

“We are simply delighted with our Swiss Browns”

Werner and Edith Roos have a farm in a little village that is surrounded by the green hills of the northern Alps. They have three children; one day, their eldest son will take over the family farm. Their lives are centred around four livestock species: chicken, sheep, pigs and Swiss Brown cattle.

“My father has devoted many years to the breeding of Swiss Browns,” says Werner Roos, “We have continued his work because the average milk production in our herd makes it worth the effort: the cows produce 8 000 kg of milk per year.” While three of Roos’ cows produce even 11 000 kg milk on a yearly basis, his favourite cow produces a stunning 11 000 kg!

Roos also appreciates the many other qualities of the Swiss Brown: “It is a very economic dual-purpose breed: both meat

and milk performances are high. The milking ability is very good to excellent and the cell count is low.” The cows are milked using milking machines; they stay in stanchion barns when they are not in the fields. Roos: “The cows are perfectly suitable for valley farming, as they only need pasture and can also be fed with hay. They are more resistant to insects than other breeds and have a quiet character”.

The demand for Swiss Brown is high and there is enough good frozen semen available. “Selling milk, excellent breeding stock and good quality carcasses are the main parts of our income,” says Roos, “Our herd is young; we raise all females and sell good older cows as breeding stock to other farmers.”



Werner Roos with a Swiss Brown
Credit: Catherine Marguerat

We would like to thank Werner Roos, his family, and Catherine Marguerat for this interview.