



Press release

Fällanden, October 31st 2008

## **Trade fair goes smoothly – mood of optimism pervades IFAS**

**The 30th IFAS Trade Fair for Medical and Hospital Equipment was a success. In the fully booked halls, over 400 exhibitors displayed what the medical technology industry enjoys a worldwide reputation for: high-tech product and service innovations. These were viewed by 18,000 visitors with high levels of specialist expertise and decision-making authority. It is this interplay of expertise on the part of suppliers and practitioners which determines the position of IFAS as a platform and showcase for Swiss medical technology.**

Due to its economic power and the significant role which it plays in improving our quality of life, medical technology is a pearl, not only from an economic point of view, but also in terms of health policy. Every other year, IFAS acts as a catalyst for dialogue between suppliers and practitioners. It therefore supports the high levels of optimism in the industry, which are discernible this October as well.

Visitor numbers exceeded those of the previous trade fair on each day of the exhibition, with the exception of a huge drop in numbers on Thursday, due to the poor weather conditions. Nevertheless, IFAS 2008 attracted 18,132 visitors, 15,373 of whom represent trade visitors, slightly above the level of 2006.

What Philipp Stähelin, member of the Swiss National Council, predicted for the Swiss medical technology industry came about at IFAS 2008 on 28–31 October: the industry remained untouched by the turmoil in the international markets. This positive note was reflected in the comments of most exhibitors, who expressed high levels of satisfaction with the trade fair.

Heinrich Jacobi, member of the executive board of the Polymed Medical Center and vice-president of FASMED *Dachverband der Schweizerischen Handels- und Industrievereinigungen der Medizinaltechnik* (umbrella organisation of Swiss medical technology trade and industry associations), reflected the obvious optimism amongst visitors to the trade fair when he said: 'As a platform for the Swiss medical technology industry, IFAS is an indispensable marketing instrument for our sector. It brings together in large numbers the right business partners, suppliers and practitioners. There is no alternative to the role of IFAS as a showcase for the industry.'

The economic power of the medical technology industry continues as strongly as ever in view of the population's increasing life expectancy and the above-average numbers of innovative companies in our country. Companies located here achieve brilliant growth rates of 7 to 10 percent, year on year. Five billion Swiss francs are generated annually through exports alone. The most important product groups and systems were also represented at IFAS. These are organisation/equipment, IT, consumables, care, rehabilitation, diagnostics and medical technology.

### **Trade fair promotes health policy dialogue**

Thanks to its important position as the showcase of Swiss medical technology, IFAS also always acts as a provider and promoter of dialogue on questions of health policy in our country. On the occasion of the trade fair, Ständerat Philipp Stähelin (member of the Council of States) and the president of FASMED, Nicolas Markwalder, addressed health policy issues. Both agree that a purely cost-driven health policy represents a too one-sided view with negative economic, financial and employment policy effects. Nicolas Markwalder remarked that the share of medical technology in health costs in Switzerland and worldwide amounts to a maximum of five percent, and is therefore not the place for great savings. Although medical technology represents a pearl in economic and health policy terms, the costs discussion will remain an economic and political issue in the future.

### **New: sales platform IFAS Romandie (French-speaking Switzerland)**

For many years, IFAS has proved extremely successful as a platform for suppliers and funding agencies. If there is still room to address and bring together additional interested parties, then, according to a representative survey carried out by the CallExpert agency, this is to be found in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. 84 percent of all medical practitioners and hospital employees are familiar with IFAS.

Around 27 of the Swiss medical market is located in Western Switzerland; however, the proportion of visitors from French-speaking Switzerland is only nine percent. The competitive three-day sales platform, which takes place in the intermediate year, offers an opportunity to attend to this important market simply and locally – especially in times of weak growth. IFAS Romandie takes place in the autumn of years with uneven numbers, for the first time from 28 to 30 October 2009.

### **IFAS 2010: widespread support is extended**

In its important role as the showcase for the medical technology industry, IFAS has for many years been supported by the most well-known organisations in the industry, such as FASMED, swissTnet, FMH Services and H+. Additional organisations will be incorporated into this corpus of interested parties for IFAS 2010. Amongst others, these include the *Schweizerische Gesellschaft für Allgemeinmedizin SGAM* (Swiss general medicine association) and the *Schweizer Berufsverband für Pflegefachfrauen und –männer SBK/ASI* (professional association of Swiss carers). The circle of visitors is being extended as the result of various packages of measures, such as joint trade fair bids on the part of association members.

On the smooth running of IFAS 2008, trade fair director Heinz Salzgeber says: 'We received positive feedback across the board during the four days of the exhibition. The positive comments regarding the high numbers and decision-making authority of trade visitors were particularly noticeable. This shows that IFAS Zürich brings together the right target groups at a high level.'

**The next IFAS Zürich takes place on the 26 – 29 October 2010.**

### **For further information:**

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## **'Decision-makers with high levels of specialist expertise'**

### **IFAS 2008 as seen by exhibitors:**

'The trade fair's target audience is identical with our clientele. The trade fair allows us to meet so many people in four days, and this would not be possible elsewhere. We have proof of our success and we are perfectly happy.'

**Michael Lienhart, Marketing Manager, Senectovia Schmidlin AG, Urdorf**

'The quantity and quality of trade fair visitors is excellent. Also we meet exclusively decision-makers. Decisions regarding future attendance and assessment of the benefits in terms of costs have to be made after each trade fair. Post-trade-fair business is certainly looking promising.'

**Laurent James, Managing Director, Hill-Rom, Bussigny**

'IFAS 2008 went off very well for us, even on Thursday as far as the number of visitors to our stand was concerned, despite the surprising snowfall. Approximately 80 percent of visitors to our stand were existing customers. The remaining 20 percent are potential new customers whom we would not have an opportunity to meet in the normal course of business. That is why we find IFAS so useful.'

**Stefan Joss, Sales Manager/Acting Managing Director, Bigla Care, Biglen**

'For us, IFAS is a good platform for meeting new customers. For example, staff from hospitals with whom we have no business relationship as yet and whose requirements were therefore unknown to us before the trade fair. If we had not attended the trade fair, we would not have had access to calls for tender for large-scale projects. We consider the both the number of visitors and their specialist expertise and decision-making authority to be high.'

**Julia Besewski, Marketing Manager, Nexus Switzerland, Schwerzenbach**

'In our opinion, both the quality and the quantity of trade fair visitors are good. Nowadays, noticeably fewer visitors per company and institution, which is more beneficial than perhaps ten years ago, when there was a trend towards concealed 'company excursions'. These days, only decision-makers and those involved in preparing decision-making are involved.'

**Michel Theubet, Deputy Managing Director, Meiko (Suisse) AG, Fällanden**

'We were able to receive a large number of visitors at our stand in a pleasant trade fair atmosphere. Our expectations were met – in particular, the high quality of visitors impressed us.'

**Jürg Kellner, Marketing IT, Ruf Group, Schlieren**

'IFAS is the optimum platform for presenting our range of products. We were very satisfied with the high quality of visitors.'

**Hansueli Hasler, Sales Representative, Kuhn and Bieri AG, Liebefeld**

'For us, IFAS is the most important platform in Switzerland. Visitors seek us out, and we can talk in a casual atmosphere.'

**Monica von Arx, Marketing & Communications, Axon Lab AG, Baden**

'IFAS is absolutely essential for us. We can make a large number of contacts in a short period of time and boost levels of awareness of our company.'

**Roman Clavadetscher, Sales Director Switzerland, XCAN AG, Littau**

'It is essential for us to take part in IFAS – we were able to generate many interesting new contacts and to maintain existing customer relationships. The best way of getting tired legs!'

**Franz Fuchs, Senior Consultant, LOBOS Informatik AG, Schwerzenbach**

'IFAS is our most important public appearance in terms of selling our products. We are already looking forward to IFAS 2010!'

**Markus Gartenmann, Managing Director/CEO, Gartenmann Software AG, Seuzach**

'We reached the right target audience as the result of attending this trade fair. Our expectations have been met.'

**René Schmed, Product Support Communication/Safety, Tyco Fire & Integrated Solutions AG, Näfels**

'IFAS is the ideal platform for personal customer care and for presenting our new products.'

**Silvia Stadler, MAQUET AG, Gossau**

'We were very satisfied with our attendance – our expectations were met. The quality of visitors was very good, and we were able to generate numerous new contacts.'

**Erich T. Utiger, Managing Director, Sedorama AG, Ostermundigen**

'Our investment in IFAS was worthwhile. Large numbers of decision-makers were present. Specific projects and orders were placed.'

**Rebekka Sah-Fischer, Marketing Director, Wiegand AG, Bülach**

'Our attendance at IFAS met our expectations. It was pleasing to see so many visitors from Western Switzerland.'

**Achille Foletti, Sales Advisor, EDAK, Thundorf**

'We had a large number of visitors at our stand. The quality was very good – many visitors have specific enquiries. IFAS is the most important platform for maintaining our customer relationships.'

**Petra Sonntag, Regional Clinical Application Specialist, ResMed Schweiz AG, Basel**