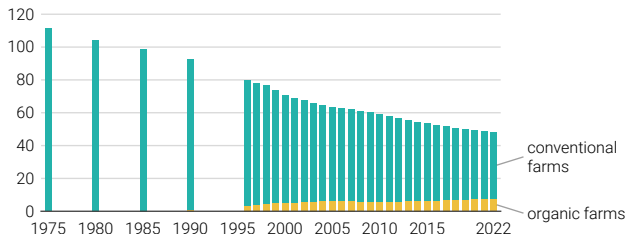
#### Gross self-sufficiency rate of 52%

Since the early 20th century, Switzerland's resident population has grown by a factor of 2.6 to over 8.7 million (2021). At the same time, breeding and technical progress in agriculture has seen food production increase. This means that from 1990 to 2014, around 60% of food consumption (in terms of usable energy) was covered by domestic production. Since then, the gross self-sufficiency rate has never exceeded this figure, falling in 2021 to 52%. For the net self-sufficiency rate (2021: 45%), with regard to animal products, only those produced with domestic fodder are included.

## 3 Agricultural structures

### Farms, 1975–2022

Thousands of farms

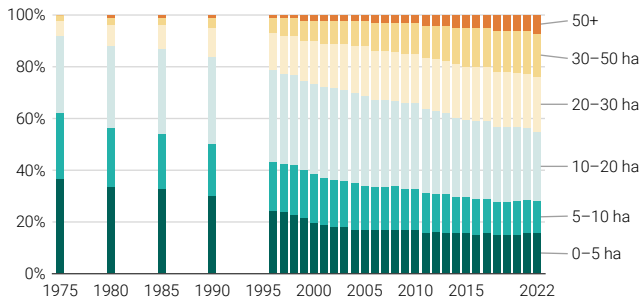


Source: FSO – Farm structure survey

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### Farms by size, 1975–2022

Size classes in hectares of utilised agricultural area per farm

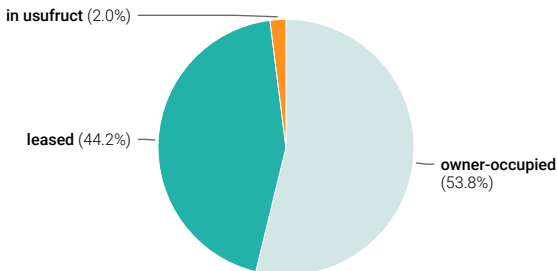


Source: FSO – Farm structure survey

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## Ownership of utilised agricultural area, 2020

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Source: FSO – Farm Census, additional survey

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### Farms are growing in size

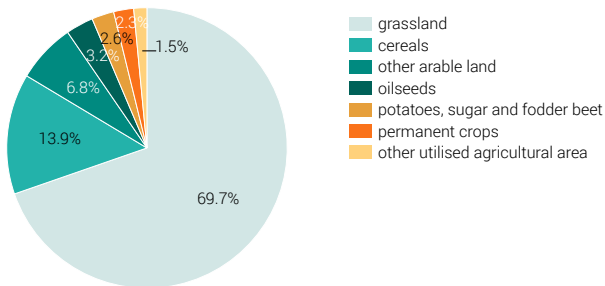
The number of farms declined from 111 302 in 1975 to 48 344 in 2022. While the number of conventional farms has fallen, the number of organic farms has risen from 896 in 1990 to 7819 in 2022. In 2022, farms had an average utilised agricultural area of 21.6 ha. That was more than twice as much as in 1975.

Some 54% of agricultural land is owner-occupied. The remaining 46% is leased on the basis of a tenancy or usufructuary agreement. These percentages changed little from 2010 to 2020. Leasing land is an opportunity for farmers to expand their farm or to take over the management of a whole farm.

## Utilised agricultural area, 2022

Excluding summer pastures

Total area: 1 042 000 ha

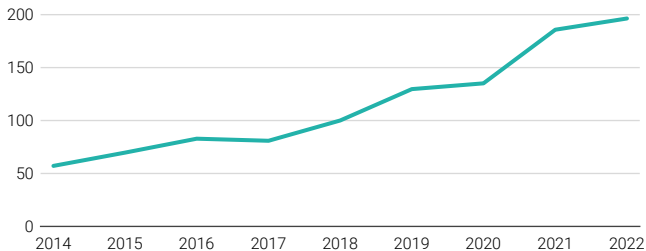


Source: FSO – Farm structure survey

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## Lentils, 2014–2022

Hectares

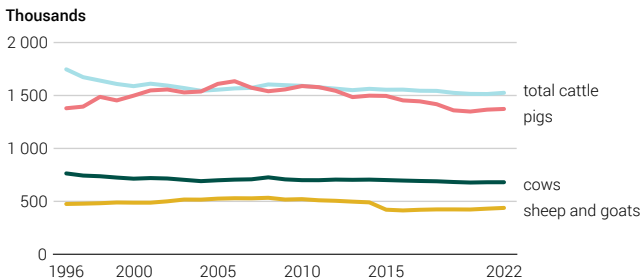


Source: FSO – Farm structure survey

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## Numbers of livestock, 1996–2022



from 2015, reference day has been moved from early May to 1st January

Source: FSO – Farm structure survey

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### Legume cultivation is marginal

In 2022, the utilised agricultural area measured some 1 million hectares. Of these, 726 000 ha were grassland. This was followed by cereals (145 000 ha), the most important arable crop.

Legumes are important sources of protein. In Switzerland, pulse crops are mainly cultivated for animal feed (protein peas, fava beans, cereal grain mixes and lupins). Lentils are increasingly cultivated for human consumption.

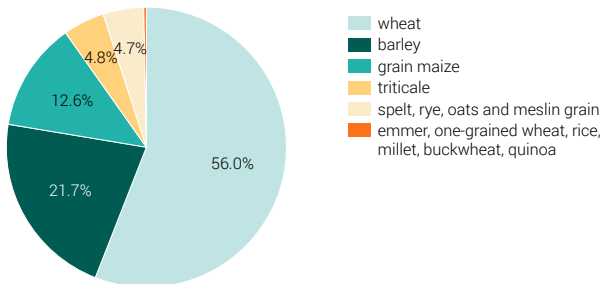
### Long-term trend for decline in the number of cattle

Cattle numbers stood at around 1.5 million in 2022. This was 13% less than in 1996. Between 2021 and 2022, however, they grew by 0.8%. The number of cows also rose slightly and with 681 000 cows almost returned to the level of 2019. The number of pigs was roughly 1.4 million in 2022.

## 4 Primary production

### Cereal production, 2021

Cereals: 782 000 tonnes

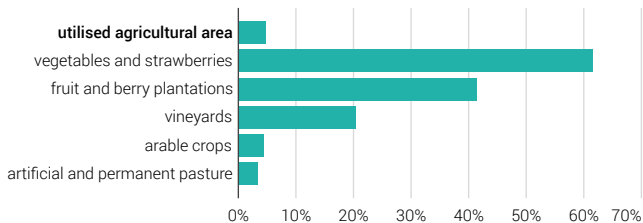


Source: Agristat – Crop production

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### Irrigation, 2020

Share of irrigated utilised agricultural area by category



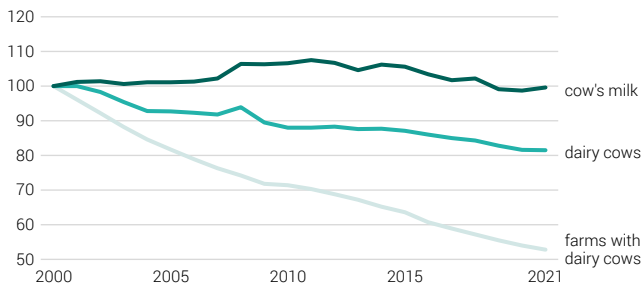
total irrigated areas: 49 000 hectares  
extrapolated values based on random sample

FSO – Farm structure survey, complementary survey

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## Production of cow's milk, 2000–2021

Index 2000 = 100



Sources: FSO – Farm structure survey; Agristat – Dairy statistics

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### Wheat is the main cereal crop

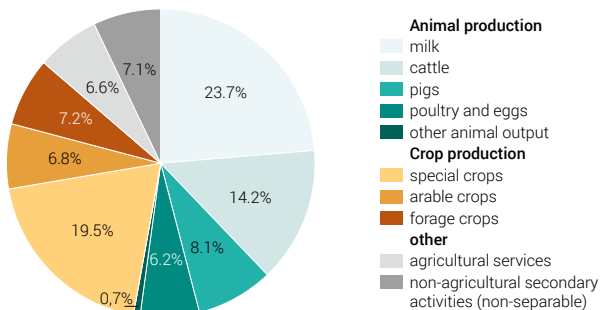
In 2021, around 782 000 tonnes of cereal were produced. The yield was almost 25% lower than in the previous year, owing to wet weather conditions. Wheat accounted for more than half of cereal yields. Cereals have a variety of uses, from human nutrition to animal feed.

About 5% of agricultural land is irrigated. Almost half is grassland. Cereals (including maize) and potatoes are the main irrigated arable crops.

The general fall in the number of farms with dairy production continued in 2021. In 2021, a dairy farm had 23 dairy cows on average.

## Total output of agriculture, 2021

Total: CHF 11.1 billion, 2021 provisional

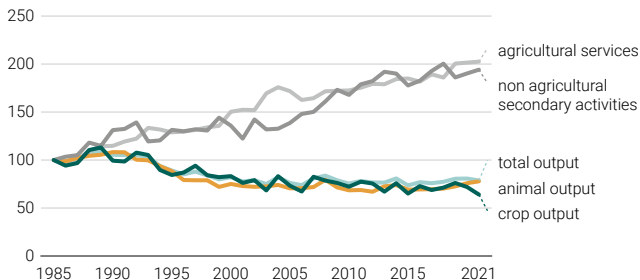


Source: FSO – Economic accounts for agriculture

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## Output of agriculture, 1985–2021

To current prices – index 1985 = 100



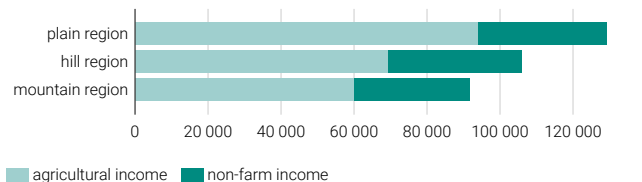
output to basic prices includes subsidies on products and excludes taxes on products;  
1985–2019: definitive, 2020: semi definitive, 2021: provisional

Source: FSO – Economic accounts for agriculture

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## Total income per farm, 2021

CHF per farm



Source: Agroscope – Farm Accountancy Data Network

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### Income differs between regions

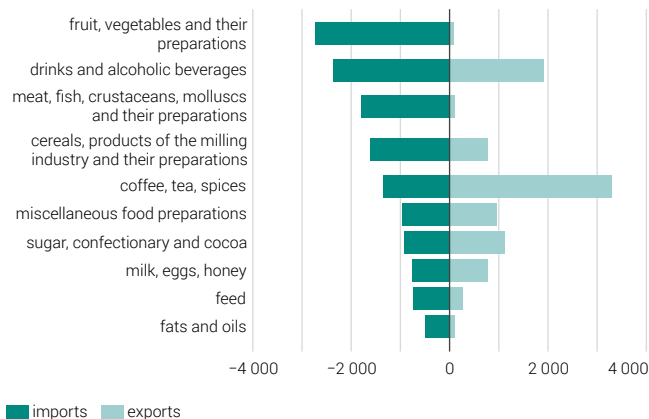
Total output of Swiss agriculture in 2021 was CHF 11.1 billion. Animal products accounted for 53% and crop production for 33% of agriculture's output value. The share of agricultural services and non-agricultural secondary activities in the total output increased from 5% in 1985 to 14% in 2021.

The agricultural income per farm was an average of CHF 80 700 in 2021 (almost CHF 1500 higher than in 2020). Non-agricultural income accounted for nearly a third of household income and was therefore very important to farming families. Household income tended to be lower in hill and mountain regions (18% and 29% respectively) than in the plain region.

## 5 Food industry, trade, catering

### Imports and exports of foodstuffs, 2022

CHF millions



Source: FOCBS – Swiss foreign trade statistics

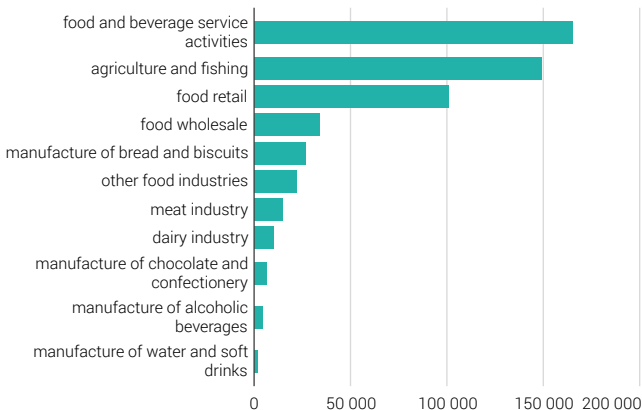
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### Fruit and vegetables are the most commonly imported foodstuffs

In 2022, fruit and vegetables were the most commonly imported agricultural products in terms of value. The most common exports were not cheese or chocolate, but beverages containing water, and coffee.

## Jobs in the food supply chain, 2020

### Number of jobs



Source: FSO – STATENT

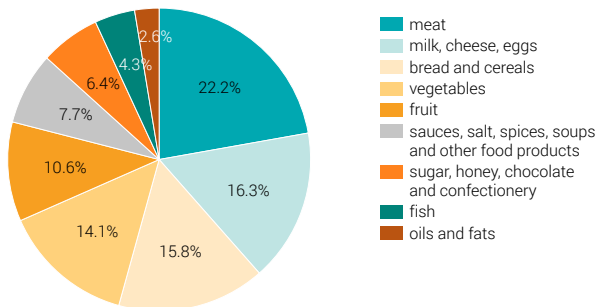
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### 10% of all jobs are in the food supply chain

In 2020, some 100 000 businesses operated in the food supply chain. Of Switzerland's total workforce of some 5.3 million, approximately 535 000 people, representing 10% of jobs, worked within the food supply chain in 2020. Most were employed in food and beverage establishments, primary production (agriculture and fishing) and in food retail.

## 6 Consumption

### Household consumption expenditure for food, 2020



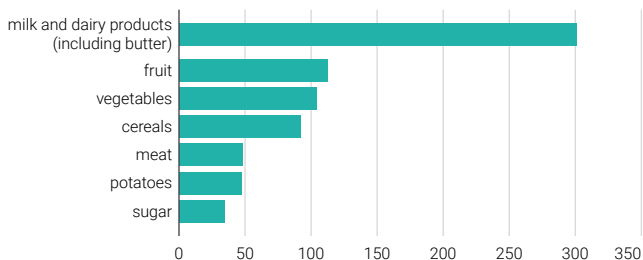
average number of persons per household: 2.1

Source: FSO – Household Budget Survey

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### Consumption of selected foods, 2021

#### Kg of raw product per head per year, 2021 (provisional)



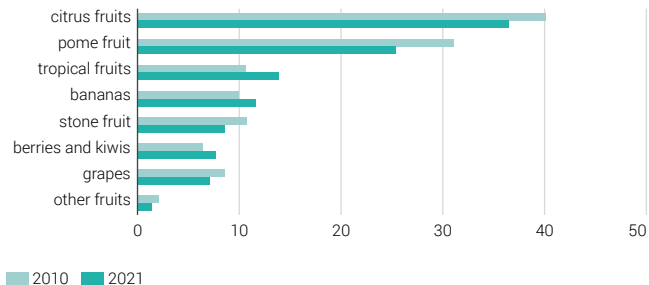
Source: Agristat – Food balance sheet

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## Fruit and fruit juice consumption

Kg per head per year<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> fresh, not prepared

Source: Agristat – Food balance sheet

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## Households spent 10% of their budget on food

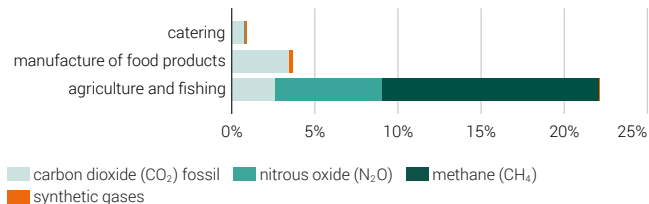
The COVID-19 pandemic brought about temporary changes in food consumption. In 2020 an average household spent roughly 10% of its budget, i.e. about CHF 1000 per month on food, including meals and drinks in restaurants. This was CHF 150 less per month than in the previous year. The sharpest decline was in restaurant spending, which was affected by restrictions.

Meat consumption, which had fallen, rose again in 2021. There has been a general decline in fruit consumption, affecting the share of stone and pome fruits consumed especially.

## 7 Environment

### Greenhouse gas emissions from the food supply chain, 2020

Proportion of total greenhouse gas emissions produced by the economy

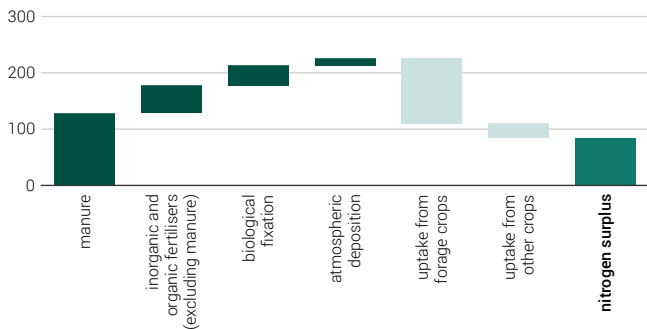


Source: FSO – Environmental accounting

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### Nitrogen balance of agricultural land, 2020<sup>1</sup>

Amounts of nitrogen inputs and uptake from agricultural land in thousands of tonnes



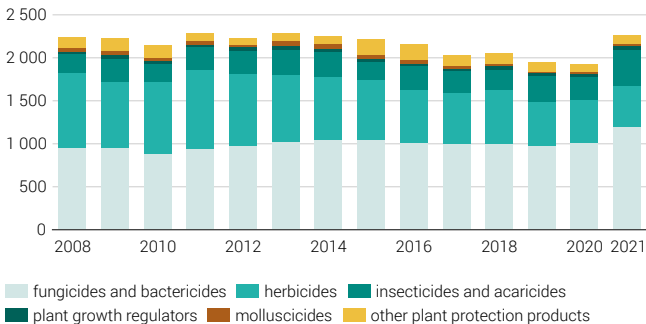
<sup>1</sup> according to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) method

Source: FSO – Nitrogen balance

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## Sales of plant protection products, 2008–2021

### Tonnes of active substances



Source: FOAG

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## Nitrogen surplus continues

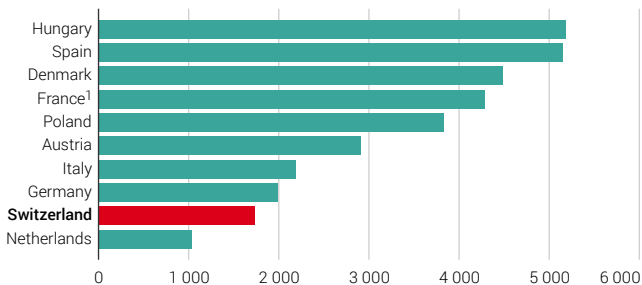
The agriculture, fishing, food manufacturing, and hospitality sectors accounted for about 27% of the total economy's greenhouse gas emissions in 2020. The largest share of the total methane and nitrous oxide emissions were caused by agriculture, in particular from cattle and fertilisers.

Nitrogen can become a pollutant in the environment (as ammonia in the air or as nitrate in groundwater). The three-year average for 2018–20 shows a total nitrogen surplus of 92 000 tonnes on agricultural land. This represents 61 kg per hectare.

In 2021, a total of 2260 tonnes of pesticides were sold. This was 330 tonnes more than the previous year.

## 8 International comparisons

### Agricultural area in m<sup>2</sup> per capita, 2021



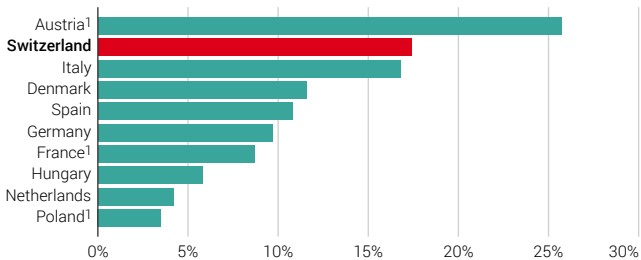
<sup>1</sup> data 2020

Source: Eurostat

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### Organic agriculture, 2021

#### Share of organically farmed utilised agricultural area



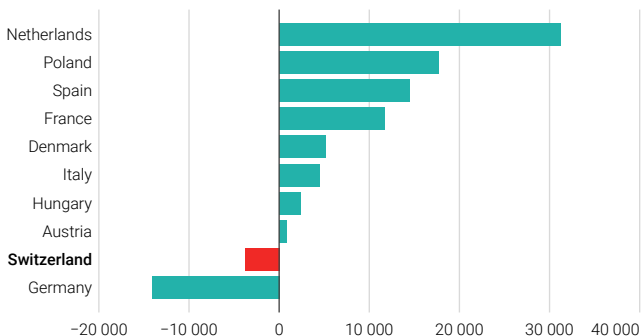
<sup>1</sup> data 2020

Source: Eurostat

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## International trade of food, drinks and tobacco, 2022

Balance in EUR millions



negative values represent an import surplus; positive values represent an export surplus

Source: Eurostat

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### In European comparison, Switzerland's per capita agricultural area is small

Switzerland, like the Netherlands, is one of the European countries with a small agricultural area per person. The share of the utilised agricultural area that is organically farmed, however, is almost twice the European average. Austria is the leader in organic farming.

Germany and Switzerland imported more food in 2022 than they exported in terms of value. The Netherlands, Poland and Spain, in contrast, stand out as export countries in terms of food.

## 9 Key cantonal figures

### Population and workplaces, 2020

Cantons	Population in thousands	Farms	Of which organic farms	Cheese dairies	Large supermarkets (1000–2499 m <sup>2</sup> )	Restaurants
ZH	1 553	3 213	453	19	86	3 220
BE	1 043	10 112	1 417	139	67	2 364
LU	416	4 450	465	41	26	773
UR	37	540	61	10	x	129
SZ	162	1 517	175	15	11	473
OW	38	604	188	14	x	87
NW	44	417	81	9	x	94
GL	41	351	97	12	x	125
ZG	129	547	92	4	10	287
FR	325	2 690	229	112	17	699
SO	277	1 324	180	4	20	620
BS	197	12	4	0	17	594
BL	291	898	161	x	30	486
SH	83	523	38	0	6	195
AR	55	675	134	8	x	154
AI	16	440	27	x	x	59
SG	515	3 860	494	66	24	1 334
GR	200	2 215	1 305	29	17	842
AG	694	3 052	303	7	46	1 193
TG	283	2 491	368	30	12	639
TI	351	1 055	167	15	21	1 354
VD	815	3 580	374	62	45	1 973
VS	349	2 634	387	33	18	1 471
NE	176	765	112	16	10	483
GE	506	389	60	x	28	1 632
JU	74	1 009	189	8	6	191
<b>Switzerland</b>	<b>8 670</b>	<b>49 363</b>	<b>7 561</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>21 471</b>

X: Not indicated due to data protection (between 1 and 3 workplaces)

Sources: FSO – Farm structure survey, STATENT, STATPOP

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