

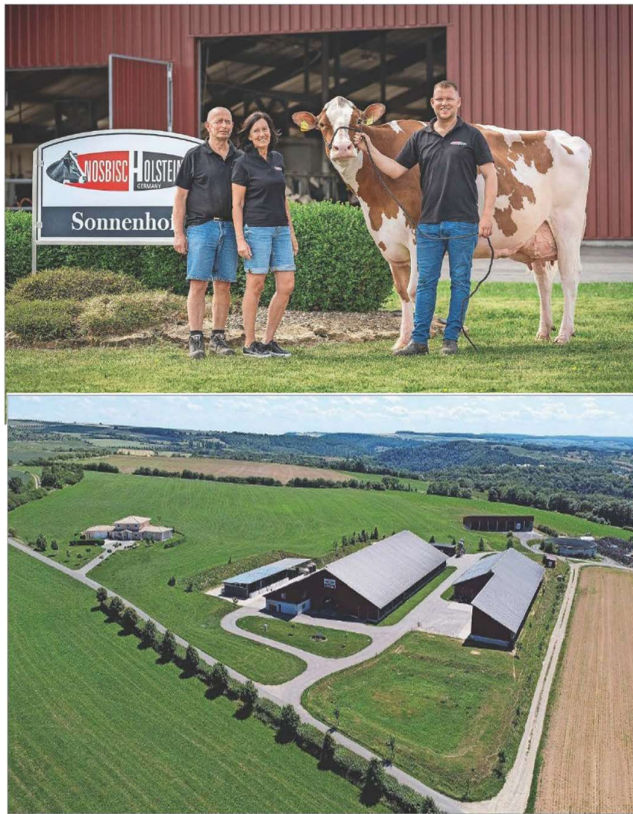
**GERMANY:** One of the best breeders in Europe is giving up milk production

## A significant chapter comes to an end

*In the mid-west of Germany, the well-known Nobsch Holsteins breeding farm is giving up milk production. Young farm manager Nici Nobsch explains the background behind this farm restructuring.*

**Adrian Haldimann**

The Nobsch dairy herd is considered one of the best herds in Europe. How is it that Nici Nobsch, who runs a 150-hectare farm with his parents Jutta and Matthias Nobsch in the mid-west of Germany in the local community of Niederweis and enjoys great breeding success, is saying goodbye to milk production and selling his animals at the mega auction on October 20 as part of the German Masters Sale? The "Schweizer Bauer" has asked the young entrepreneur about this.



Dairy cows are a thing of the past on this farm.

### Focus on Swiss products

The 33-year-old's career has been on a steep upward trajectory over the past few years. He has been organizing the German Masters Sale since 2014, has developed a company with the European Livestock Service that trades more than 2,500 cattle annually, and is co-founder and shareholder of the highly regarded breeding company Bulls-eye Genetics. In addition, he is increasingly on the road as an auctioneer. As a breeder, he has bred top bulls such as Aristocrat or the Red Holstein Extérieur Star Solito-Red and successful show cows such as NH DG

### HERD SALE AND GERMAN MASTERS SALE

The Nobsch Herd Sale, which will be held as part of the German Masters Sale 2023, will start on Friday, October 20, at 12:00 noon, at the Nobsch farm in Niederweis (Germany). There are 333 sale numbers in the catalog, 265 of which are offered by the Nobsch family mostly with the prefix NH. There is talk about the

most exclusive collection of the German Masters Sale ever. Among others, the highest GTPI cattle ever offered in Europe will be sold. Direct daughters out of some of the best cows in the world are on offer. And that, whether in red or black and whether in Holsteins, Jerseys, Wagyu, Brown Swiss or even the Normandy breed. According to Nici

Nobsch, animals can be exported to Switzerland immediately after the auction without quarantine. Transport prices of 400 to 700 francs per animal can be expected. For Switzerland, Marcel Egli is available as contact person: 076 427 45 24. Catalog: [german.masterssale.com](http://german.masterssale.com). hal

Arvis Silky EX-91 (see picture).

First, Nici Nobsch tells us about his connection to Switzerland. At the German Masters Sale, animals are regularly sold to Switzerland and animals from Switzerland are offered at the sale. He also regularly travels to Switzerland: "The Swiss Expo is an absolute must for me." For calf and cow feeding, Nobsch relies on products from the

Swiss company Hokovit. "The use of the products helped us to increase the farm ratios every year." In the last ten years, he said, he has been able to increase the herd yield by almost 3000 kg of milk, and the ingredients are also higher. In addition, there is very good fertility and low cell counts.

### Not easy emotionally

Next year, Nici Nobsch wants to take over his parents' farm. He sums up the challenge and the reason for his decision to give up milk production as follows: "Because my father wants to scale down, with milk production I would be forced to commit 100 percent to the farm. It's only one or the other. I want to do what I do as well and as perfectly as possible." The profitability of milk

### OVERVIEW OF THE FARM

Together with two employees, the Nobsch family farms an area of 150 hectares, including 60 hectares of grassland, 15 hectares of alfalfa, 45 hectares of corn and 30 hectares of grain. Until the auction on October 20, they still have 120 dairy cows and 220 head of young cattle. On average, Nobsch milks a standard lactation of 12,780 kg of milk at 4.22% fat and 3.56% protein, with a cell count of 80,000. The GMO-free feed consists of 26 kg of grass, 13 kg of corn, 10 kg of alfalfa, 7 kg of sugar beet pulp, 3 kg of protein feed, 2.5 kg of corn meal, 2 kg of grain, 1 kg of hay, minerals and yeast (Hokovit Dairy Protect). Most recently, bulls such as William, Skyliner, Red, Lambda, Redlea RC, Highclass, Rubicon, Remover PP, Doral Red, Heatwave Red, Dropbox and Soysauce were used. hal

production did not play a role in the decision. "We decided to restructure the farm when the milk price was at a record 60 cents per kilo last year."

The conditions for milk production on the Nobsch farm are good. In 2011, the herd moved into the new dairy barn, and since then robots have been used for milking. "Not all people have to be able to understand my decisions," says Nici

Nobsch. Each person has to make the right decision for him or herself personally. He also ad-

*"All of life is about compromise."*

mits that not every farmer has such alternative livelihoods as he does. Nevertheless, he believes that farmers are sometimes too fixated on existing strategies and not very open to new paths. It's not

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easy emotionally for him either, he says, to sell the herd he's built. "All of life is about compromise," he says. "Once you make decisions, you should follow through with them. I'm looking forward to what's coming. And when we have a little more time, new opportunities and possibilities will arise that we're not even thinking about now."

In any case, Nosbisch plans to continue using

the stables, for his commercial enterprise, for example. He also wants to keep some young animals under the NH prefix in the future and continue breeding. Another option, he says, is to offer the stables to private breeders or breeding companies for carrier animals and for ET transfers. "However, these plans are not quite concrete yet," Nosbisch keeps in mind.

#### **Problem workforce**

Was hiring additional workers to replace him on the farm out of the question for Nici Nosbisch? "The problem is that it is almost impossible to find good workers," says Nosbisch. Those who have the potential to be herd managers usually have a farm at home themselves. "Here in Germany, it's not like in the U.S., where it's common to move far away to work on a farm. Here, the mentality is different." In

addition, he says, he himself has high expectations of management on the farm. "My father used to work 100 percent at home, so it worked well when I was only 30 to 50 percent on the farm." For Nici Nosbisch, it was important to act in time: "My father is 64 years old. We want to restructure the business, as long as everyone is in good health."

#### **"Genetics is key"**

Nosbisch always wanted to breed a Holstein cow that would work anywhere. "The differences between show and conventional genetics should not be big. A cow that can win at the show should also be a good cow in the barn." There was little to no extreme mating done, he said. "We always bred a cow that had bull dam quality and the potential to succeed at a show."