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INFORMATION  
TEMPERATURE: 25 DEGREES CELSIUS  
HUMIDITY: 90%  
UV INDEX: 4  
WIND: NE 10 MPH

# Charter

on the Digitalisation  
of Swiss Agriculture  
and Food Production

# Preamble

The content of this Charter is broadly based and was developed via an open consultation procedure involving agriculture and food production stakeholders. The process was overseen by a core group comprising representatives of the sectors and authorities concerned.

The Charter is aligned with the Federal Council's "Digital Switzerland" strategy and seeks to implement this strategy for the agriculture and food sector. The "Digital Switzerland" strategy is based on the principles that society and the economy need room for digital development; that the state should actively facilitate the structural change associated with digitalisation; and that the transformation processes require an integrated approach. The Federal Council's strategy has four key objectives:

- promoting innovation, growth and prosperity in the digital world
- enabling equal opportunities and participation for all
- ensuring transparency and security
- contributing to sustainable development

Under the "Digital Switzerland" strategy, and in connection with this Charter, a dialogue is to be launched, bringing together all stakeholders. This dialogue should create a shared understanding, promote cooperation, identify further areas where action is required and ultimately ensure that the strategy is implemented.



# Purpose

We, the signatories to this Charter, are committed to making an active contribution to the digitalisation of Swiss agriculture and food production<sup>1</sup>. With the Charter, we aim in particular:

- to create a shared understanding among the federal authorities, cantons and private actors concerning the principles governing the handling of digital data and applications in agriculture and food production<sup>2</sup>;
- to lay the foundations for jointly addressing the opportunities and challenges of digitalisation along the value chain, from producer to consumer;
- to establish a broad strategic basis, which enables the sustainable use of digitalisation in agriculture and food production, supports the shift towards digital processes and promotes an open culture vis-à-vis digitalisation;
- to ensure that all agriculture and food production stakeholders can access the digital world under the same conditions, so that discrimination is avoided and healthy competition is promoted among service providers;
- to bring actors together to promote the development of a transparent, user-friendly and efficient structure for digital data and applications, as well as nationwide standards compatible with the relevant international standards.

<sup>1</sup> This covers agricultural production as well as upstream and downstream areas.

<sup>2</sup> This covers the collection, storage, processing and use of data in a digital format.



# Guidelines

The following twelve guidelines on the use of digital data and applications in agriculture and food production both elaborate and complement the relevant areas of action and objectives defined in the "Digital Switzerland" strategy. All the guidelines are of equal importance.

## Focus on benefits I.

We seek to ensure that digitalisation strengthens sustainability and the competitiveness of actors along the value chain, enhances efficiency at the federal and cantonal level, and reduces administrative costs, as well as further improving animal welfare, the protection of natural resources and resource-use efficiency.

## Transparency II.

We want actors to have access to information on the use of their data and will inform them about the existence and use of data platforms.

## Access to data III.

We promote free access to anonymised data. Access to non-anonymised data should only be possible after they have been released by the actors who generated them.

## Empowerment IV.

We support the use of data through open exchange via defined interfaces, thus empowering actors to exploit the significant potential for value creation.

## Fair competition V.

We are committed to fair competition among providers for the benefit of actors along the value chain.

## Value of data VI.

We take the view that data have a value. Actors who make their data available should not be disadvantaged but should be able to benefit as a result.

## Data ownership VII.

We support the principle that data generated by actors and made available on data platforms should only be used for explicitly defined purposes and not be passed on to third parties without consent.

## Infrastructure for data transmission VIII.

We seek to ensure that the necessary applications and infrastructure are developed in such a way that the requirements for data use are met as far as possible in all regions of Switzerland.

## Added value through data integration IX.

We undertake to use standardised data formats and interfaces. We recognise and use federal master data and data transmission formats, thus permitting data integration and the creation of added value.

## Duty of care X.

We seek to raise actors' awareness of their duty to handle data carefully and to ensure that they fulfil their responsibilities in this area.

## Research, knowledge transfer and innovation XI.

We support research activities, training and advisory services tailored to target groups, and innovative business ideas. Synergies should be exploited, resources pooled and knowledge transferred so as to promote innovation.

## Technological development XII.

We promote the further development of applications and technologies so as to create recognisable benefits of digitalisation for actors along the value chain.

# Final declaration

The signatories undertake:

- within their area of responsibility, to comply with the guidelines set out in this Charter;
- to actively contribute to the implementation of the Charter through specific initiatives, and to communicate such efforts in an appropriate form;
- to take the principles of the Charter into account in their strategic decision-making;
- to pursue joint solutions in the digitalisation of Swiss agriculture and food production.



Bern, January 2018