

LOOK!

Bell Food Group Employee Magazine

02 2020

**Through a
challenging time
together**



BELL
FOOD
GROUP





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I'm so proud of you!

Dear Colleagues,

We're not going to forget 2020 in a hurry. The coronavirus pandemic has held the whole world in suspense, and few could even have imagined the impact it would have. No one was able to escape this highly elusive threat. Overnight, our lives revolved around just one thought: how can we possibly get a grip on this virus, and how can I play my part with my behaviour?

The coronavirus pandemic also pulled the Bell Food Group into its maelstrom. Certain business areas such as Food Service, system catering or the to-go business came to an almost complete standstill for weeks due to the lockdown. In other areas, we had to cope with a massive increase in production volumes at short notice. Together with the entire food production industry, we faced the huge challenge of protecting the health of our employees on the one hand, and ensuring food supplies to the population on the other.

Following the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic we immediately formed central and regional crisis units.

We took the situation extremely seriously from the outset.

We took the situation very seriously from the outset. Hygiene and safety concepts were developed and are consistently implemented in all our companies. As the result, we have so far succeeded in creating a safe working environment for our employees and prevented the coronavirus from spreading throughout our companies.

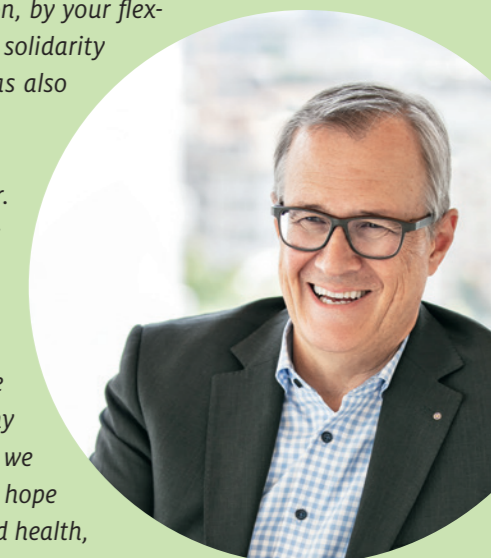
I am well aware that this situation has also been extremely difficult and upsetting for you. Some of our farms were located in so-called hotspots, and were hit

by the full force of the pandemic. Maintaining the highly fluctuating production volumes with all the hygiene and protection measures has demanded a lot from us, and will continue to do so over the coming weeks and months.

So far, we have mastered the unprecedented challenge of the coronavirus well. This is thanks to you, our valued employees. And that is why I would like to express my sincere thanks to you on behalf of the Bell Food Group. I was deeply impressed by your willingness to adapt to this extraordinary situation, by your flexibility and by the mutual solidarity among you. And yes, I was also extremely proud.

The pandemic is not over. The effects will be with us for a long time yet, and will cost us a tremendous amount of strength. We have a broad base, we are efficient, we have a healthy economic foundation, and we have the best employees. I hope that you all remain in good health, and I am convinced that thanks to your commitment we will continue to cope with this extraordinary situation together in the future.

Lorenz Wyss
Chairman of the Board





In the digital world, scammers usually have only one goal: to collect data to harm you or your employer. This makes it all the more important to be attentive and critical with your own data. With LOOK! you will sharpen your IT security awareness and receive practical tips for everyday life.

We've all had them in our mailbox before: the prince's email, which tells of a large fortune waiting for you. All that is required is a small transfer and some information, and you'll have access to the money. We delete e-mails like this without a second thought.

Be attentive, read carefully and question critically.

absolutely necessary to be attentive, to read carefully and to question critically.

Unfortunately, not all fraudsters in the digital world are as obvious as the wealthy prince. It is therefore

Everyone is relevant when it comes to attacks

The intentions of the scammers are usually not as innocent as many phishing emails would have us believe; instead, it is a matter of accessing information and data in order to harm a company or an individual. A few things are usually provided for this, such as an active user account and a correct password, whether from the CEO or the temporary intern.

Once fraudsters have access to the network, they can, for example, distribute malicious software via email or access other data to gain access to central systems. This kind of email sent internally may not be considered harmful by the email security gateway and can then spread freely throughout the company unless it is detected by attentive users.

A security tool is not always perfect.

Although IT Security does everything possible to detect attacks as such early on, it is a cat-and-mouse game. A security tool that is «perfect» today may have to deal with malware tomorrow that did not exist yesterday.

The scales are tipped by the vigilant users, who handle personal data carefully and so contribute to their safety. After all, even the strongest safety lock is of no use if you hide the key under the doormat. • sh

The strongest lock is of no use if the key is under the doormat.

Practical tips for you

In addition to the «10 Rules of IT Security», which were discussed in LOOK! edition 1/20, here are some helpful tips:



Check files, links and websites for malicious software

Do you want to check if a file, link, or website contains malicious software? Go to the website www.virustotal.com and you can have various file formats and URLs checked.



Password protection

- Use upper and lowercase letters, numbers and special characters for your passwords. The longer the password, the higher the security.
- Use a different password for each login.
- Do not share passwords with third parties, but use e.g. the proxy function in Outlook instead.
- Never write down your password in plain text.



Password Ideas

- Create your passwords according to a specific scheme that only you know, e.g. lines of a poem or the title of a fairy tale.
- Use numbers or special characters instead of letters, e.g. 3 instead of E or ! for 1.



Privacy screen

- Do you work a lot on the go? Equip your monitor with a screen.
- Use the Windows key combination + L to quickly lock the screen.



Software updates

- Install software updates e.g. on mobile devices as soon as possible in order to close security gaps.

The Green Mountain» burger now also available in retail outlets

«Zero meat. Genuine Swiss.»

For over a year now, in Swiss gastronomy «The Green Mountain» burger has been regarded as the alternative for all burger fans who want to reduce their meat consumption. Since the end of March this year, the consumer has finally had the opportunity to enjoy the patties. Accompanied by a large set of measures, «The Green Mountain» burger was successfully launched in the retail trade and is enjoying growing popularity.



Whether out of love for animals or to protect the environment, more and more people are giving up meat, either entirely or in part. But does this mean that people have to give up on juicy burgers as well? Werner Ott, «The Green Mountain» project manager says: «No!»

With «The Green Mountain» burger, the in-house start-up manufacturer from Landquart offers a vegan burger based on pea protein, which can easily compete the beef original.

Hilcona already proved its pioneering role in the vegan sector when it introduced the innovation for the gastronomy industry: «The Green Mountain» burger was the first vegetable-based burger developed and produced in Switzerland. Now, the successful concept is being extended to the Swiss retail trade: since the end of March, Coop customers have been able to see for themselves that the new burger looks like meat, can be prepared like meat, and also tastes like meat.

And the patties are an excellent source of protein. They are also rich in dietary fibres and vitamin B₁₂. At the same time, the manufacturer does not use flavour enhancers, soya, genetic engineering, palm oil or added sugar. Furthermore, the burger is also free of cholesterol and lactose. Perfect for a conscious diet.

When selecting the raw materials, the product developers paid attention to ensuring the highest quality and also to short delivery routes, in the interests of sustaina-

bility. They source all ingredients from the EU, with the exception of coconut oil.

«The Green Mountain» burgers can be prepared on the grill as well as in the pan and oven, which is clearly recommended. This is because roasting and grilling develops an appetising brown colour and a delicious roasting flavour. «The Green Mountain» website offers creative recipe ideas: www.thegreenmountain.ch.

Under the slogan «Zero meat. Genuine Swiss.», Hilcona has also launched an extensive marketing campaign with a variety of POS, social media and discount campaigns to launch the new product in the spring.

And the meatless pleasure continues: «The Green Mountain» is already working intensively on new products, and two more will be launched in the autumn. With these products the manufacturer is appealing above all to the

growing target group of flexitarians, i.e. those who like to eat meat but want to limit their consumption. «We have got off to a very good start,» says Werner Ott summarising the situation. «Sales in the first few weeks have even far exceeded our high expectations, and the great deal of consumer feedback shows us that we are on the right track.» • *mr*

Link:
thegreenmountain.ch

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This burger is an excellent source of protein.

Hilcona's product development focuses on a multifunctional workshop

Bundled competences in the new iBox

Since last October, Hilcona has been setting the course for the culinary future in its new Competence Centre in Schaan. iBox is the innovation forge in which six teams from product development and from technology and packaging management work closely together. Their common goal is to create exciting new products for the various product categories.

A low-rise building with a small herb garden in front of the entrance is the new home for around 45 «iPeople». This is where Hilcona has brought together the Competence Centres for Meals, Pasta, Veggie and Preserved Convenience as well as Sandwiches & Pizza. The technology and packaging management and project management of the two new manufactory brands «The Green Mountain» and «La Pasteria» are also involved.

Previously housed in three buildings on the Hilcona site in Schaan, these teams now concentrate their work and expertise in one place: the iBox. The «i» in the name stands for innovation. And in the multifunctional workshop, innovation is not only important in terms of developing new products, but also in the way we work.

In the iBox, Hilcona has created an open, communicative atmosphere with a start-up feeling. The placement of the teams in shared offices with sound-absorbing carpets and glass doors is just as much a part of the transparent concept as the «ixChange-Rooms» for exchanging ideas in small groups or the «iEat» coffee kitchen as a meeting place. To ensure that the cooperation works well, the «iPeople» have established rules for considerate cooperation.

«For us, the new concept has already proven itself,» reports Dirk Sylvester, Head of the Competence Centre for Meals. «The confined space automatically leads to close cooperation, so that we benefit more than ever from the know-how and insights of our colleagues.»

In this inspiring environment, trend-setting products such as «The Green Mountain» burger (see left) can be developed from the idea



The photo of iPeople around Dirk Sylvester (2nd from right) was taken before the coronavirus pandemic.

to market. Authenticity, enjoyment, variety, quality and sustainability are just some of the factors that drive the enjoyment experts.

The coronavirus crisis has shown that the spirit of the iBox is not only felt when everyone is on site: «We have had very good experience with alternative communication methods such as Webex meetings during the time that many employees were working from home,» says Sarah Klein, Head of the Sandwich & Pizza Competence Centre. What iPeople have come up with in close cooperation with the iXperts of iKulinarik will certainly soon be on the plates of customers. • *mr*

Hilcona created a communicative atmosphere for the iBox.



Barbecue like a pro with tips from BBQ expert Philipp Glauser

«There are often only a few degrees between tender and dry»

Even as a child, Philipp Glauser loved to stand at the grill. Today the Head of Culinary Advisors at Hügli is a proven master of his trade: In 2015 he and his team «Chläggi Brutzler» were runners-up at the BBQ World Championship, and in 2018 the Swiss Champions. In LOOK! he reveals how even amateur barbecue enthusiasts can bring a top result to the table.

Due to ongoing contact restrictions, there will probably not be any big barbecue parties this summer. But even if only two families meet up for a casual BBQ evening, this could mean eight to ten people getting together.

And if you plan to serve individual pieces of meat for everyone, you will soon run out of space on the grill. «I recommend grilling a larger piece of meat, such as a pork neck or an entrecôte, to serve everyone»,

Barbecue sausages are grilled from A to Z on the embers.

Philipp Glauser says. «This will easily fit on any grill, and there will even be enough room for a few baked potatoes or vegetables around it.»

When it comes to preparation, the expert recommends the indirect

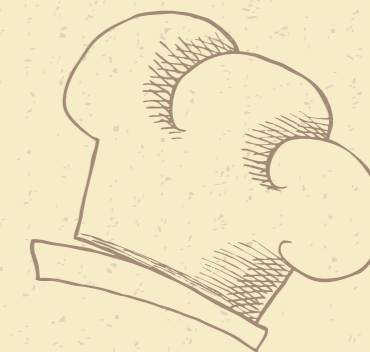
method, provided a suitable grill is available. In this method, the meat is first seared over a high heat on all sides, just above the embers, or, if using a gas barbecue, over the flame, and then cooked until done next to the heat source with the lid closed. This may take longer than direct grilling, especially with large pieces of meat, but the result is a treat to look at, or rather, to taste.

Sole exception: barbecue sausages. They are grilled from A to Z on the embers. The grill should be adjusted so that they do not get too much heat. Otherwise, there will be what probably every «pitmaster» has experienced at least once: The sausage is more than crisp on the outside, but still cold on the inside.

It is hard to tell whether large pieces of meat or steaks are done just by looking at them, much more so than with sausages. So a digital meat thermometer is essential for the



The Head of Culinary Advisors at Hügli, Philipp Glauser, has been infected with the BBQ virus since his childhood.



Any type of meat is cooked through at 72 degrees Celsius.

professional. «Nowadays, many people invest in a high-quality kettle or ceramic grill, so they should not skimp on the thermometer,» advises Philipp Glauser. «Because there is often only a few degrees' difference between a piece of meat that is tender and one that is dry.»

As a general rule of thumb: any type of meat is cooked through at 72 degrees Celsius. Beef and lamb steaks should reach a significantly lower core temperature, depending on the desired degree of cooking. By the same token, pulled pork, which should be so tender that it can be pulled apart with forks, requires a higher temperature. Our Cooking Grade Table gives an overview of the core temperatures for some BBQ highlights.

Finally, the BBQ professional has an unbeatable anti-stress tip up his sleeve: «If guests are late, you can wrap the already cooked meat in aluminium foil and keep it warm at the desired core temperature next to the grill or in the oven. The aluminium foil should remain open a little to allow moisture to escape». This keeps the meat warm and tender, so it doesn't matter if the barbecue evening begins a little later.

Got a taste for it? Then turn the page and use the grill professional's recipe on the next page to prepare the perfect boiled beef from the grill yourself. • mr

The cooking levels

Dish	Core temperature
Beef and lamb steaks – rare	47-50 °C*
Beef and lamb steaks – medium	56-58 °C*
Beef and lamb steaks – well done	starting at 64 °C*
Burgers (beef)	57 °C
Veal cutlets	60 °C
Pulled pork	83 °C
Chicken legs	72 °C

* Temperature directly after roasting, allow to rest afterwards for approx. 5 minutes for perfect tenderness.

Recipe for the barbecue season recommended by Hügli BBQ expert Philipp Glauser:

Boiled fillet of beef with chimichurri sauce and cheesy-bacon potatoes

For 4 people

Ingredients for boiled beef fillet

- 1 cap of rump, roughly 1.5 kg (with fat and well stored)
- 1 sprig rosemary
- 1 sprig thyme
- 3 leaves of sage
- 10 ml olive oil
- 50 g beef rub (e.g. Stein's Best Beef Rub)

Preparation

Finely chop the herbs. Rub the boiled beef well with the rub, then sprinkle the meat with the herbs and add the olive oil. Cover and leave to rest overnight in the refrigerator. The next day, grill the meat in the ceramic or kettle grill under indirect heat at roughly 110°C to a core temperature of 57°C. This takes about one hour.

Ingredients for the chimichurri sauce

- 2 sprig thyme (only the leaves)
- 30 g flat-leaf parsley
- 2 cloves of garlic
- 30 g red peppers
- 30 g yellow peppers
- 1 chilli pepper
- 1 lime
- 50 ml white wine vinegar
- 100 ml olive oil
- Salt and pepper from the grinder

Preparation

Finely chop the herbs, garlic and chilli pepper (without seeds). Cut the peppers into small cubes. Finely grate the zest of the lime and then squeeze the lime. Mix everything together with the remaining ingredients and season to taste with salt and pepper.

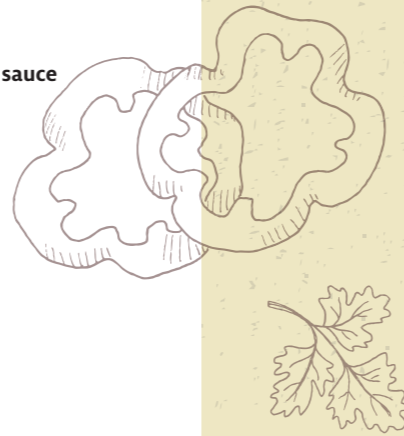
Ingredients for the cheesy-bacon potatoes

- 4 large potatoes (mealy)
- 16 slices of bacon
- 160 g Appenzeller cheese

Preparation

Steam potatoes for 20 minutes or boil them in salted water and let them cool afterwards. Cut off the top and hollow out the potatoes with a small spoon. Dice the cheese and fill it into the potatoes. Finally, wrap the potatoes with bacon and bake in the oven or on the grill at 180°C for 12 to 15 minutes.

Tip: You can use the leftovers from the hollowed out potatoes to prepare a potato salad for the next day, for example.



Variety on the grill with innovations of the Bell Food Group

For a fiery time at home

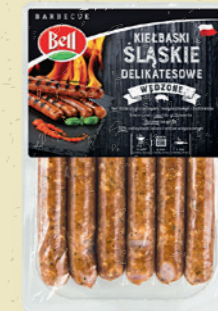


Gathering around the grill in your own outdoor refuge in a small group – this trend has been around for years. In times of the coronavirus, it now has the potential to become the number one culinary pastime. To remove the chance of boredom, the product developers at Bell Food Group have come up with some new ideas again.

Bell France: minty summer delight

Hot chorizo taste and cooling mint – this unusual combination was designed by Bell France for the new «Mini Diots BBQ – Chori-zo Menthe». A summer treat of a special kind, which now extends the popular seasonal range from the Savoy region to four variations.

Thanks to the mini sausages and the wooden skewers enclosed, creative combinations with other ingredients become feasible too.

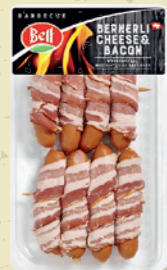


Bell Poland: hearty sausage duo

With the two new products «White Ham Sausage» and «Silesian Sausage», Bell Poland is whetting the already great appetite of people in Poland for grilled sausages. The sausages owe their hearty aroma to garlic, pepper and marjoram. The strong taste of the «Silesian Sausage» is also enhanced by its smoking. Bell does not add monosodium glutamate and phosphates to either variant.

Bell is whetting Polish people's appetite for grilled sausages even more.





Bell Switzerland: leading roles for cheese and bacon

At Bell in Switzerland, cheese and bacon are two hot topics this barbecue season. The new «Cheese & Bacon Beef Burger», for example, proves how well this trendy duo goes together with the best Swiss beef. The combination is also used in the grilled sausages segment: the «Bernerli Cheese & Bacon» sausage skewers are ideal for grilling, while the «Bacon & Cheese Cervelas» are a true classic revisited.

Bell is also continuing to drive the slow-cooking trend.

Poultry lovers can also look forward to the tender chicken breast skewers, «Chicken & Grill Cheese» with creamy cheese, and the stuffed chicken legs «Cheese & Bacon Chicken».

Last but not least, Bell continues to drive the slow-cooking trend too: the «Pork Drumsticks» and «Pulled Pork Mojo» are pre-cooked and only need to be warmed on the grill or in the oven, and then served with the accompanying sauce.

Hilcona: BBQ treats with Pasta and Pesto Tradizionale

Pasta and pesto in the barbecue season – Hilcona reveals some great recipe ideas for them on the on the right. In addition to the new Pasta Tradizionale varieties «Ravioli Ricotta di Bufala e Spinaci» and «Mezzelune 4 Formaggi», which have been available since June 2020, and the seasonal Pesto Tradizionale «Chickpeas-Lime», keen barbecue enthusiasts will certainly come up with other exciting creations. For these new products from the Tradizionale range Hilcona also relies on the familiar Besseresser quality with high-quality ingredients without preservatives, flavour enhancers and artificial flavours. More delicious recipe suggestions for the new products are also available to try out on hilcona.com/recipes.

The new pasta varieties have been available since June.



Hilcona recommendations for Mediterranean barbecue indulgence: Aromatic BBQ Burger with Pesto rosso

Ingredients

- 40 g Pesto rosso (e.g. Hilcona Tradizionale «Pesto rosso»)
- 100–200 g beef patty
- 30 g cucumber
- 40 g tomatoes
- 30 g red onions
- 3-4 salad leaves
- 1 burger roll

Preparation

Cut the cucumber, tomatoes and onions into slices. Grill the beef patty until the desired level of doneness is reached. Cut the roll in half, brown the insides briefly on the grill and then spread with pesto. Then lay the burger on with the remaining ingredients as desired.

Tip: The burger can also be refined with a slice of cheese.



Summer Tortelli Salad

For 2 people

Ingredients

- 1 pack of pasta filled with cheese and ham (e.g. Hilcona Tradizionale «Tortelli Prosciutto Crudo e 4 Formaggi»)
- 50 g red cherry tomatoes
- 50 g yellow cherry tomatoes
- ½ red grapefruit
- ½ green bell pepper
- ½ red bell pepper
- 30 g Pecorino or Parmesan cheese in one piece
- 20 g rocket salad
- Balsamic vinegar
- Olive oil
- Lemon juice
- Salt and pepper
- Basil leaves

Preparation

Boil the filled pasta in salted water until «al dente» or as desired, according to the package instructions, then drain and cool briefly under cold water until lukewarm. Cut the cherry tomatoes in half, and the flesh of the grapefruit and the peppers into cubes. In a bowl, carefully fold in all ingredients (except for the cheese and basil) and season to taste. Finally, freshly grate the cheese over the salad and garnish with basil leaves.

Tip: The recipe can also be refined with Hilcona's pesto «Chickpea Lime» as a topping.



Eisberg salad suggestion for BBQ evenings:

Rocket salad with courgette and tomatoes

For 2 people

Ingredients for the grilled vegetables

- 1 courgette
- 3 Roma tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp fresh basil, chopped
- 1 tsp fresh oregano, chopped
- 1 tsp fresh marjoram, chopped
- Salt

Ingredients for the salad

- 90 g rocket salad (e.g. Betty Bossi)
- 50 g olives (black, green or mixed)
- 50 g Parmesan cheese in one piece

Ingredients for the dressing

- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar di Modena
- 4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- Fleur de Sel
- Freshly ground pepper
- 1 tsp maple syrup

Preparation

Mix basil, oregano and marjoram with the olive oil, season with salt and pepper. Cut the courgette in about 5 mm thick slices, cut the tomatoes in half lengthwise and place both on a plate. Brush the vegetables with the herb oil marinade, leave to rest for roughly 10 minutes.

In the meantime, pour the balsamic vinegar into a bowl for the dressing, season with salt and pepper and mix vigorously until the salt has dissolved. Add the oil and maple syrup and stir well again. Arrange the rocket salad on two plates. Now grill the vegetables and put them onto the rocket salad. Garnish with the olives and freshly flaked Parmesan and add the dressing.

Eisberg: barbecue awareness with organic products

Eisberg has new answers to the growing demand for organic food in Poland and Switzerland. Since the beginning of May, Polish customers have been able to choose from five new organic salad varieties. These include the mono-varieties of rocket, lamb's lettuce and baby spinach as well as the «California Mix» and «Toscana Mix» blends. The new «NaturaPlan Mais Rugeli» are also certified with an organic label.

Pasteurised and conveniently portioned, they complement Eisberg's existing Swiss barbecue range, which consists of «Gemüse Spiessli» and stuffed mushrooms.

«Mais Rugeli» with organic certification adds to the barbecue range of Eisberg.



Hügli: flavour boost with Stein's Best

Extra taste is added to the grilled food with the new products of the Stein's Best brand. House sauce, sour cream sauce and burger sauce have added three varied options to the existing Table Top range for the catering industry since March. The Rub range has also been expanded: With the new «Fish & Seafood Rub», tuna or halibut steaks and seafood skewers can be dry seasoned or marinated before grilling. • mr



On the trail of the spice classics

Aromatic envoys from around the world

Neither amateur chefs nor food manufacturers can do without salt, pepper, nutmeg and the rest of the flavoursome family. But what do you do if you want to spice things up a little? And why are cabbage dishes often accompanied by cloves? We've been doing some snooping around and have come up with some spicy facts.



Salt

There's no getting away from salt. Yet strictly speaking, it is not a spice but a condiment. The different kinds such as rock salt, sea salt or evaporated salt differ in their occurrence and mining methods. But in fact, salt is salt, or rather – chemically expressed – sodium chloride. Rock salt is the same as sea salt, which was deposited in the ground millions of years ago. Mineral components give some salts a special aroma or colour. This applies for example to the so-called pink Himalayan salt, which actually comes from Pakistan, or Fleur de Sel, which is very popular with chefs for its moist, soft grainy structure among other things.



Nutmeg

Finely grated nutmeg lends a slightly nutty and fiery note to mashed potatoes and meat dishes, but also to some desserts. Nutmeg is the fruit kernel of the nutmeg tree, which grows mainly in Indonesia and on the Caribbean island of Grenada. This intensive spice should be added carefully, because even small amounts can have a great effect.



Caraway seeds (cumin)

With its distinctive pungent-sweet aroma, caraway is one of the oldest spices in Europe. The elongated grains are the dried seeds of the plant bearing the same name. They are used either whole or ground in the preparation of various types of cabbage, but also in braised dishes or bread.



Ground paprika

Ground paprika is produced from ground paprikas. Depending on whether and what quantity of seeds and white pith containing capsaicin are used will result in different degrees of spiciness. Hungarian cuisine, which uses a lot of ground paprika, for example, a distinction is made with decreasing pungency between «rose pepper», «semi-sweet», «noble sweet», «delicate» and «strong». Ground paprika is also a traditional spice in Spain and Portugal.



Cloves

Cloves are the dried flower buds of the clove tree. Hailing originally from the Moluccas (also Maluku or Spice Islands), the spice has been used in Europe since the early Middle Ages and is not only popular for its woody, slightly pungent taste: users also take advantage of its proven health benefits. So it is not surprising that cloves are often added to hard-to-digest foods such as red cabbage or sauerkraut.

Pepper

We mentioned spicing things up at the beginning. Some places to start could be Madagascar, Indonesia, India or Malaysia. That is where the pepper plant grows, whose fruits are the peppercorns that can always be relied on to spice things up. The colour of the peppercorn is determined by the time it is harvested and how it is processed. Unripe, unpeeled whole berries are dried for black pepper. The unripe fruits, on the other hand, remain green if they are pickled in vinegar or brine or freeze-dried. The fully ripe unpeeled corns are red. White pepper is produced when the ripe red berries are peeled. The best pepper taste is obtained when it is freshly ground in a mill. Fresh green pepper is also often used as a whole corn in soups or sauces, for example.



Whether pepper is black, white, green or red mainly depends on the time of harvest.

Blended spices

Many dishes get their typical taste from mixing a whole range of spices. The recipes for this are often a well-kept secret of their creators. One of the most famous representatives is curry powder, which was invented in the 19th century in Great Britain to imitate the special aroma of Indian dishes. An important ingredient is turmeric, which gives curry its characteristic yellow colour. Other standard ingredients include coriander, cumin and ginger.

Ras el-Hanout, for example, is indispensable in North African cuisine. The blend, which can consist of up to 30 individual spices, combines hot, sweet and bitter flavours. A classic mix from Central Europe should also be mentioned, despite the summer season: gingerbread spice, whose fragrance alone creates a festive atmosphere. • *mr*

We people make the difference

Through a challenging time together

The corona pandemic has kept the whole world in suspense and presented us all with new challenges. The Bell Food Group has also had to deal with this unknown situation. Various employees from the whole group share how they dealt with the situation.



Kathrin Faerber
Head of Process Engineering (TOP BPM)
at Bell in Zell (CH)

«I usually support focus projects as part of TOP BPM, expand 5S, further develop the session structure and support process optimization. My everyday life was changed a lot by Corona: With the increased production volumes, the priorities were clearly to master day-to-day production and to maintain the TOP BPM standard. Therefore, the ongoing projects had to be postponed.

So I looked for new areas of work where I could support the company, for example in the implementation of the corona measures. I was able to work on other projects from home. I was also happy with my goal planning; this made it easy for me to re-coordinate projects that now had to wait. In the meantime, the situation has calmed down somewhat and I can resume my normal activities.»



Krzysztof Więclaw
Operations Manager at Bell
in Niepołomice (PL)

«When the corona virus appeared in Poland, I had to adapt the management of the company to the new reality. The normal processes in the company were threatened almost overnight. We set up a crisis team and worked together to determine where action was needed to comply with the new regulations and restrictions. Many measures focused on protecting employees and minimizing the risk of spread.

This crisis has confirmed to me again that my colleagues are not only successful, but that their commitment to finding optimal solutions is invaluable. I owe it to my team that we will successfully master this difficult time without giving up and always with the solution in mind.»

The column «We employees make the difference» will be now in every issue of LOOK! This is where employees have the opportunity to take a position on a specific topic. Would you like to have your say in this section? Then contact us at look@bellfoodgroup.com!



Stefan Potgeter
Head of Central Services
at Bell in Seevetal (DE)

«The current situation is an enormous challenge for all of us. After the serious changes regarding the loss of the sausage and convenience factories and the associated reorganization of many departments, this was a test for the entire organization.

Despite the spatial separation with working from home, we are making use of the various technical tools. It turns out that video conferences in particular were being held in a very disciplined manner, and yet everyone still had fun at work. Nevertheless, we very much miss the personal contact with our colleagues. At the beginning, we also had to get used to the changing conditions in the supply of goods, and to adjust the quantities or to cope with the sometimes extremely fluctuating orders. In close coordination with the production department and the other departments, we mastered the challenge together and have always been able to deliver.

I am particularly proud that, as well as maintaining the day-to-day business, we are also continuing to pursue an extraordinary number of projects, for example in the context of TOP BPM, in product development, in technology, in energy management or in construction projects. This shows how stringently everyone is pursuing the same goal and still bringing in their personal touch!»

This was an acid test for the entire organization.

Sadat Shaqiri
Chairman of the Works Council
at Hubers Landhendl in Pfaffstaett (AT)

«The past few months have been a challenge for everyone, both privately and professionally. As a works council member and department head in the cutting department, I regularly ensure that the protective measures are observed. We take our breaks in turns to keep the number of people in the canteen as low as possible.

It is a challenge for the production that production lines must always be staffed. It is therefore extremely important to adhere to the break times. We generally start the first shift one hour earlier in order to avoid any interpersonal contact between the two production shifts. So we all get up one hour earlier – and at 2 pm there is an hour of production downtime.

For some time now, we have all been tested for COVID-19 after vacations and in case of illness to prevent it from being brought into the company. For me as a works council member and employee, it is important that we all help together to fight this virus. We can make it happen. Together.»



From left to right: **Ambre Savoy, Nicolas Perret, Modi Ide, Fabrice Perignon, Frédérica Gueissaz** from Sylvain & CO in Essert-sous-Champvent

«The corona virus has no chance against us! Thanks to the protective measures, we were able to remain calm during the crisis. Our employer has done everything possible to protect us from this pandemic. Our daily work has not changed, but the atmosphere has changed due to social distancing. We all respect the new rules, wear masks and regularly sanitize our hands. The sensitive areas are all regularly disinfected.»



Christine Dehnert
Head of the canteen at Süddeutsche Truthahn AG
in Ampfing (DE)

So we had the opportunity to do some painting ourselves and to beautify the canteen.

«The past few months have been a challenging time. In March, our canteen was immediately closed as a protective measure. However, we knew how to make good use of the «newly gained» time. When there was a sharp increase in the number of orders over the following days, two employees from my team helped out, for example in the packaging and in the cardboard warehouse, in order to be able to cope better with the increased volume. We took care of the regular disinfection of the door handles and the desks in administration and the tables in the communal areas.

When everyone in the company was tested for Corona as a protective measure, the tests took place in the canteen – I was able to support the authorities with the internal organization. We were also able to implement projects for which we had previously not been able to find the time: We restructured the changing rooms and cleaned them from top to bottom. It continued in the canteen. We also cleaned it from top to bottom and treated it to a new coat of paint. We would normally have hired an external painter for this, but this gave us the opportunity to paint it ourselves and to beautify the canteen.

In the interim we didn't know whether the canteen would open again in the near future and what that would mean for our workplace. But with the new hygiene concept, which I developed with the support of our quality management, we were able to reopen the canteen in July and welcome our colleagues back!»



Sinuhe Hofstetter
Plant manager at the Hilcona Taste Factory
in Landquart (CH)

The employees had questions that are normally answered by the family doctor rather than the plant manager.

«We had an invisible enemy, which became more and more visible from China via Italy to Ticino and changed the employees at the plant. The employees had questions that are usually answered by the family doctor rather than the plant manager. From 'It's all exaggerated' to 'I'm afraid that I or my relatives could die from it', the range of daily opinions varied widely.

Thanks to the daily comparison with sales and flexible improvisation of the entire value chain, we at Team Hilcona have been able to work out a goal-oriented solution together with the customers. With the great commitment of the Hilcona Taste Factory employees, who have adapted to the new general conditions on a daily basis, the additional challenges were mastered extremely well.

Thanks to the already high applicable hygiene guidelines in the food industry and the jointly developed additional measures, a high level of safety could be radiated and created. Many individual discussions and the daily presence of the superiors reduced the fear and helped to make the invisible opponent more visible.»



Roland Vrecko
TK Production Manager
at Bell in Oensingen (CH)

«In the frozen food department, we felt the lockdown very clearly. We had to switch off some of the lines on which, for example, catering goods are produced. With other lines, an enormous additional quantity was added overnight. As a consequence we had to work on Saturdays, for example. The greatest increase in demand was for minced meat products. It was clear to see that people were cooking more at home themselves – and it's very easy with minced meat.

At first, staff were somewhat unsure about how to deal with the situation. Risk groups were another factor. At the beginning it was not easy to guarantee the 2 meter distance rule. Staff handled the situation very well after initial difficulties and were also very flexible.»

Reinhard Gassner
Operations manager Eisberg
in Marchtrenk (AT)

«Of course, the effects of the corona pandemic are also being felt in Austria, and thus also at our Marchtrenk site. Thanks to the immediate introduction of all the necessary measures and additional safety precautions, we were able to react very quickly to this crisis.

We are very pleased not to have a single confirmed case of corona at our site to date, and would like to thank everyone once again for their exemplary compliance with all measures and safety precautions taken.»





Diana Riedel
District Manager Food Service Field Service
at Hügli in Radolfzell (DE)

«With the beginning of the corona period, a completely new and unusual situation emerged for all of us. For me and my colleagues it was a new challenge to no longer drive to our customers and support them by phone. Through intensive preparation of customer conversations by telephone we were able to maintain customer contact very well, although nothing can replace an on-site visit.

Furthermore, we were able to use the time well to work on administrative matters, for example to update customer data or to optimize tour planning in order to come back well prepared after the crisis. In addition, we carried out weekly telcos on a wide variety of topics, such as an Excel refresh. Everyone could benefit from these training courses for the time after lockdown. Due to the relaxations, I and my customers are very happy again that we are able to be back on site.»

Gabriela Boldeanu
Quality Manager at Eisberg
in Pantelimon (RO)

«We have not seen any major changes; after all, we have been working with strict hygiene regulations for a long time. Masks, disposable gloves, special equipment are part of everyday life for us. Of course, we have increased the number of checks at certain points.

As far as the common areas, corridors and canteen are concerned, we have increased the number of times we clean items that we used to clean only once a day. We also disinfect door handles, switches, desks, common rooms, microwave and so on.

For a food manufacturer like Eisberg, product safety is essential. Procedures that are now also known to the public are only a small part of the 'normality' during this pandemic. Three factors prove to us that what we are doing is right: our customers' trust, consumer feedback and audits.»



William Pandolfi
Shift manager at Ali-Big
in Brivio (IT)



«Production management and compliance with social distancing are working very well today. It is a pity that we cannot enjoy the work shoulder to shoulder as before, or have lunch together in a team. So far, these measures have been necessary – and they have worked: So far the company hasn't yet had a single case.

When Lombardy, where our company is located, was declared a risk region, we were very much afraid of this unknown virus and its effects. The media provided contradictory information. We immediately started wearing masks, kept our distance and intensified the cleaning in the company with the help of an external company – and we were able to maintain production all the time.»



Roland Kalberer
Head of Culinary Arts at Hilcona
in Schaan (FL)

«In the kitchen, we were unaccustomed to the numerous restrictions in the workplace, although hygiene has always been part of our everyday life. Especially when cooking and tasting, the obligation to wear a mask has created some strange situations. One thing is clear: you were more conscious, sensitive and focused on the road.

Basically, the Swiss government has done a lot well. This also applies to Hilcona and the pandemic management team. Important decisions were made in good time and communicated well. However, I am currently struggling with the laissez-faire feeling that prevails in large parts of society. In spite of all the economic challenges, I hope that the few positive aspects of this time will remain and have a lasting effect.»



Patrik Keller
Head of PPS / Production Service and
Assistant Plant Manager
at Hügli in Steinach (CH)

«For me, the corona crisis was and still is an extraordinary, uncertain, but also an interesting time that has required and will continue to require a great deal of organizational skill and flexibility, both professionally and privately. Professionally, I was confronted with challenges in a special way.

It became even more important to look at the entire value chain in order to understand and implement customer needs (internally and externally). I also learned a lot of new things, such as using new tools so we could still achieve the goals we had set and to be able to successfully complete projects. I have had positive experiences with Webex. However, for me the interpersonal aspect is very important, and that was somewhat lost in the webcalls and conferences.

For me in my position, working from home is not a holistic solution, but for certain tasks it certainly makes sense, as long as the furnishings and environment at home meet the necessary requirements. Since my social obligations (for example, club activities) also ceased during this time, I was able to fully enjoy my free time in the evenings and on weekends with my family or use it for my further training and leisure sports.»



Jaroslaw Korman
Sales Manager
at Eisberg in Legnica (PL)

«A meeting with the biggest catering customer in Poland had been planned for the last week before the outbreak of the corona crisis. Due to the ban on travel and contact, the meeting has not yet taken place. This shows how badly the catering industry in Poland was hit by the crisis. Sales in the gastronomy sector are also slow to recover. For example, joint projects with Hügli Poland had to be put on hold for the time being.

The corona crisis is also affecting our operations: In production, we introduced an hour's break between shifts to avoid contact between employees. Daily temperature measurements, hand sanitization and wearing masks in all areas prolongs and slows down the workflow – and influences productivity. Nor is it that easy for our colleagues in administration.

Weeks of working from home with the whole family around you, including small children, makes it difficult to stay focused. Without face-to-face contact, some projects takes longer to move forward. The most important thing, however, is that by following all these measures, all our employees have remained healthy. We all are aware of the consequences of possible illnesses and quarantine in the result, which is already weakened because of the virus. This is the best motivation to continue to implement all the necessary measures so we all remain healthy and survive the crisis.»

Anniversaries

LOOK! congratulates colleagues celebrating anniversaries between June and August 2020

Bell Switzerland

20 Years of Service

Uthayakumar Vallipuram, June 15, Bell Schweiz AG, Oensingen
Victor Rinus Solomon, June 30, Bell Schweiz AG, Zell
Walter Schwegler, July 1, Bell Schweiz AG, Zell
Shukrije Kuqi, July 3, Bell Schweiz AG, Zell
Hysen Mustafa, July 4, Bell Schweiz AG, Zell
Emebet Tesfaye, July 10, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Manoranjitha Tharmagulasingham, July 10, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Balasingam Muthuthamby, July 17 Bell Schweiz AG, Zell
Paramathas Paramanandan, July 17, Bell Schweiz AG, Zell
Thangavel Sinnathurai, July 17, Bell Schweiz AG, Zell
Belkisa Memic-Smirko, August 14, Bell Schweiz AG, Oensingen
Somboon Müller, August 14, Bell Schweiz AG, Oensingen
Ananthar Markandu, August 21, Geiser AG, Schlieren

25 Years of Service

Frédéric Rivoire, June 1, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Gilles Schmitt, June 1, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Stefanie Stange, June 1, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Boban Markovic, June 6, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Pascal Studer, June 9, Bell Schweiz AG, Cheseaux
Martial Vogt, June 12, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Christina Albisser, June 15, Bell Schweiz AG, Zell
Urs Wälti, July 1, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Thomas Böhler, July 10, Geiser AG, Schlieren
André Kurt, July 10, Bell Schweiz AG, Oensingen
Robert Frei, July 17, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Jean-Pierre Gschwind, July 27, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Shahe Ramaj-Avdyli, July 31, Bell Schweiz AG, Oensingen
Joseph Kuttler, August 14, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Flavien Guerin, August 28, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Dany Sutterlin, August 28, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel

30 Years of Service

Sylvie Martin-Bohès, June 1, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
David Sinniger, June 1, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Ljubisa Kerculjevic, June 11, Bell Schweiz AG, Oensingen
Rolf Grogg, July 1, Bell Schweiz AG, Oensingen
Ferdinand Müller, July 1, Geiser AG, Schlieren
Thierry Parmentier, July 1, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Renee Moyses, August 1, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Vincent Muller, August 1, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Pierre Schertzinger, August 1, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Gilbert Ott, August 6, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Michel Schelcher, August 27, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel

35 Years of Service

Gilbert Pahud, July 1, Bell Schweiz AG, Cheseaux
Hansruedi Rüfenacht, August 1, Bell Schweiz AG, Oensingen

40 Years of Service

Nicole Schappler, June 2, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Gérard Baud, June 5, Bell Schweiz AG, Cheseaux
Rolf Rothenbühler, June 17, Bell Schweiz AG, Oensingen
Josef Birrer, August 4, Bell Schweiz AG, Zell

Retirements

Kurt Dubach, June 30, Bell Schweiz AG, Zell
Eliane Stocker, July 31, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Willi Eggenberger, August 31, Bell Schweiz AG, Gossau

Early Retirements

Simon Ketterlin, June 30, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
René Linder, June 30, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Francis Schmitt, June 30, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Myriam Gadola, July 31, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Marc Juncker, July 31, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Annemarie Lüscher, August 31, Bell Schweiz AG, Zell

Deceased

Vincent Bartholomé, February 23, Bell Schweiz AG, Basel
Sivasamboo Yoganathan, April 30, Bell Schweiz AG, Zell
Mladen Haban, June 17, Geiser AG, Schlieren

Bell International

20 Years of Service

Natalie Obermann, June 2, Bell Deutschland GmbH & Co. KG, Harkebrügge
Gerhard Aicher, June 19, Hubers Landhendl GmbH, Pfaffstätt
Zila Smajic, June 26, Hubers Landhendl GmbH, Pfaffstätt
Nihad Hasanovic, June 28, Frisch Express GmbH, Pfaffstätt
Günther Petermaier, August 16, Frisch Express GmbH, Pfaffstätt
Olga Becker, August 23, Bell Deutschland GmbH & Co. KG, Harkebrügge

25 Years of Service

Claudia Kobler, July 24, Hubers Landhendl GmbH, Pfaffstätt

30 Years of Service

Bernhard Olliges, July 16, Bell Deutschland GmbH & Co. KG, Edewecht
Frank von Ohlen, August 1, Bell Deutschland GmbH & Co. KG, Edewecht

Retirements

Anna Dziadoń, July 20, Bell Polska, Niepołomice
Sergej Neuwirt, July 31, Süddeutsche Truthahn AG, Ampfing

Convenience

20 Years of Service

František Truchlý, February 1, Hügli Food s. r. o., Zásmyky
Anabela Da Conceicao Rodrigues da Silva April 1, Eisberg AG, Dällikon (*Amendment*)
Yousif Esmaeil El-Fatih, April 1, Eisberg AG, Dällikon (*Amendment*)
Makfire Sadikaj, April 1, Eisberg AG, Dällikon (*Amendment*)
Nirmaladevy Yejamogan, May 17, Eisberg AG, Dällikon (*Amendment*)
Valerij Vilgauk, June 13, Hügli, Radolfzell
Erich Rosa, June 19, HFC GmbH, Bad Wünnenberg
Mohan Kandiah, June 26, Eisberg AG, Dällikon
Werner Ritter, July 1, Hilcona AG, Schaan
Besim Ahmeti, July 1, Hilcona Gourmet S.A., Orbe
Samir Husejinovic, July 1, Hilcona Gourmet S.A., Orbe
Muharrem Kutbay, July 1, Eisberg AG, Dällikon
Karlheinz Senn, July 3, Hügli, Radolfzell
Sabine Vogel, July 3, Hügli Austria, Hard
Nijazi Murseli, July 3, Eisberg AG, Dänikon
Muhunthan Thanabalasingham, July 17, Eisberg AG, Dällikon
Sterzer Alexander, August 14, HFC GmbH, Bad Wünnenberg
Sergio D'Inca, August 15, Eisberg AG, Dällikon
Rosalía Marchetta, August 25, Hügli, Radolfzell
Angela Migliaccio, August 28, Hügli, Radolfzell
Rakija Durmisi, August 31, Eisberg AG, Villigen

25 Years of Service

Roman Müller, May 1, Eisberg AG, Dällikon (*Amendment*)
Daniela Burri, June 1, Hilcona AG, Schaan
Thomas Kuehnis, June 1, Hilcona AG, Schaan
Mustafa Mermer, June 6, Eisberg AG, Dällikon
Peter Slanschek, June 15, Hilcona AG, Schaan
Isaltina Maria Mateus Rebelo Figueira, June 15, Eisberg AG, Dällikon
Fernando Belo Maia, July 1, Hilcona AG, Schaan
Jörg Brucker, July 3, Hügli, Radolfzell
Nerime Alili, July 3, Eisberg AG, Dänikon
Selim Sadikaj, July 14, Eisberg AG, Dänikon
Maria De Nova e Sousa, July 15, Hilcona AG, Schaan
Therese Assala, July 17, Eisberg AG, Dällikon
Barbara Benko, July 24, Hilcona AG, Schaan
Waldemar Keilbach, July 24, Hügli, Radolfzell
Niels Rainer Frank, August 1, Hügli, Radolfzell
Imke Glocker, August 1, Hügli, Radolfzell
Jürgen Werkle, August 1, Hügli, Radolfzell
Manuela Suter, August 7, Eisberg AG, Dällikon
Heinz Wegmann, August 12, Hilcona AG, Schaan
Amélia Da Conceicao Faria Oliveira, August 17, Eisberg AG, Dällikon

You will find current job offers under:
bellfoodgroup.com/karriere

30 Years of Service

- Manuel Rego Oliveira**, March 1, Eisberg AG, Dällikon (Amendment)
- Ana Rita Fernandes Lopes**, May 1, Eisberg AG, Dällikon (Amendment)
- Ulrike Wiedenbauer**, May 2, Hügli Austria, Hard
- Sinnarasa Kathirgamu**, May 28, Eisberg AG, Dällikon (Amendment)
- Karin Dupper**, June 1, Hügli, Radolfzell
- Raimund Marchler**, June 1, Hilcona AG, Schaan
- Renato Marni**, June 1, Hügli Switzerland, Steinach
- Rasathurai Murugupillai**, June 1, Eisberg AG, Dällikon
- Mirjana Grbavac**, June 5, Hügli, Radolfzell
- Rolf Gruber**, June 18, Hügli, Radolfzell
- Holger Kleinschmidt**, July 1, Hügli, Radolfzell
- Jose Enrique Andrade Gider**, July 1, Hilcona AG, Schaan
- Vicky Booth**, July 30, Hügli UK, Redditch
- Angelika Reck**, July 30, Hügli, Radolfzell
- Matthias Martin**, August 1, Hügli, Radolfzell
- Guenter Kopitsch**, August 13, Hilcona AG, Schaan

40 Years of Service

- José De Matos Veiga**, March 6, Eisberg AG, Dällikon (Amendment)
- Isabel Maria Da Silva Luz Guerreiro**, April 11, Eisberg AG, Dällikon (Amendment)

Retirements

- Ternovski Alexander**, February 29, HFC GmbH, Bad Wünnenberg (Amendment)
- Durmus Kömürçü**, March 31, Eisberg AG, Dällikon (Amendment)
- Max Bossard**, June 30, Eisberg AG, Dällikon
- Josef Köchl**, June 30, Hubers Landhendl GmbH, Pfaffstätt
- Jürgen Lindner**, June 30, Hügli, Radolfzell
- Harek Mahfoud**, June 30, Hilcona Gourmet SA, Orbe
- Christian Schlegel**, June 30, Hilcona AG, Schaan
- Marianne Schmid**, June 30, Hügli, Radolfzell
- Niels-Rainer Frank**, July 31, Hügli, Radolfzell
- Jürg Schwengeler**, July 31, Hilcona AG, Schaan
- Dieter Weller**, July 31, Hügli, Radolfzell

Retirements

- Manuel Jorge De Matos Fernandes**, March 31, Hügli, Steinach (Amendment)
- Bernhard Erni**, March 31, Hügli, Steinach (Amendment)
- Richard Schmid**, June 30, Hilcona AG, Schaan



PICTURE SEARCH
Win a BBQ course

Competition question

Can you tell us what page of this issue this detail has been taken from?



Prizes

- 1 BBQ/cookery course of your choice for two people worth EUR 400.
- 10 shopping vouchers worth EUR 30 to use at a local supermarket.

How to enter

Please send the solution along with your name, your (former) place of work and the name of your employer to look@bellfoodgroup.com.

Closing date: 18 September 2020.

The winners will be chosen from among the entries with the correct solution. Multiple answers will not be included. Winners will be informed directly. No correspondence will be entered into or information provided by telephone.

Until now, our Swiss colleagues have received a voucher booklet with every issue of LOOK! that we obtained directly from the parent company Coop. Due to changes in Coop's production times, we will not be able to include this booklet with future issues.

We took the discontinuation of the voucher booklet as an opportunity for a new solution that would benefit staff in the entire group, regardless of their country or division. So, from now on, every issue of LOOK! will include a competition for all LOOK! readers.

Hilcona Agrar performs new feats every day

Total commitment for the best vegetables

It's not only at harvest-time that the Hilcona Agrar team has its hands full. As well as looking after the 500 farmers who provide the vegetables for Hilcona's canning production, it performs many other tasks ranging from seed procurement to the coordination of harvest yields and times and to field trials.

Hilcona Agrar offers farmers a comprehensive level of protection.

Stefan Däster and Ueli Giger travel a total of around 70,000 kilometres per year by car. And not on routes across Europe, but exclusively in the Swiss Mittelland and the Rhine Valley – partly on dirt tracks. There, the two cultivation consultants look after around 500 farmers who grow peas, beans, baby carrots and other vegetables for processing by Hilcona Agrar under cultivation contracts.

Cultivation consultants Stefan Däster (left) and Ueli Giger (right) regularly check the ripeness of the vegetables that are grown.



And this support is comprehensive. From surveying the fields and cultivation planning to sowing the seeds and harvesting with its own high-tech machines, Hilcona Agrar supports the farmers – who also grow potatoes and spinach for their Liechtenstein customers – every step of the way. «Our work requires smart coordination», explains Andreas Messerli, Chairman of Hilcona Agrar. «After all, we can't have everything ripening at the same time because each day's harvest needs to be processed fresh from the field that day».

And so the six-member team of the agricultural sector performs logistical feats every day, especially at harvest-time. Because, as is always the case with natural products, nothing can be planned too far in advance.

The timing of the harvest is controlled with area-by-area sowing. How well and quickly the plants then develop depends not least on the weather. «This year, we had wet and not too warm weather in May and June which is ideal for growing peas, beans and carrots», explains Andreas Messerli. «That was a great stroke of luck after two years with distinctly hot spells». Temperatures around 30 degrees Celsius, for instance, are simply stressful for peas. They ripen faster, turn yellow and hard, and can become acidic if the period between harvesting



The pea harvester quickly harvests these delicate legumes.

From the field to the can in just a few hours

When a field is ready to be harvested, the pea harvester starts making its tracks around eight o'clock in the evening. That's because the little green beads cope better with cooler night temperatures than the heat of the day.

The modern machine picks the plants and pushes the pods open in just one step, so that only the peas end up in the hopper.

Once a container is filled, the truck driver loads it and takes his delicate cargo directly to Hilcona. There, the peas are first washed and sorted by size.

Then there is a thorough check, during which everything that should not end up on the customer's plate is removed in several runs.

After that the vegetables head for the cans, either on their own or together with baby carrots. It's only a few hours from harvesting to preservation.



and processing is too long. Poor conditions in times of climate change. This is why Hilcona Agrar has also set itself the task of testing new varieties for their heat tolerance, for instance. «We regularly try out new seeds and observe how the variety behaves over several years», reports Andreas Messerli.

After all, the standards for peas are high. Fine and very fine peas are much in demand. That is why when the peas are delivered, the level of tenderness is measured with what is known as a «Tenderometer». This allows the perfect harvest-time to be determined for the following fields.

Fine and extra fine peas in particular are much in demand.



At harvest-time, Andreas Messerli is out in the fields himself every week.

In conversation with Andreas Messerli

You've been the Chairman of Hilcona Agrar since 2018. Did you have any connections to the world of agriculture before that? I worked on farms while I was still at school. Later on, I decided to study agriculture. Two years ago, after stints in marketing and sales in the consumer goods industry, I was lucky enough to take over the management of Hilcona Agrar from my predecessor, who was retiring after 38 years. A task that I enjoy tremendously because I am able to act as a link between farmers and processors.

Do you ever go into the fields yourself? Occasionally? At harvest-time, I am in the field every week to check, for instance, that the quality of the vegetables is right, and to see what yields can be expected for the next ten days. From time

to time, I might have to go out on the spur of the moment. Perhaps if there has been a heavy hailstorm and we need to assess the damage and the shortages.

You are also active in various agricultural associations as the representative of Hilcona Agrar. What topics are the members currently dealing with? I represent Hilcona's interests in various trade associations and commissions. One much-discussed issue, for instance, is climate change and how we can deal with it. And the ever-increasing restrictions on plant pesticides are a worry for the industry. It's a fact that consumers want more ecology. So it's up to us to find alternatives that meet the ecological requirements. But this service can't be entirely free, and that's something that needs to be made clear to the consumer.

At the moment, this device is still being used in purely mechanical form. However, a new electronic device is available, and will be tested this year.

The latest technology has long been part of everyday life in the company's own agricultural machinery. One example of this is the state-of-the-art potato planter. The tractor navigates the field perfectly via GPS, while the attached planter sets the seed potatoes (which have been treated to prevent fungal infestation) precisely in prepared ridges. All in one operation.

Life was completely different when people first started processing vegetables, over 80 years ago, when most of the work was still done by hand. Even then, the founders cultivated some of the products that would be used for the company's canning production, later to be known as Hilcona (from «Hilti Convenience Nahrungsmittel»), on their own farm – which still exists today and is managed by Hilcona Agrar.

Today, Hilcona is the only manufacturer of canned vegetables in Switzerland. Items grown by domestic producers for the agricultural team include almost 3400 tonnes of peas, around 2200 tonnes of beans and more than 1800 tonnes of baby carrots. All of the very highest quality and bearing the «Suisse Garantie» seal, and increasingly also labelled organic.

Hilcona processes about three-quarters of the total yield itself. The stable sales figures of

recent years are proof indeed that Hilcona canned vegetables have lost nothing of their popularity in recent years. Since the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic, the Liechtensteiners have actually delivered even more canned vegetables than at any other time in the history of their company.

Hilcona Agrar also supplies other Swiss food manufacturers with fresh vegetables from the field. This cooperation is also an advantage when the production capacities at Hilcona are at full capacity. «In these cases, we try to sell the surplus vegetables on to our customers», says Andreas Messerli. «Avoiding food waste is of the utmost importance to us». • *mr*

Hilcona is the only manufacturer of canned vegetables in Switzerland.

At Hilcona in Schaan, the freshly harvested vegetables are preserved as quickly as possible.



Enjoy safely with the Bell Würstli

An impressive number

There are probably only a few other foods that are subject to as many quality controls as meat.

LOOK! did some research and found, using the example of the Bell Würstli, that this claim isn't just words.

190 is a big number. It is even more impressive when you know that this is the number of quality controls that a Bell Würstli goes through before it is allowed to leave the production plant in Basel. From raw material to finished product. The example of the Bell Würstli, the crunchy sausage made from beef and pork, is a wonderful example of the care that needs to be taken to ensure that a product meets all the requirements for enjoyment and quality.

Quality controls take place throughout the entire manufacturing process: on the animals, raw materials and products, but also on the equipment, means of transport or in production rooms.

For Bell-Würstli, the process starts with the delivery of the cattle and pigs. The supplier's accompanying documents provide information about the animals such as their origin, the raising method or the name of the farmer. A veterinarian checks the state of health and the ear tag number, and only then is an animal approved for further processing.

About a quarter of the checks take place before the slaughter and ensure the careful handling of animals

and compliance with legal requirements, such as the Animal Welfare Ordinance. In processing – from cutting to smoking and packaging – the focus is on the quality of the meat as well as the processing. This quality is maintained afterwards during storage and logistics.

Every single control is an essential contribution to safe indulgence.

33 out of the total of 190 controls are based on legal standards. The remaining 157 are internal Bell guidelines, customer specifications or food safety standards such as IFS Food or FSSC 22000. 143 controls are a direct

part of the process; 47 are so-called support controls, which ensure a general clean and safe production environment: for example, the measurement of germs in the air or testing drinking water.

As numerous and varied as the controls are, each one makes an essential contribution to the production of enjoyable and safe products. In this way, we can guarantee our consumers at all times: It's good if it's from the Bell Food Group. • sh

