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Education and Research EAER

**Agroscope**

# The advisory and continuing education system in Switzerland for artisan cheese dairies

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Liebefeld, Bern

12.11.25





# Summary

- Cheese production in Switzerland
- Agroscope
- Advisory organisation
- Continuing education for advisors and cheese makers



# Cheese production in Switzerland

- 600 artisanal cheese dairies
- Cheese production (t):

Cow	197'258 t
Goat	1'109 t
Sheep	384 t

## Size of milk processing companies<sup>1</sup>

number of employees	<10	10-59	50-249	>250	total
Number of milk processing factories	666	163	23	9	861

*1-4 million liters of milk per year*



5-25 milk producers



vat 1000-7000 liter



100'000 –  
500'000 kg/year

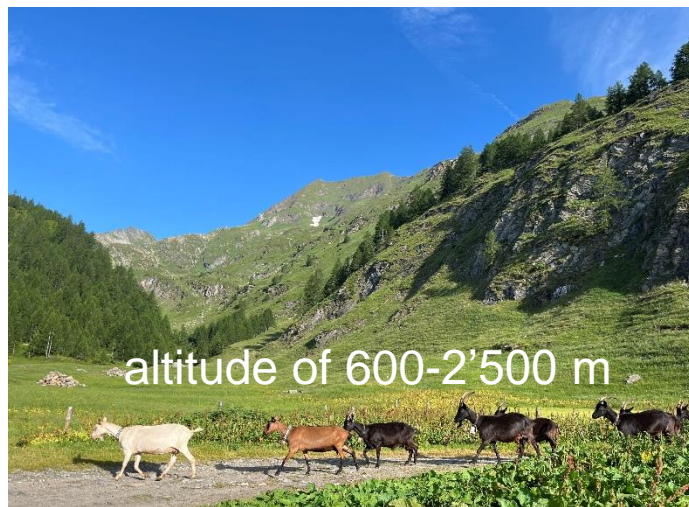




# Alp cheese production

- 1'284 alpine cheese dairies<sup>2</sup>
- Cheese production (only im summer, 90-120 days):

Cow	5'428 t
Goat	122 t





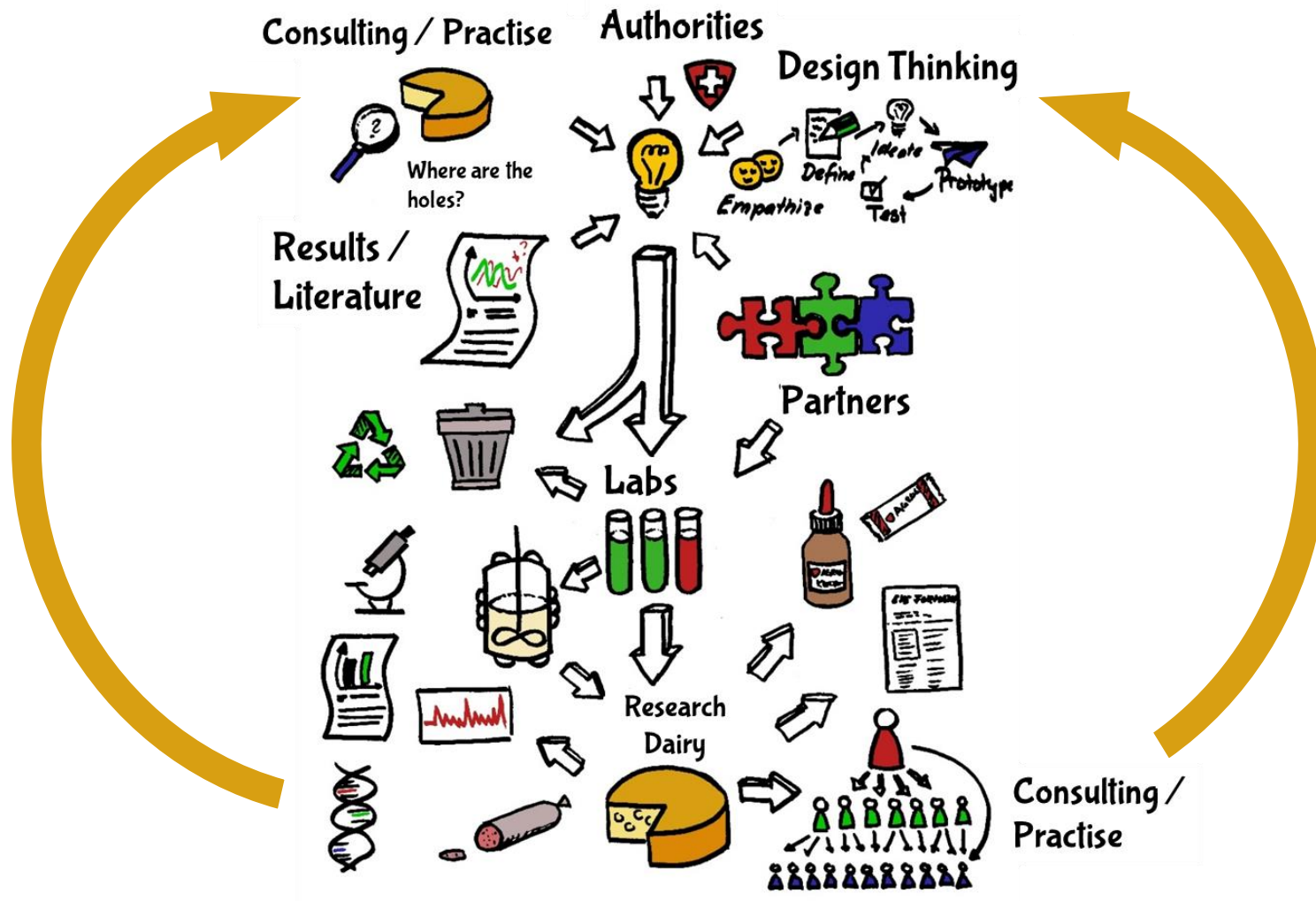
# Agroscope: Working model

Capillary  
sys. & mutual  
trust

Education &  
Sustainability

Innovation  
& science

Community  
of practice







# 4 Agroscope consultants



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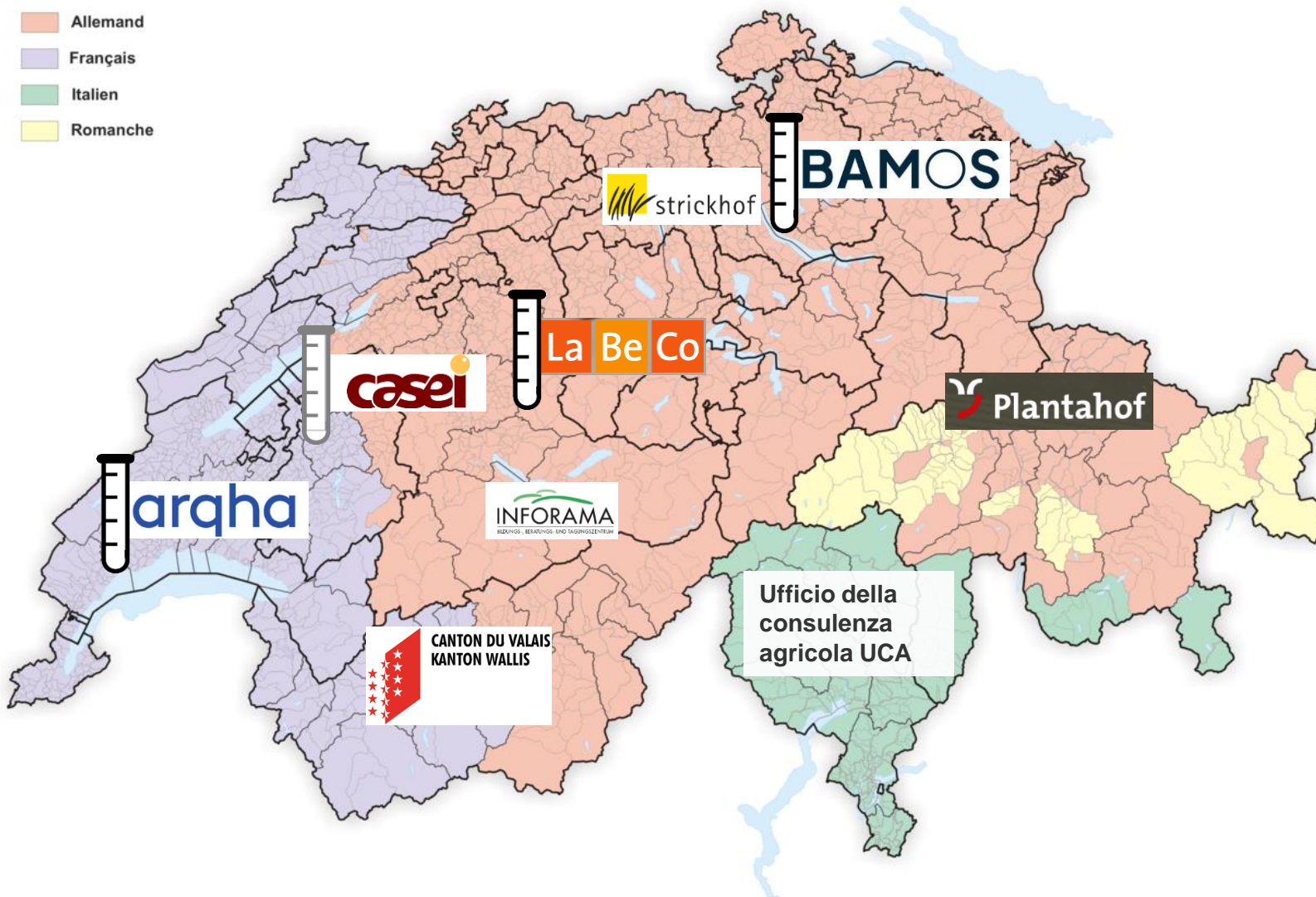
## 4 Agroscope consultants


- The **link** between research and practice
- Close **contact** with cheese makers, organisations and regional advisors
- **Disseminate research conducted by Agroscope**
- Provide **continuing education** courses for advisors, cheese makers, and milk producers
- **Advise** on manufacturing parameters (use of Swiss lactic ferments, etc.)





# Advisory platform



9 advisory organisations  
4 with laboratory 

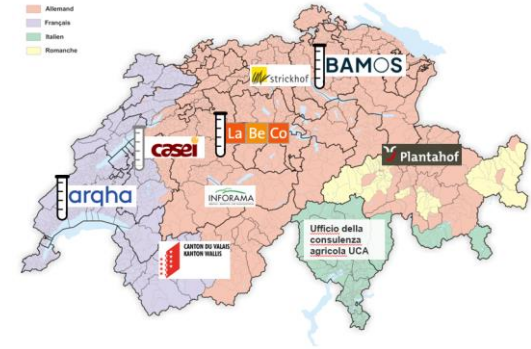




# Advisory organisations

## Roles et activities

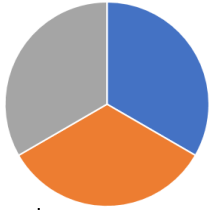
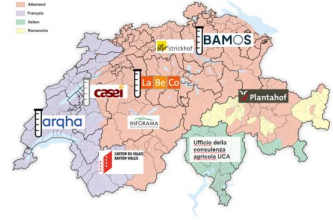
- Maintaining and improving cheese quality
- Regular visits to cheese dairies (2-6x/y)
- On-site analysis (pH and water content in cheese, microscopy of lactic ferments)
- Advice in case of problems
- Advice on setting up a new cheese dairy (type of installation, compliance with hygiene zones, forward processing principle)
- Support in setting up a quality management system
- Transport of samples to the laboratory
- Implementation of a sampling plan





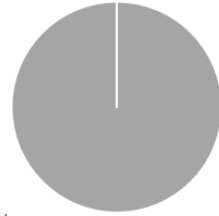
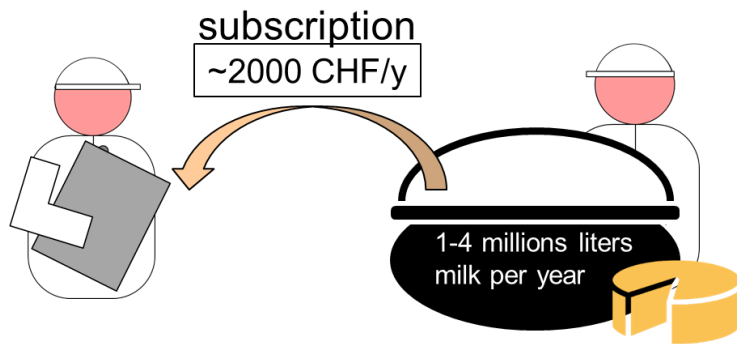
# Advisory organisations

## Funding → *different models*



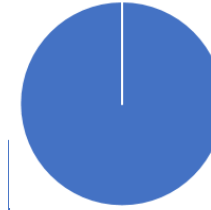
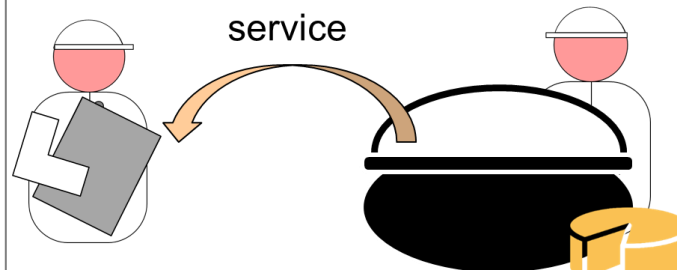
or

- subscriptions from cheese makers
- interprofessional cheese organisations
- cantons (public money)

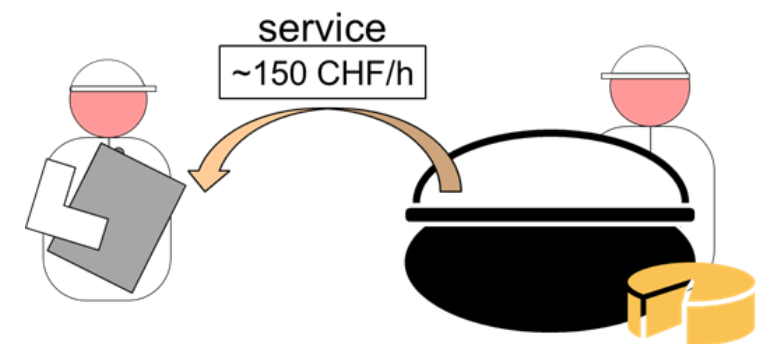


or

- cantons (public money)

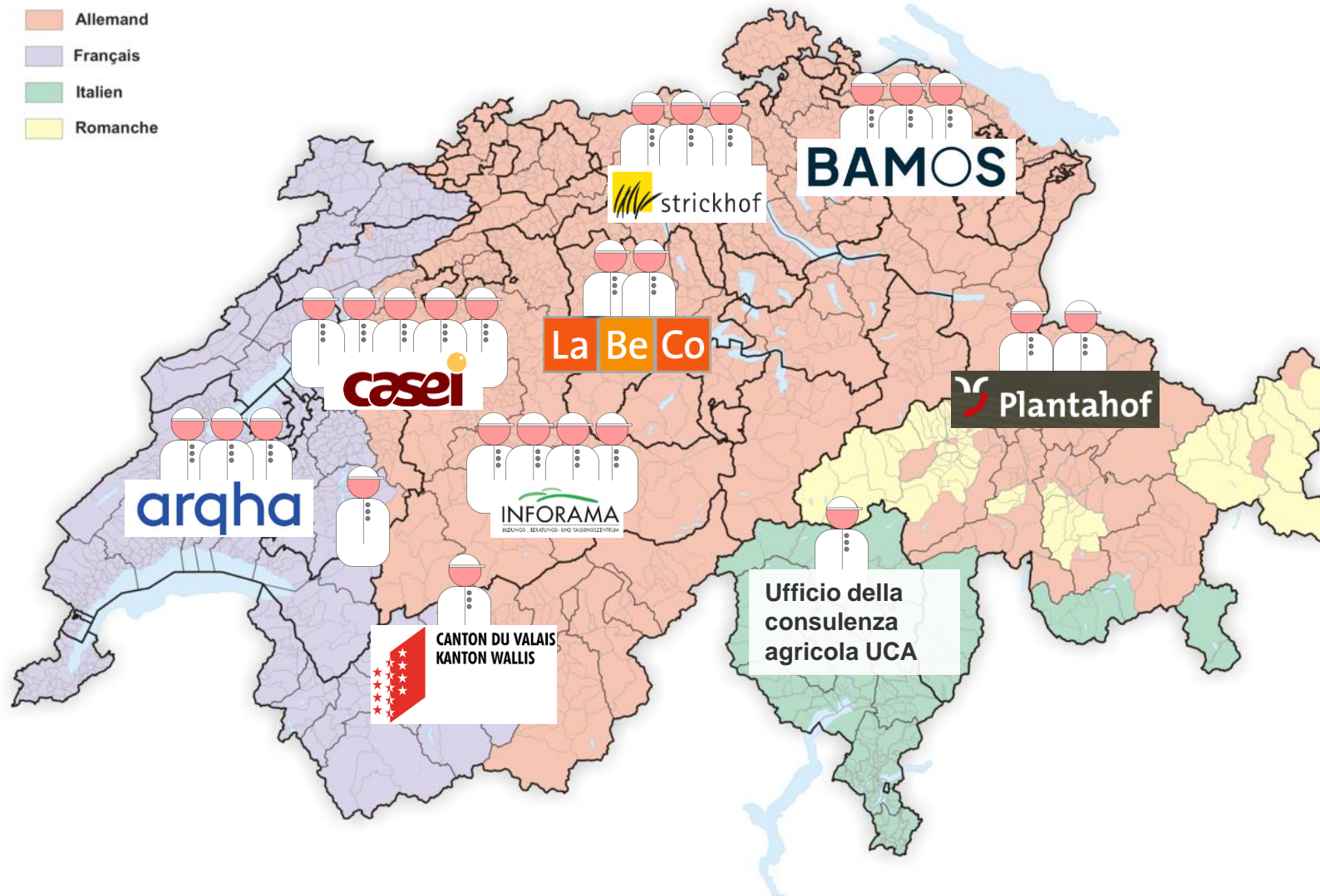


- subscriptions from cheese makers
- *co-financed by income from analyses*





# Cheese and dairy production advisors



25 advisors

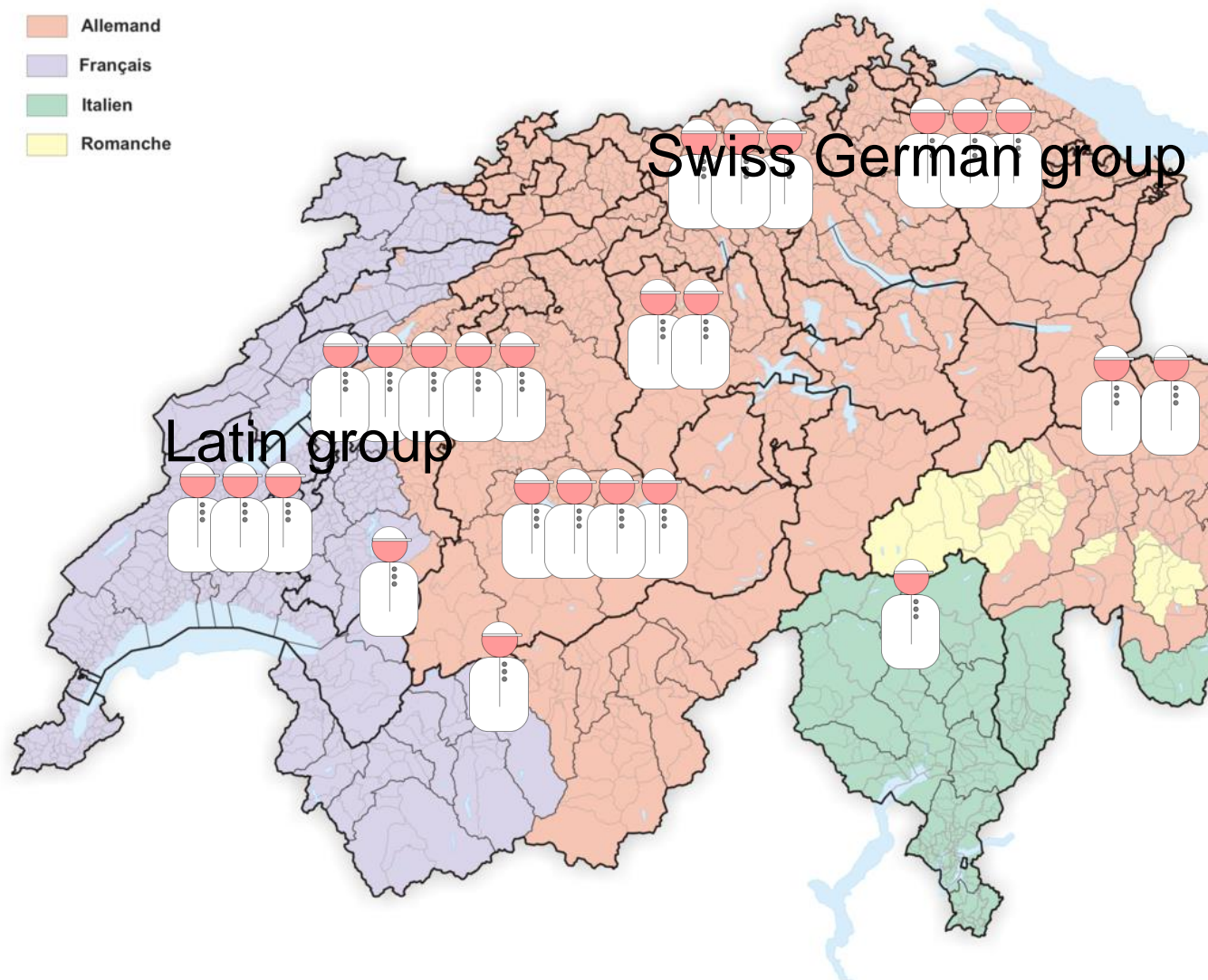
- Cheese dairies
- Alpine cheese dairies
- Farmhouses dairies
- Milk producers





# Continuing education for **advisors**:

Allemand  
Français  
Italien  
Romanche



2–4 per year



**Visit** to a new cheese dairy or a company in the cheese sector *organized by the advisory organisations*

## **Theoretical part:**

- Agroscope research
- Exchange of practical cases *organized by Agroscope*

## **Recreational part:**



# Continuing education for **cheese makers and milkproducers:**

- In collaboration with the advisory organizations
- 2–3 afternoons per year per group (region)
- 66 lessons (2024)



- **Visit** to a new cheese dairy

- **Theoretical part (1h):**

- Agroscope research
- Practical cases

- **Recreational part:**

Informal exchanges between the cheese makers







# Example of current topics

- **Black spots** in cheese caused by teat sealant (bismuth)
- Heterofermentative lactobacilli
- **Phages** in cheese production
- Influence of feeding cows rapeseed meal on the quality of Gruyère DOP
- **Wooden boards** in cheese ripening
- **Listeria** in cheese production
- **Automated milking** in DOP cheese production
- Causes of the **sandy texture** of cheese paste





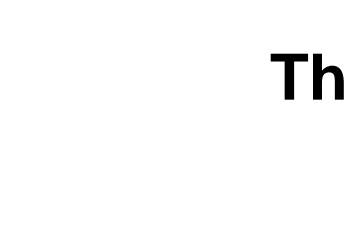


# Questions or comments?

Advisory system for artisan cheese dairies | Liebefeld 12.11.25  
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**Thank you for your attention**

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**Agroscope** good food, healthy environment

[www.agroscope.admin.ch](http://www.agroscope.admin.ch)

