

INTERVIEW: Around 1,000 Swiss farmers rely on Hokovit micronutrients

“Proven alternative to antibiotics”

After 44 years, Jürg Hofmann has handed over management of his company Hofmann Nutrition AG to his son Alexander. In the interview, he looks back on and shares his experience in the field of livestock feeding.

INTERVIEW: SUSANNE MEIER
«Schweizer Bauer»:
Looking back on the last 44 years, what was the biggest milestone in the history of your company?

There are actually two milestones. In the late 1970s, it was the development and introduction of our first immunity and performance-enhancing micro-nutrient “Homexan” in farm animal nutrition, and in the mid-1980s, our development and production of the first Swiss branded meat, “Bell Porc”, the cornerstone of all meat labels in our country.

Many feed companies today rely on natural feed supplements such as herbs. You do the same thing with your Qualivo label. What

supplements are involved?

Colostrum, yeast extracts, a great variety of plant extracts and herbs, specific fatty acids, peptides, antioxidants, as well as highly bio-available vitamins and trace elements. We combine these for each type of animal and age exactly according to the needs. We've been doing this for 40 years, and therefore know how to derive the greatest benefits from these natural substances. The natural HOKOVIT micronutrients not only improve the health, performance and meat enjoyment value of our QUALIVO animals, they also ensure the highest feed efficiency in conventional breeding and fattening.

How did you discover that these micronutrients are beneficial to the animals?

I had seen the results of our feeding trials!

Has the composition been adjusted in the 40 years since the beginning?

The composition has changed a lot, because over the decades we have always found new combinations. So, today we can offer sophisticated, mature products and feeding strategies.

How many farmers use Hokovit products today?

Since our HOKOVIT micronutrients are used today in 20 countries around the world, more than 90% of these products are exported. Abroad, we supply only very large companies or integrators directly, and everything else goes through retail. This is why we don't know the number of farmers who use the products abroad. In Switzerland, where we deliver directly to farms, there are about 1,000 farmers who benefit from HOKOVIT special feed.

These are looked after and advised by our eight Swiss feed consultants in the field.

How is demand evolving as knowledge about the effects of herbs is increasing?

It is growing and also sustainable, if you do it right. It's not just about the herbs, but about combining a variety of natural ingredients.

In your view, do micronutrients represent a way to reduce the use of antibiotics in animal husbandry?

That's definitely true of HOKOVIT micronutrients. We have clearly demonstrated this in our experimental farm for bull and calf fattening with the rearing and fattening of purchased calf groups without vaccination and without group medication.

Agriculture, and especially animal husbandry, is faced with challenges: decline in meat consumption, a “jungle” of labels,

animal owners being denounced as “climate sinners”, to give just a few examples. How do you – or your successor – want to counter this in the next few years?

We will do exactly what we have been doing for years. Create real added value for producers, renderers and consumers. More profitable and sustainable animal production with sophisticated feeding strategies. Top feed efficiency, that is, resource conservation and healthier animals through HOKOVIT micronutrients in conventional breeding and fattening. Standardized, highest enjoyment value with our QUALIVO beef, veal and pork thanks to premium feeding. The current outlook for “emotion or fantasy labels” is not favorable, unless there's added value on the plate. Renderers and consumers today expect genuine added value when it comes to labeled meat. That's exactly what we offer today with our QUALIVO meat.

