STATION FÉDÉRALE DE RECHERCHES EN PRODUCTION VEGETALE DE CHANGINS
STAZIONE FEDERALE DI RICERCHE PER LA PRODUZIONE VEGETALE
EIDGENÖSSISCHE FORSCHUNGANSTALT FÜR PFLANZENBAU
SWISS FEDERAL RESEARCH STATION FOR PLANT PRODUCTION
Centre d'arboriculture et d'horticulture des Fougères, CH - 1964 Conthey

☎ centrale: 027 345.35.11
Fax : 027 346.30.17
✉ RAC Centre des Fougères
CH - 1964 Conthey

BERRIES: RESEARCH AIMS AND TOOLS

Structure of research in berries in Switzerland

Research in berries is done in three experimental sites: Centre des Fougères in Conthey, Bruson (1100 m a.s.l), the highest experimental station for berries in Europe and Wädenswil (FAW).

Mission concerning research in berries

Development and promotion of a sustained production of berries along economical, ecological and social welfare lines (Integrated and Biological Production). Research projects have priority which aim at conservation of natural resources, ways of improving production and of making Swiss berry production competitive. Research work is focused mainly on applied problems which is of high practical use. It should, however, also furnish dependable information to government and agricultural consultancy.

Major activities concerning applied research in berries

- Testing of new varieties of berries (strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, gooseberries, blueberries) in Conthey, Bruson, Wädenswil.
- Study and monitoring of current and emerging pests and diseases (biology, threshold, forecasting, warning).
- Development of strategies to reduce damages of pests and diseases and of production systems to reduce these problems, such as benefits against pests.
- Development of techniques for an optimal application of pesticides.
- Tests of different weeding methods.
- Development of soilless cultures with renewable substrates and recycled solution.
- Development of methods to measure organoleptic quality of berries and conservation of fruits quality after harvest.
- Development of tools for diagnostic of nutrient status of the plants and management of fertilisation.
- Development of production systems to better program harvest date.
- Expertise for Swiss government, for example homologation of pesticides.

Contacts: christoph.carlen@rac.admin.ch
andre.ancay@rac.admin.ch

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MEDICINAL AND AROMATIC PLANTS: RESEARCH AIMS AND TOOLS

Structure of research in medicinal and aromatic plants in Switzerland

Research in medicinal and aromatic plants is done at the RAC in three experimental sites (Centre des Fougères-Conthey (500 m a.s.l.), Bruson (1100 m a.s.l) and Arbaz (900m a.s.l.) and on-farm in different parts of Switzerland.

Mission concerning research in medicinal and aromatic plants

Development and promotion of a sustained production of medicinal and aromatic plants along economical, ecological and social welfare lines. All the research projects are conduced according the guidelines of organic farming (biological production). Research projects have priority which aim to improve production, quality, homogeneity and winterhardiness of these plants and to reduce production costs under organic farming. Research work is focused mainly on applied problems which is of high practical use concerning the 50 species actually cultivated in Switzerland. It should, however, also furnish dependable information to government and agricultural consultancy.

Major activities concerning applied research in medicinal and aromatic plants

- Prospection of application and production of new medicinal and aromatic plant species for mountain regions.
- Selection of new cultivars of thym, sage, common balm, white genepi, edelweiss, etc. adapted for mountain regions and organic farming.
- Tests of new cultivars of the different medicinal and aromatic plants.
- Development of production techniques (for exemple drilling and planting dates and methods, plant densities, etc.) in order to increase yield and quality.
- Definition of the optimal harvest times and harvest frequencies for the different medicinal and aromatic plants.
- Tests of different weeding methods to reduce production costs.
- Tests of different fertilisers allowed in organic farming and development of ecologically sound strategies of fertilisation.
- Study and monitoring of current and emerging pests and diseases and development of strategies to reduce damages of these pests and diseases.
- Expertise for Swiss government, for example homologation of pesticides.

Contacts: christoph.carlen@rac.admin.ch
charly.rey@rac.admin.ch