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Switzerland's first fully-organic cocoa plant opens for business

Swiss cocoa processor PRONATEC's organic manufacturing facility can process 15,000 tonnes of organic cocoa beans a year and provides the firm with greater traceability capabilities.



Switzerland's first 100 percent organic cocoa-processing plant has completed its test phase and as of May 2022 is producing organic and fair trade certified semi-finished cocoa products.

PRONATEC's Swiss Cocoa Production is, according to the ingredients provider, an entirely organic production plant. Based in Beringen, Schaffhasuen, PRONATEC says the plant will process around 15,000 tonnes of organic cocoa beans a year, sourced from smallholder cooperatives. It is the first production plant in Switzerland to make all three semi-finished products: cocoa mass, cocoa butter and cocoa powder.

"More and more consumers are not only looking for sustainable products but wanting to know exactly where the ingredients come from. This production plant is our response to that trend," said David Yersin, PRONATEC CEO.

Having its own cocoa-processing plant means that, from procuring the beans from small-scale farmers, through fermentation and export to processing and sale of the finished product, all stages of the value-added chain are now in PRONATEC's hands.

Thanks to its unique direct-sourcing system, every product can be traced back to the cocoa-growing smallholder by the manufacturer. PRONATEC says all the semi-finished cocoa products are processed in strictly separated batches: each consignment of beans is handled separately, with no mixing up with preceding or subsequent production runs, enabling the plant to meet the strict criteria for organic and fair trade certification.

"Demand from the market is confirming the trend towards stricter labels such as Bio Suisse and Demeter. Our products help to meet that need," added David Yersin.

Traceability is becoming an increasingly important aspect of food and beverage production – [an hour-long discussion was dedicated to the topic at Food Bev Horizons in December 2021](#). It's therefore no surprise to see manufacturers placing an increased capacity for tracing products at the centre of any new facility or system.