

**GENERAL AGREEMENT
ON TARIFFS AND TRADE**

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International Meat Council

MEAT CONSUMPTION TRENDS

At the twenty-seventh meeting of the Meat Market Analysis Group, held on 15-16 June 1994, participants agreed to reply, on a voluntary basis, to a questionnaire regarding meat consumption trends (IMC/W/97). The documents containing the replies to this questionnaire are circulated on a country-by-country basis under the document series IMC/W/...

SWITZERLAND

Question 1

Is meat the major source of animal proteins in your country? How does it compare with other animal protein sources such as fish? Have there been any changes in the relation of the consumption of meat and other animal proteins? Why?

As compared with the per capita annual consumption of meat which amounts to a total of 84 kg., fish consumption is only 6.3 kg. The following table gives a breakdown of animal protein consumption; the information is based on the agricultural and food supply statistics and estimates of the Union Suisse des Paysans.

Per Capita Meat Consumption

(kg.)

	1993	1994
Pork	37.66	38.04
Beef	18.89	19.72
Poultry	10.43	10.69
Fish	6.33	6.26
Veal	5.18	5.55
Mutton/lamb	1.69	1.68
Horse	0.79	0.79
Goat	0.13	0.13

Question 2

Which type of meat has traditionally the consumers' preference in your country? Why?

For the consumer, pork is the best value.

Question 3

Do meat consumption trends in your country correspond to the general trend described above (see IMC/W/97), i.e. a shift away from red meat consumption to white meat, in particular poultry meat? Please provide evidence.

Except for poultry, the figures indicated correspond to a trend which has been observable for many years. As far as poultry is concerned, consumption increased up to 1990, after which it fell, generally to the advantage of fish.

Question 4

Which factors among those cited above (see IMC/W/97) (and/or others) affected beef and veal consumption the most in your country? Please elaborate. For example, the following factors and their changes are frequently identified as significantly affecting beef and veal consumption: beef prices; disposable household income; relative prices of other meats; population growth; age structure of the population; health considerations (including those related with production methods); product image; animal welfare concerns. What is the role of those factors? What other factors are relevant?

Eating habits have the most effect on meat consumption. Under the influence of school and the media, they have changed somewhat in recent years (problems connected with cholesterol, propaganda against meat consumption; see also the reply to question 3). Other factors such as prices and the level of economic activity also play a part.

Question 5

Is there any relationship between beef trade and domestic beef consumption in your country? Please elaborate.

In principle, there is no direct relation between local meat production and consumption. There has, however, been an increase in marketing by the producers who have the animals slaughtered by a butcher and then sell the meat themselves. Nevertheless, the economic impact is insignificant.

Question 6

Are there any policies or other measures in force directed at affecting beef consumption and/or retail beef prices in your country? In the affirmative, please describe the type of measures and the rationale behind them.

Within the framework of its public relations budget, the Coopérative Suisse pour l'approvisionnement en bétail de boucherie et en viande (CBV), which represents the producers and the meat industry, is trying, through an objective information campaign, to maintain the amount of meat consumed at the present level.

Question 7

Are there other types of measures designed to stimulate meat consumption (promotion campaigns in fairs, audiovisual promotion, particular marketing techniques)? For all types of meat or for a particular type of meat? Please specify.

The CBV, which has the main responsibility for promotion, is supported, at national and regional fairs, by the master butcher federations. The big distributors make a significant contribution to the public relations effort.

Question 8

Retail trade practices are changing fast in a rising number of countries. Butcheries are being affected by competition from supermarkets and hypermarkets. Is this the case in your country? How is it affecting meat consumption in general, and beef and veal in particular? Is meat quality being affected?

In Switzerland, too, the number of retailers is decreasing, but since it is a question of a process of absorption by the big distributors, meat consumption is not directly affected. As for quality, always high, it has improved still further, thanks to the requirements which must be met by animals for slaughter, not to mention hygiene and the conditions (in harmony with nature and humane) under which the animals are kept.

Question 9

Is the catering market an area of expansion in your domestic market? How does it affect the consumption of the different types of meat?

So far there has been no official survey of trends in the catering sector. However, meat consumption in that sector has declined to a lesser extent than in households. For catering, this is a favourable sign.

Question 10

Could you forward to the Secretariat any study/document, official or non-official, which your authorities believe might be helpful for a better assessment and understanding of meat consumption trends in your country?

No further information provided.