

Simmental meat: Migros Basel and Qualivo team up for a special culinary experience

Qualivo fatteners are sought for Migros Basel

When original genetics from the Simmental region and feeding specialists from Oberraargau are brought together, people in the northwest of Switzerland will find meat for consumption at Migros, and farmers will have new opportunities to earn money.

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“Migros Basel is focusing on regionality and Swissness in the gourmet sector and has rediscovered the Simmental breed,” explains Alexander Hofmann, who as Managing Director of Hofmann Nutrition AG launched the “Simmental Qualivo” brand program in 2017 together with Migros Basel. Pure-bred Simmental genetics from the Bernese Oberland are combined with pure hay feeding and the Qualivo-Müesli mix from Hokovit. This is the only way to ensure that the meat has sufficient fat storage and thus the typical taste that meat lovers appreciate so much. The animals have a controlled free range and are kept on straw.

Natural micronutrients

“The real secret of Qualivo feeding is the added HOKOVIT micronutrients from over 60 different plant, herb and yeast extracts as well as other natural ingredients,” explain Jürg and his son Alexander Hofmann. The natural micronutrients not only ensure the best health and performance of the fattening animals, but also the best quality and highest enjoyment value of the meat. Jürg Hofmann protected this form of production – without silage, only hay and supplementary feed with natural micronutrients, and known by its brand name “Qualivo” – nationally and internationally 24 years ago.



Simmental-Qualivo fattening for Migros Basel: Eric Quiquerez; Alexander Hofmann from Hokovit; Robin Quiquerez.



Simple feeding with great effect: the farm's own hay and Qualivo-Müesli mix. (Pictures: Ruedi Haudenschild)

Meat is also produced according to Qualivo standards in Germany, the Czech Republic and Slovakia. First trials with Qualivo have also been conducted in Russia. The Qualivo brand is aimed at quality-conscious meat lovers in retail and top restaurants.

Pioneer in meat labels

Hofmann Nutrition AG in Bützberg BE is considered a pioneer in the field of meat labels, as Jürg Hofmann developed the first branded meat in Switzerland for Bell and Coop in the mid-1980s. The Bell-Porc pigs were fed antibiotic-free and with natural micronutrients from Hokovit and kept in open-fronted stables on straw in a more species-appropriate way than was usual at that time. This first label meat was very successful in sales and caused a big wave of other meat labels in Switzer-

land.

Simmental-Qualivo

“Qualivo meat was brought to Swiss retail by Migros Basel. The Simmental-Qualivo concept is pure Swissness and, contrary to the general meat trend, continues to develop positively in double figures at Migros Basel,” says Albin Oeschger. The marketing manager in charge of meats and dairy products at Migros Basel has already had good experience with the Swiss Qualivo feeding concept in Germany and therefore wants to develop Qualivo meat further. Further producers are now being sought for this.

Regional producers

“As it is a product in the ‘From the Region for the Region’ (AdR) range, for the time being only farmers in north-western Switzerland can fatten,” explains



Albin Oeschger, Meat- and Milk Marketing Manager at Migros Basel (center) with his butchers at the sales counter.

Alexander Hofmann during a tour of Eric and Robin Quiquerez's farm in Grandfontaine JU. Father and son Quiquerez gave up milk production some years ago and fattened bulls conventionally in stables. “As an arable farm in the Ajoie region, we were looking for a simple, clear and animal-friendly concept where we could use our hay and straw and generate additional income,” explains father Eric Quiquerez, who was the first farmer to start this contract production in 2017. The Quiquerez farm produces each year 150 to 160 class C and H Simmental-Qualivo bulls ready for slaughter with a carcass weight of 290 to 310 kilograms and good fat cover for Migros Basel.

A guaranteed margin

“We are completely convinced by the concept,” explains Eric Quiquerez, the

father. With a dry ration of hay and soy-free müesli ad libitum, there is significantly less work, and machine costs are lower too. The Simmental bulls are comfortable on the straw and also have access to a free range. As a fattener and IP-Suisse producer, he also appreciates the production reliability of Hofmann Nutrition AG's Qualivo concept: When ASF delivers the 230-kilo fattening weanlings from market places in the Bernese Oberland, Hofmann Nutrition AG sets the sales price as well as the stabling price, and Migros Basel guarantees it. “This, together with the sales guarantee, gives us maximum production reliability,” explains the visibly satisfied fattener.

Special AdR product

“Qualivo is an AdR product with unique selling points.

Because quality is usually not very tangible for the consumer, but a better aroma and tenderness are very real with Qualivo,” says Albin Oeschger from Migros Basel. “For once, the emphasis is not only on good animal husbandry, but on a very special culinary experience on the plate.” This makes all the difference and explains the growing popularity of meat from young Qualivo bulls among consumers. “Not only sirloin and entrecôte, but also the otherwise more difficult-to-sell meat cuts such as stewing meat, ragout, roast or minced meat (burger) are very popular with customers and can be sold well all year round,” confirm the Migros butchers at the counter. “This is the only way to achieve whole-animal processing, which is not only economically interesting, but also in terms of genuine sustainability and appreciation of the animals,” says Albin Oeschger. The improved CO₂ footprint per kilo of meat due to better feed conversion and earlier slaughter maturity with Hokovit nutrients is also significant. Qualivo is a good thing all round – also for the fatteners, whose earnings are protected by a special price system.

Looking for contractual partners

Hofmann Nutrition AG in Bützberg BE is looking for additional contractual partners for the Qualivo concept.

Info: www.hokovit.ch