



## Press release

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Our great cheese festival is about to begin!

### **Mountain Cheese Olympics in Jura**

**Bellelay, 1<sup>st</sup> October 2009 – The Jura region has every right to be proud - in just over three weeks, the region will play host to a huge cheese festival guaranteed to delight the whole family and sure to attract a great deal of attention from both home and abroad. For four days, mountain cheese will be in the spotlight, whether at the international market with 60 producers exhibiting their wares or at the Olympics, where the best mountain cheeses in the world will be selected for the sixth time.**

#### **A festival for everyone – for cheese fans!**

Taking a leisurely stroll through the mountain cheese market with all the regional products, sampling the wares on offer at the stands, at the largest mountain cheese buffet in Switzerland and at the huge mountain cheese fondue for 1000 gourmets, many visitors will be amazed just how varied mountain cheeses can taste and how different their appearance can be. And let's not forget the tasty delicacies from the mountain kitchen!!

For the very first time it will be possible to watch the competition judging on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2009 and to discover how the professionals taste cheese. Just what distinguishes a Japanese mountain cheese from a Swiss one? What does a layman taste and smell as he stands and selects his cheeses from the hundreds of competition cheeses on offer at the buffet? The answers can be found at the 6<sup>th</sup> Mountain Olympics alongside pure delight and enjoyment of the cheeses on offer. The culmination of the festivities will be the medal presentation ceremony to the winners of the international competition. This will take place on the 25<sup>th</sup> October as a precursor to the big folklore parade.

#### **A festival for everyone – not just cheese fans**

You don't have to be a cheese freak to take part in our festival, dedicated to all the mountain cheeses in the world and officially opened by Federal Councillor Doris Leuthard. There will be events and entertainment the whole weekend to accompany the Mountain Cheese Olympics, giving visitors of all ages a chance to experience and learn about crafts, traditions and history.

The Tête de Moine museum will be inaugurated and a play will be presented several times throughout the weekend to whisk visitors on a journey through time and the history of Bellelay and its cheese, the Tête de Moine that is older than the Swiss Confederation itself. You can also see how this famous cheese used to be made during the presentations that will take place on each of the days. There will be organ concerts in the venerable Abbey church, trips to the wind park on Mont Crosin, animal shows and various horse displays to highlight other traditional aspects of the Jura region. Live music, a relaxed get-together in one of the restaurants or at the Olympic bar with colourful entertainment will add extra flavour to our festival and ensure you won't want to go home.

Having Jean-Marc Richard as our presenter, live RSR radio shows daily and the re-launch of the Swiss German folk radio station "Musikwelle" at our competition venue have already created a great deal of interest in the media.



At the Mountain Cheese Olympics, we will also have attractions to make children's hearts beat a bit faster! There will be so much to enjoy - from pony riding to crafts, from tractor competitions to making your own cheese and, in Saignelégier, the chance to try out cheese rolling, to milk a cow or to enjoy our cheese circus.

For the entire weekend, visitors to the Mountain Cheese Olympics will also be able to tour the largest Swiss solar and wind power plants, situated above St Imier. The Longines museum and the Spielhofer dairy in St Imier will also be opening their doors and offering free tours for the whole weekend.

### **Travel arrangements and venues designed with our visitors in mind**

Our great cheese festival will take place even if it rains, with both our venues offering covered stands and activity areas. Extra trains provided by the SBB (Swiss railways) and a shuttle bus service arranged by the Chemins de Fer du Jura (Jura Railways) will ensure that your journey to Saignelégier and the connections between Bellelay and back again will be stress-free. Entry to all the venues is free of charge.

### **For professionals and experts**

The professional aspect of the skills of cheese-making will be brought to the forefront when the judges evaluate and assess the hundreds of mountain cheese samples according to the competition rules for taste, appearance and texture. The festival also provides the perfect background for experts to discuss the added value provided by the mountain regions for both agriculture and society in general. The starting point will be the expectations that consumers have of a mountain product compared to an industrial product. This two day seminar, with a podium discussion, will be attended by important figures from agriculture and tourism and will take place in the CIP in Tramelan starting on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2009.

For the first graduates of FROMARTE'S «Sommelier Maître Fromager» course, the Mountain Cheese Olympics will also be an unforgettable experience as they will be receiving their diplomas.

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### **Notice to editors and registration for the 6th Mountain Cheese Olympics**

Media representatives who would like to attend the 6th Mountain Cheese Olympics or other related official events can now register.

Please visit <http://www.caseusmontanus.ch/2009/de/media/> for further research material (images and texts).

We look forward to receiving your registration. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any further questions.



**For questions about the event:**

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