



## Press release

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It's raining medals at the Mountain Cheese Festival!

### Mountain Cheese Olympics in Jura

**Saignelégier, 25<sup>th</sup> October 2009 – Today, it became clear which nations produce the best mountain cheeses in the world: Swiss cheese-makers won 39 of the 64 medals while their colleagues and neighbours will be taking 25 home with them. Mountain cheeses from Japan, Canada and Mexico were also awarded prizes by the 100 strong judging panel.**

On Friday, international cheese judges assessed and awarded marks to the 631 competition cheeses in Bellelay Abbey and chose the best of them from 15 categories and 19 sub-categories. The Jura region also had the honour of welcoming Federal Councillor, Doris Leuthard, who officially opened the festival with a huge cheese market.

The two government representatives for Jura and Bern, Michel Probst and Andreas Rickenbacher were also present at the award ceremony in the centre of the Olympic village in Saignelégier and presented the medals to the proud cheese-makers, some of whom had travelled great distances to participate.

The Jura region will continue to celebrate all the mountain cheeses in the world until this evening as part of the 6<sup>th</sup> Mountain Cheese Olympics that are being held in Switzerland for the second time. Event organisers are expecting 40,000 visitors.

During the closing ceremony, the Olympic flame will be handed to France, host country of the next Mountain Cheese Olympics in 2011.

### It's raining medals for mountain cheese

Here are the best mountain cheeses in the world:

[http://www.caseusmontanus.ch/2009/\\_download/20091025\\_winners\\_en.pdf](http://www.caseusmontanus.ch/2009/_download/20091025_winners_en.pdf)

### This festival turns a visitor into a cheese fan!

At the covered mountain cheese market, 70 producers and exhibitors sold their cheese specialities, brought directly from the region, from Switzerland and from far off countries. At the largest mountain cheese buffet in Switzerland and the giant mountain cheese fondue for 1000 guests, visitors were able to discover for themselves just how diverse and exquisite mountain cheese can taste. Bellelay enticed visitors to enjoy laid-back and contemplative moments with organ concerts and fondues in a horse-drawn cart.

Numerous craft, traditional and historical presentations delighted visitors of all ages. The Tête de Moine museum and a play showed the development of Bellelay through the ages, the place where this famous cheese originated. The traditional method of making Tête de Moine was demonstrated daily during the presentations at the market in Saignelégier. Visitors were invited to learn more about the folklore traditions in the Jura region during the parade on Sunday afternoon and the rustic horse displays.



The children had a great time, too, riding ponies and horses, doing crafts, face-painting or at the tractor competition. In Saignelégier, there was cheese rolling, cow milking, a Flying Fox and a cheese circus for the youngest visitors to enjoy.

Throughout the entire Mountain Cheese Olympics, there was a chance to visit the largest Swiss wind and solar power plants, situated above St Imier. The Longines museum and the Spielhofer dairy in St Imier also offered free tours for the whole weekend.

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

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

We look forward to seeing your publication and will gladly answer any questions you may have.

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