

The in-store bakery principle

THE FOOD RETAIL IN SWITZERLAND HOLDS ALMOST 80 % OF THE BAKED GOODS MARKET. A SMALL PROPORTION OF THE TURNOVER, BUT A LARGE PART OF THE GOOD IMAGE OF THE FOOD RETAIL BAKERS, ORIGINATES FROM IN-STORE BAKERIES. THE FOLLOWING PORTRAYS A VISIT TO THE COOP IN-STORE BAKERY IN EGERKINGEN



++ figure 1

++ figure 1

Production in the in-store bakeries is done largely by hand

+ The Switzerland Coop operates 816 supermarkets of widely varying sizes throughout the country. There have been in-store bakeries in selected markets for more than 20 years. They now total 37, of which 29 are in so-called megastores. The General Manager of the respective supermarket is responsible for personnel, whereas responsibility for investment lies with Directorate 1 (Retail), and technically the in-store bakeries report to the Coop Bakery Technical Centre, which also has technical responsibility for the seven industrial bakeries. Directorate 3 (Marketing) decides on 80 % of the product range. The regions decide on 20 % and the in-store bakeries are in accordance with the varieties stocked in the regions. The Bakery Technical Centre also looks after purchasing, technology, production and projects in the two bakery branches. It is clear from the complicated organisational network that the in-store bakeries carry out many more tasks than just supplying the supermarkets with fresh bread. They are an essential part of the Coop Group's marketing concept, both as a customer draw and as an image builder. In return their machines, worktables and preparation rooms are permitted to occupy expensive square metres of retail space at a prominent

position in the supermarket. In Egerkingen that means around 260 m² metres close to the exit, with a display window onto the shopping mall with the Coop Café also being situated there. However, it is more usual for this to be situated on the rear wall of the supermarket in order to tempt customers to the whole product range. On average, the Coop's in-store bakeries supply around 40 % of the entire sales of baked goods (the calculation includes rusks, crackers etc.). In the bread segment this figure is up to 70 % depending on the location, and in the confectionery area in the west of Switzerland it can even be up to 95 %.

The in-store bakeries bake profiling articles such as the classical butter plait, without which no weekend in Switzerland would be complete. It goes without saying that more than 80 % of the 212 employees have had professional training. 60–65 % of the in-store bakery's sales are generated by the range of breads and 15–20 % by confectioneries, and the remaining 15–20 % originate from small baked goods delivered frozen from the central bakeries and baked-off in-store. In 2011 the in-store bakeries processed 3,000 t of flour, 134 t of butter and fats, 45 t of sugar and 38 t of eggs. Baking uses mainly



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++ figure 2
Specialized positioning for the 800 g rustic bread in a handy carrier bag

conventional raw materials but no premixes. It is now two years since the product range was streamlined under the slogan “Back to the Roots” and was reduced to 10 small baked goods, 18 large loaves and 4 varieties of plait. Customers showed their appreciation of the reorientation in the form of additional sales. In addition, since November wheat flour with the “IP-SUISSE” seal (Swiss Integrated Production) has been used for the hausbrot (homemade-style bread), and since mid-April two organic large loaves and one organic small baked product have been available throughout Switzerland. All the wheat doughs (except for the plaits) have 2 % wheat germ and 5 % wholegrain flour added to them, and all are produced using pre-doughs and long, soft dough processing methods.

As a general rule baking starts in the morning at 06:00, and the bakers load the ovens for the last time at 17:00 if the supermarket closes at 18:30, and at 18:00 when it closes at 21:00. As many of the in-store bakeries are situated in supermarkets located outside of densely populated areas, the demand is concentrated in the evening after office hours. Half of the bread sales take place after 16:00.

The in-store bakeries operate using a variety of processes to guarantee that the shelves are supplied throughout the whole

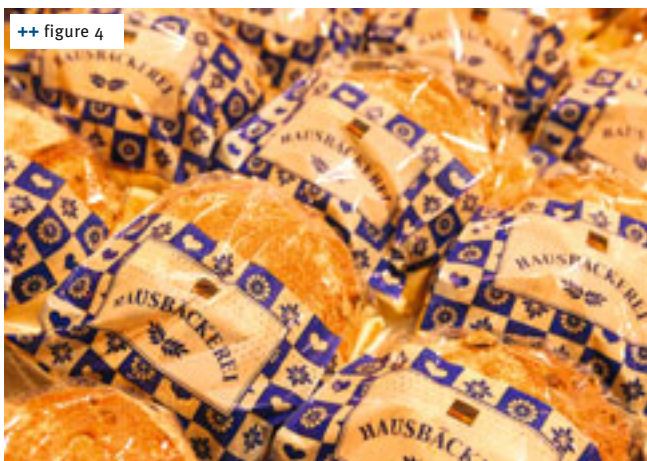


++ figure 3
The multi-deck oven in the background bakes the whole bread range, part of which is stored in PATT cells (front)

day, especially at the peak demand times in the afternoon. The PATT system (programmed cooling of part-proofed dough pieces) allows dough pieces that were set aside to be baked-off for up to 72 h. Dough pieces stored in a cool room remain there for maximum of overnight with self-produced frozen dough pieces being ready for baking after thawing and proofing, and of course there is also the direct route from dough work-up through proofing and into the oven. The confectioners produce goods freshly several times a day, depending on what is in demand. As a rule the blister-packed confectionery articles have a shelf life of up to two days.

The technical equipment of the in-store bakeries is practice-oriented: it consists of spiral mixers, baguette long moulders, dough dividing and moulding machines for small baked goods, various air-conditioned rooms, a simple rolling-out machine, a flour silo, and finally one rack oven and one multi-deck oven. There is also a small shop bake-oven in most of the in-store bakeries.

In late May this year, the Coop's first in-store bakery in the canton of Ticino will commission a wood-fired oven in which there will also be room for pizzas and focaccia in addition to loaves. +++



++ figure 4
The blue lettering clearly means “manufactured in the in-store bakery”



++ figure 5
The shelves in front of the bakery display goods from the in-store bakery together with goods from the central regional bakery, both being clearly identified

sweet baking

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