

Bio-Data of Farmers who were under Training in Switzerland recently - and their Reports

Name	Mr. Genden
Age	37 years, married
Geog	Merak
Dongkhag	Merak
Qualification	Class VII



To
The Chairman
Swiss-Bhutanese Friendship Association
Switzerland

A brief summary of my stay in Uster-Switzerland

We started our journey from Paro on the 3rd of July and arrived in Zürich on the 4th of July. Mr. Erich Oberholzer came to pick us up and he brought us to our host family in Uster. The names of my host family are Mr. Martin Pfister and Elsbeth Pfister. They showed me my room and explained everything about the use of the facilities around the house. I am surprised and curious about the things in the farm.

On Sunday the 6th of July Mr. Erich Oberholzer and Aum Tshering came to visit us. They explained about the fooding and lodging, insurance and the tax. Then Aum Tshering explained to my host family about the custom and culture of the Bhutanese, especially about my village(Merak) and in turn she also told us about the Swiss culture and the customs.

The name of the my farm is Brirkenhof. There are 70 milk producing cows and about 95% of them are Brown Swiss. The farm has a small factory where they make yoghurt, cheese and milk for the market. I am told that a cow gives minimum 30 litres of milk a day. I learnt how to make cow fodder, Silage and hay. In Merak the cattle depend only on grass as we don't have any fodder to feed them. I also learnt the difference in rearing the cattle, for example the Brown Swiss and Simmentaler are for milk, Limousin, Charolais and Angus are only for meat. Even though everything is mechanised, I still learnt to milk the cow, drive a tractor and to make Swiss cheese and yoghurt. My host family was very good to me, they always asked me what I would like to learn, so since I was interested in everything they rotated me around – like a week in milking the cow, then in Cheese and yoghurt making, life stock pasture and making fodder. In the meantime I also learnt to ride a bicycle, I never rode a bicycle in my life and so this was very exciting for me. Sometimes in the evenings after work I rode the bicycle to the Zaugg farm where Namgay was, our farms were very close to each other.

We were not only working and learning in the farm but we also got the chance to visit the other Cantons in Switzerland. Our first trip was to the city of Zürich and this was organised by Aum Tshering. Mr. Erich also joined us, we went up to the top of Zürich and had a good view over the lake and the city. Then we walked around the city and Aum Tshering explained about the different types of the public transport, the different houses and we also walked through the old city and she told us about the history of Switzerland. And in the afternoon we went to the Zoo, I had never seen so many animals and this was very wonderful. This day also happened to be the national day of Switzerland, so Aum Tshering had organised a trip on one of the big boats and we had our dinner on the boat and later we could see all the fire works. It was a very beautiful day. Then we slept in Aum Tshering's house and next day we went to Bad Ragaz, Landquart and to the region of Pfäfers. Mr. Erich had asked one of his friend Mr. Raphael to tell us about mountain farming. We also got the chance to part take in the birthday celebration of Mr. Daniel Schwitter, who is a friend of Aum Tshering and Mr. Erich. We all slept over in Mr. Daniel's house and next day he took us around the village. Mr. Erich also explained to us about the Swiss forestry. Later we went back to Zürich with Aum Tshering and Mr. Erich. We also stayed the night in Aum Tshering's house and next day Mr. Reinhardt took us up to the mountains and explained to us about the different kinds of fruits in Switzerland.

On the 29th of August we went to Bern and there we met Dr. Menzi, he took us around the city of Bern, later in the evening we went to Thun and stayed in Dr. Menzi's house. The next day we visited Dr. Tobias who is the vet there and then we went to Niederhorn. Dr. Menzi also took us high up in the Swiss Alps to see a farm, where they worked without any machine, there they made cheese manually. This was very interesting for me as I could apply the work method back in Merak.

We also visited Ballenberg and Interlaken.

On the 14th of September Mr. Erich took us to a poultry farm and we also visited his family. All these visits were very interesting and I learnt many new things.

I also got the chance to see a Swiss wedding as my co-worker Mr. Peter got married and he had invited me. On the 27th of September we helped Aum Tshering to prepare a Bhutanese meal and had invited both the host families and also my co-workers, which was very successful.

We left for Delhi on the 28th of Sept, the Zaugg family, Mr. Peter and his wife Mrs. Barbara and Aum Tshering came to see us off.

This programme was very interesting and good for me as I learnt many new things that I could try and apply in my farm and also teach my neighbours, like to increase the milk production by supplying more fodder for the cattle. In this programme I learnt not only the work methods but also got to meet new people with new customs. This has also given me exposure which has made me more confident.

I would like to thank the Swiss-Bhutanese Friendship Association for given me this opportunity. I have never dreamt this in my life.

My special thanks goes to Mr. Erich Oberholzer, Aum Tshering, Mr. Reinhardt, Dr. Menzi and my host family Mr. Martin Pfister and Mrs. Elsbeth Pfister, for all their support and kindness.

Tashi Delek

Gyenden
Merak Gewog
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Easter - Bhutan

- Cc: 1. Dasho Tshering Wangda, Ministry Of Home Affairs, Thimphu, Bhutan
2. Mr. Erich Oberholzer, Zürich, Switzerland
3. Aum Tshering Altherr, Zürich, Switzerland
4. Mr. Martin Pfister and Elsbeth Pfister, Birkenhof – Uster, Switzerland
5. Mr. Namgyel Tshering, Helvetas, Thimphu, Bhutan