



PRESS RELEASE

Agriculture

In the Land of the Alps, agriculture is shaped by nature and is closely knit with tradition: it is traditionally small-scale. More than 90% are family businesses. Usually several generations live and work on a farm. Each family member brings knowledge and experience. Many farms have been in existence for several hundred years - the oldest since 1313. Sustainability and tradition are what matter here.

The average size of a farm is around 20 hectares. On any one of the approximately 25,000 farms operating as dairy businesses, there is an average of 20 cows. 70% of the country lies within mountainous regions, which calls for a lot of hard work due to the gradient and weather. The steep slopes necessitate that some jobs such as mowing grass must also be done manually.

Austria covers a total of 8.4 million hectares. The area used for farming comprises 2.8 million hectares. Approximately half of this area is cropland - and as befits a Land of the Alps - a quarter is made up of farmed alpine pastures and meadows.

Mountain pastures reach right up high into the alpine region of the mountains. They shape the landscape and provide special ways to keep animals. Around 300,000 cattle, of which 50,000 are dairy cows, are taken up onto the Alps every year. In addition, there are 130,000 sheep and goats. They graze on the lush grass on the mountain pastures or the grass is cut and dried into hay. Animal feed, milk, dairy products and cheese are 100% GMO-free.

In the EU, Austria is number one in organic farming as around 26% of its surface is organically farmed and one in five businesses is organic.

Organic production follows these basic principles:

Working within natural systems and cycles and a wide range of plant varieties and animal breeds are intended to increase biodiversity. Special attention is paid to species-appropriate animal keeping and organic feed. There is no use of genetic engineering and the use of external energy is minimised as much as possible too. No use of synthetic chemical pesticides or synthetic mineral fertilisers, promoting a diverse soil life.

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AMA-Marketing GesmbH is the Austrian platform for quality, sales promotion and communication of agricultural products and food. It awards the AMA Quality Seal and the AMA Organic Seal in recognition of excellence in the food industry. Its duties are regulated by law. Financing is provided through agricultural marketing contributions from farmers, European Union funding and licence holder fees.

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