

Swiss organic dairy farmer survey 2003



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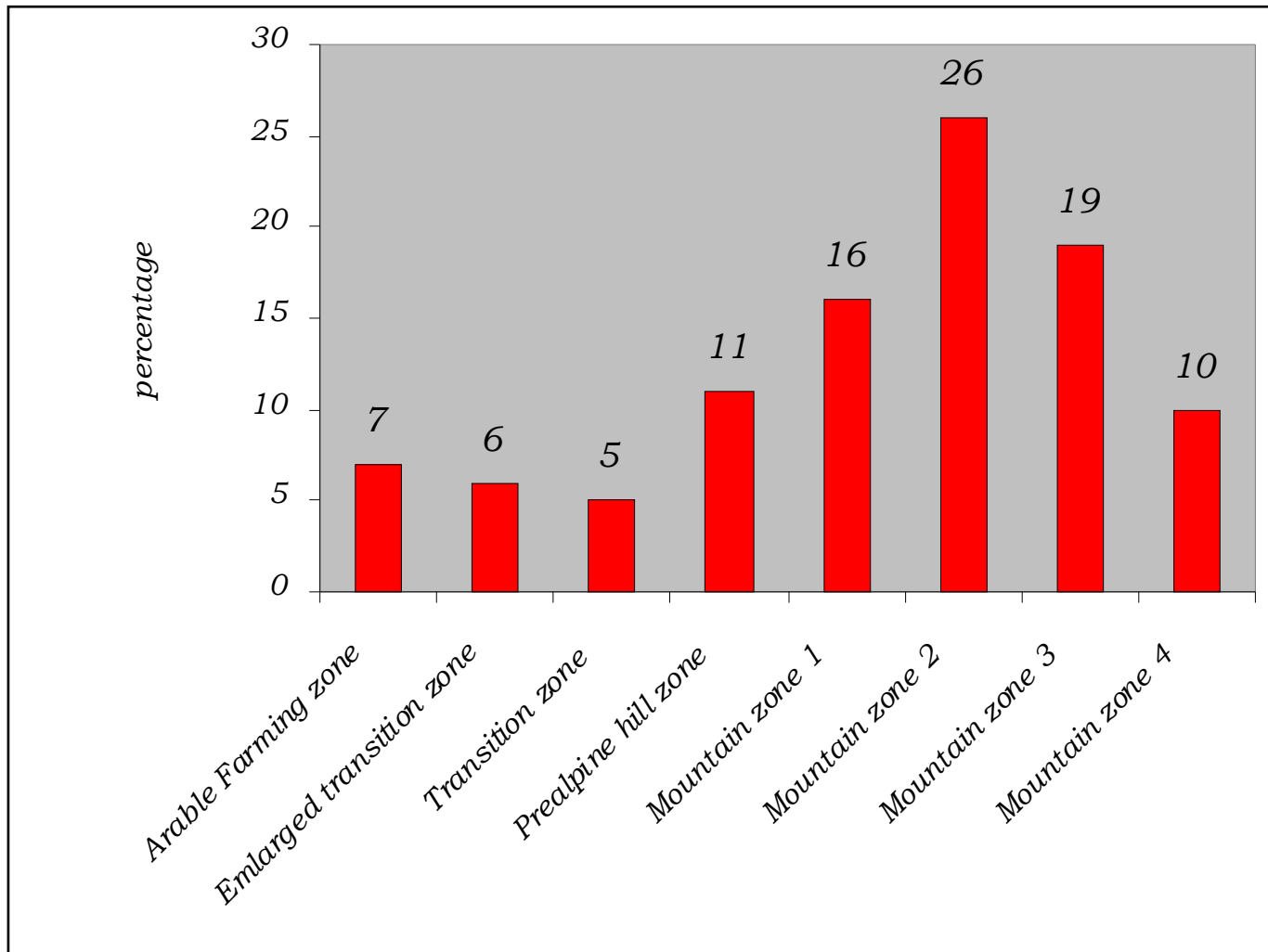
Why did we realise a survey?

- To collect actual problems in cattle breeding
- To determine the knowledge and the usefulness of the Ecological Breeding Index (EBI) among the farmers
- To propose practical possibilities of improvement of the EBI
- To evaluate the farmers opinion regarding to the breeding social environment and the upcoming needs

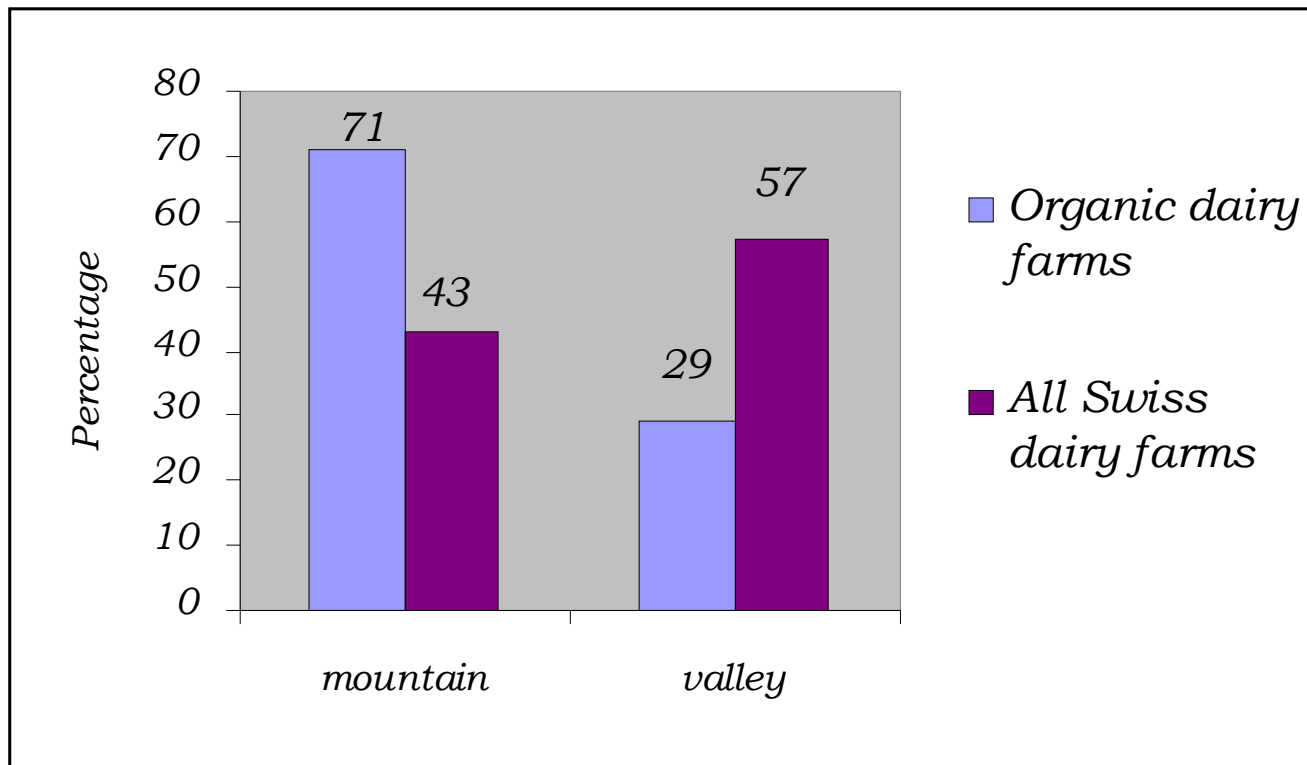
The database of the survey

- Number of organic dairy farmers in Switzerland
June 2003 (Bio Suisse) : 3595
- 1000 randomized questionnaires
 - 942 German speaking part of Switzerland
 - 46 French speaking par of Switzerland
 - 12 Italian speaking part of Switzerland
- 608 valid questionnaires came back!

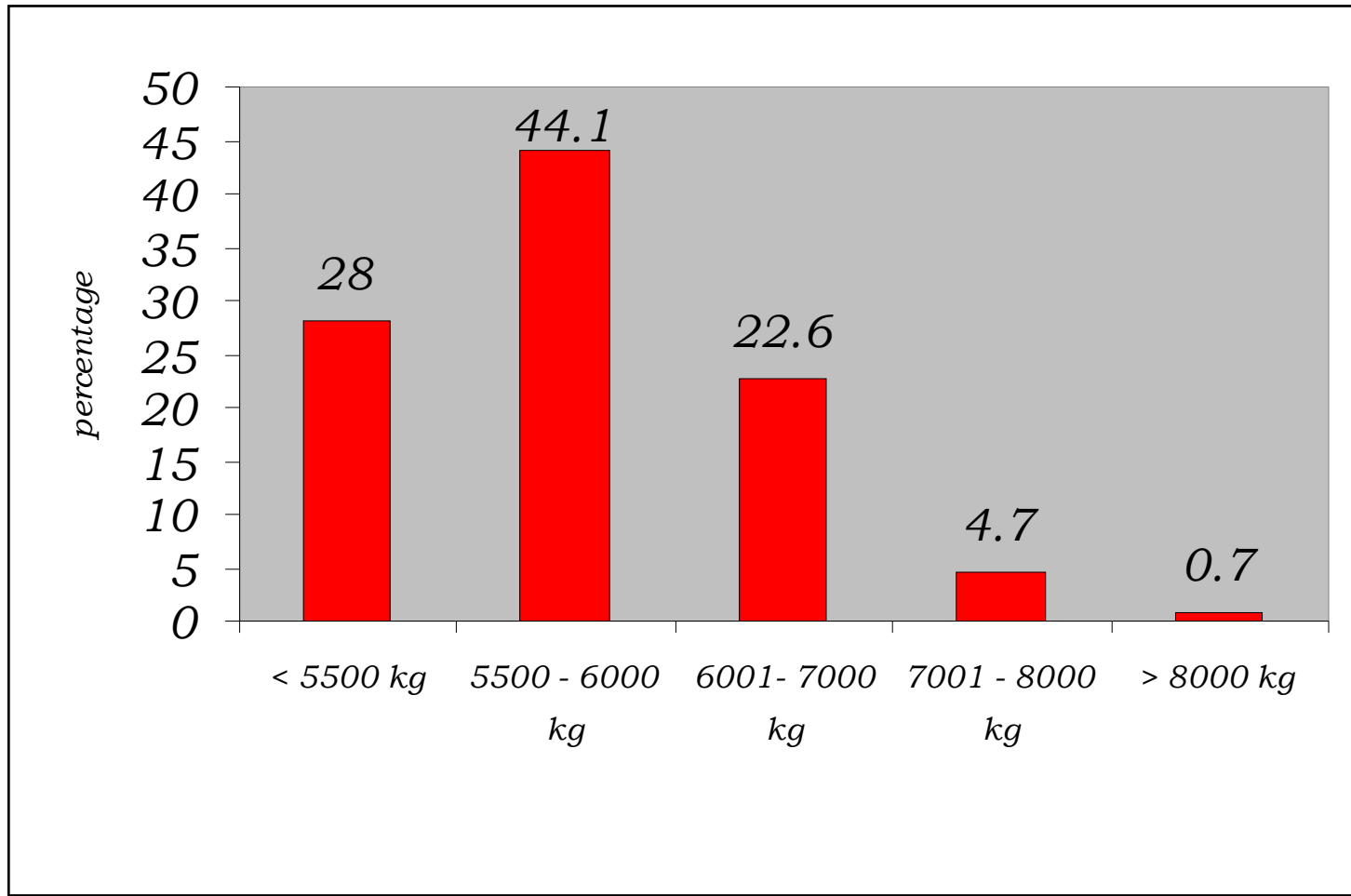
The distribution of the organic dairy farms according to farming zones



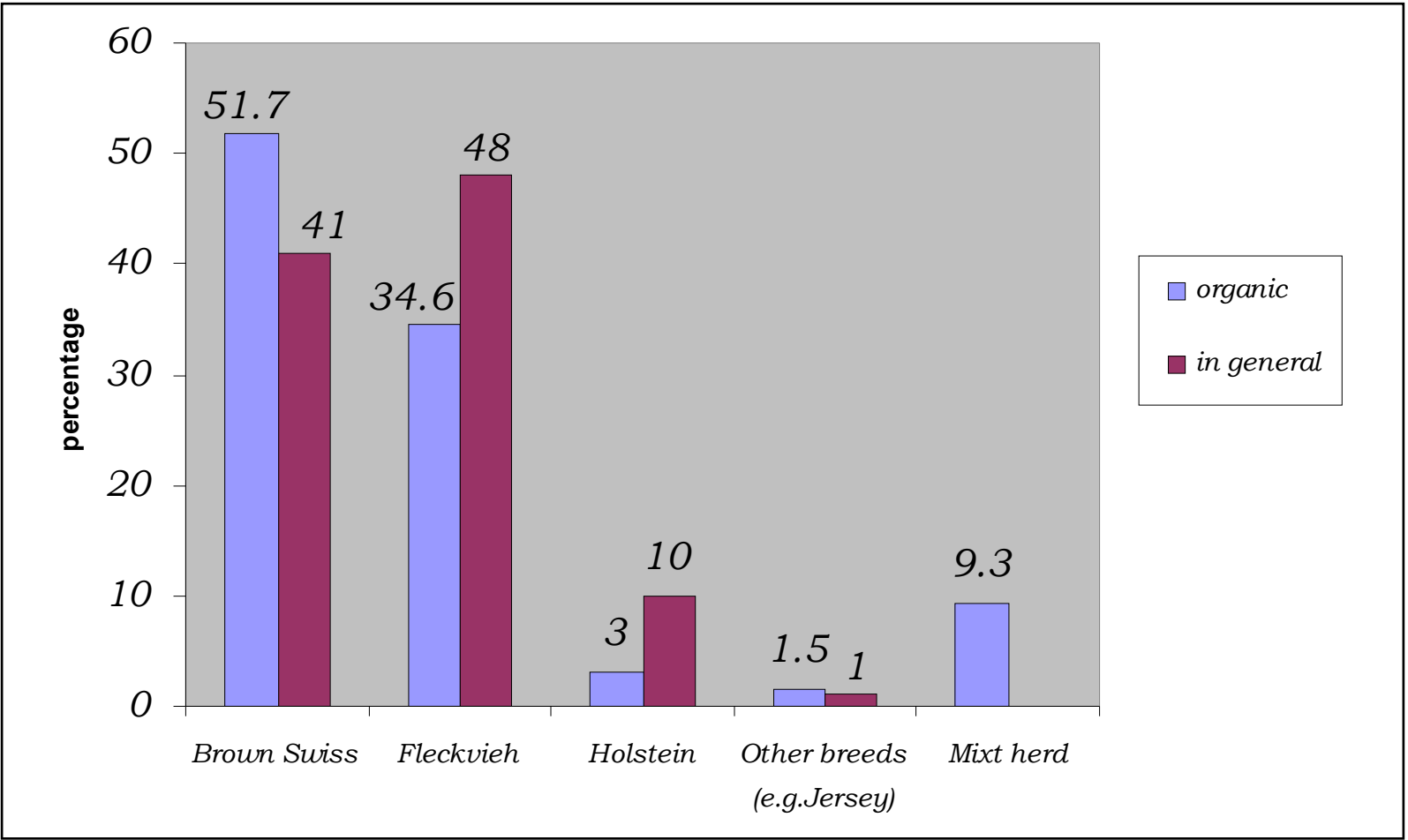
The distribution of Swiss organic dairy farms



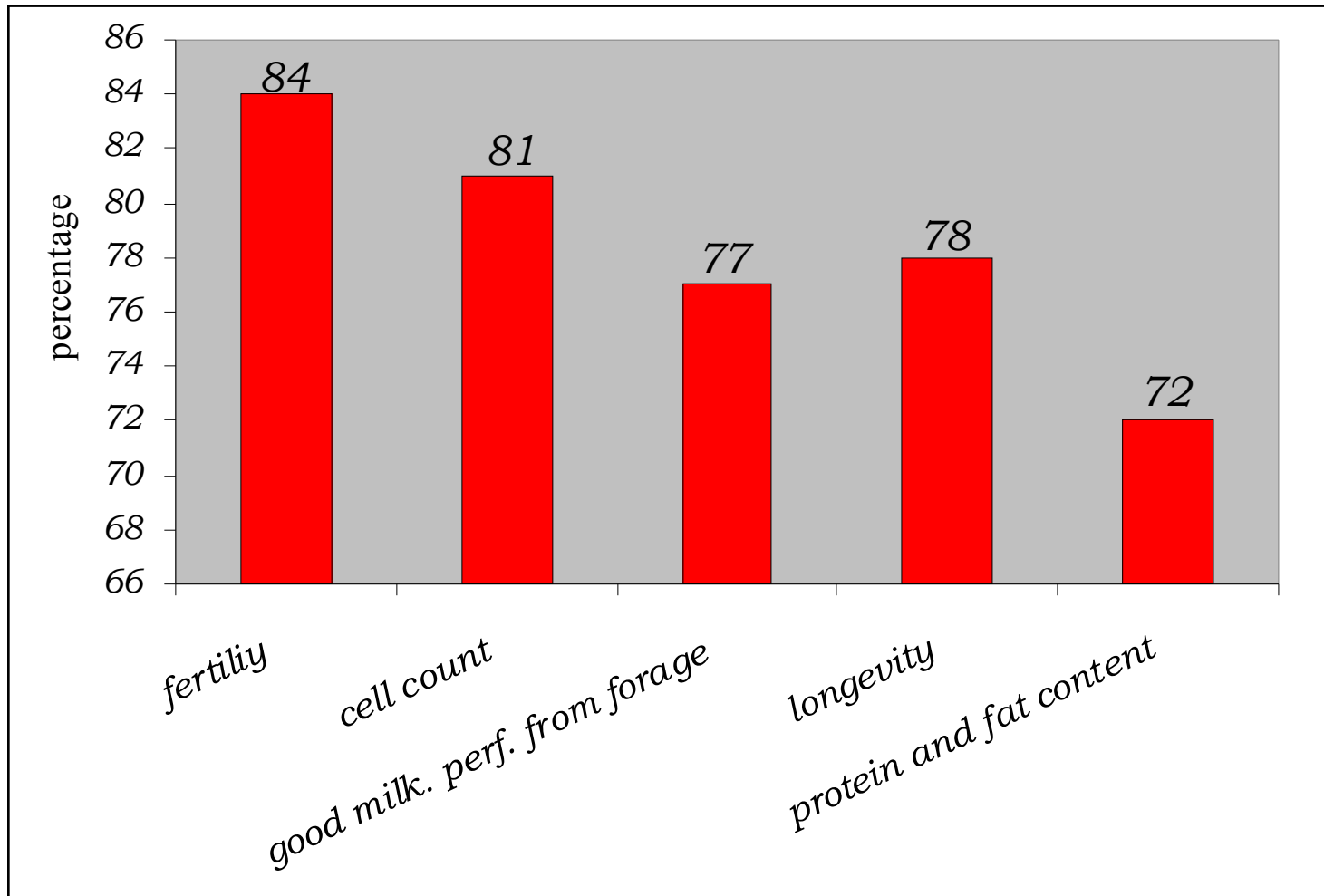
The distribution of the milking performance among the Swiss organic dairy farms



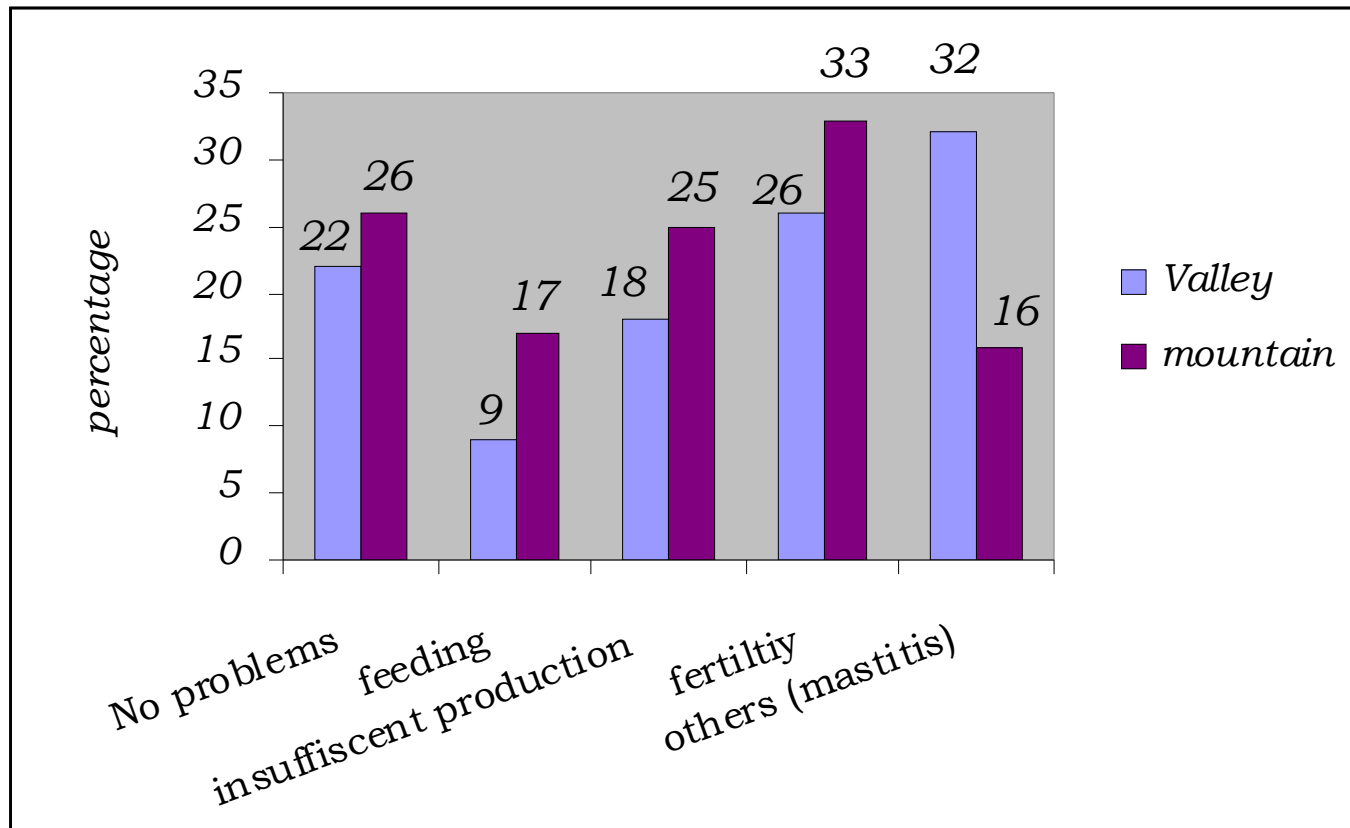
What cattle breed is used by Swiss organic dairy farmers?



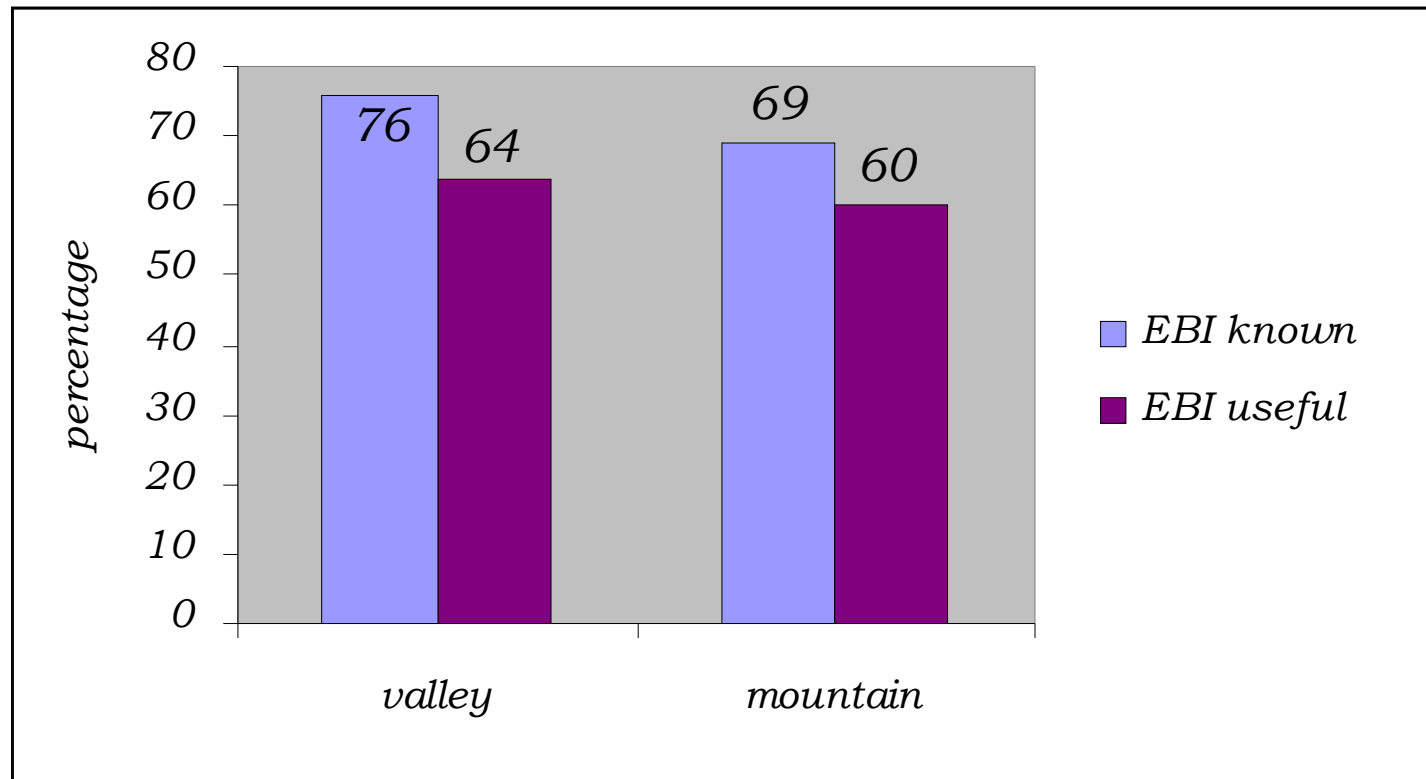
Selection criteria of great importance for organic dairy farms



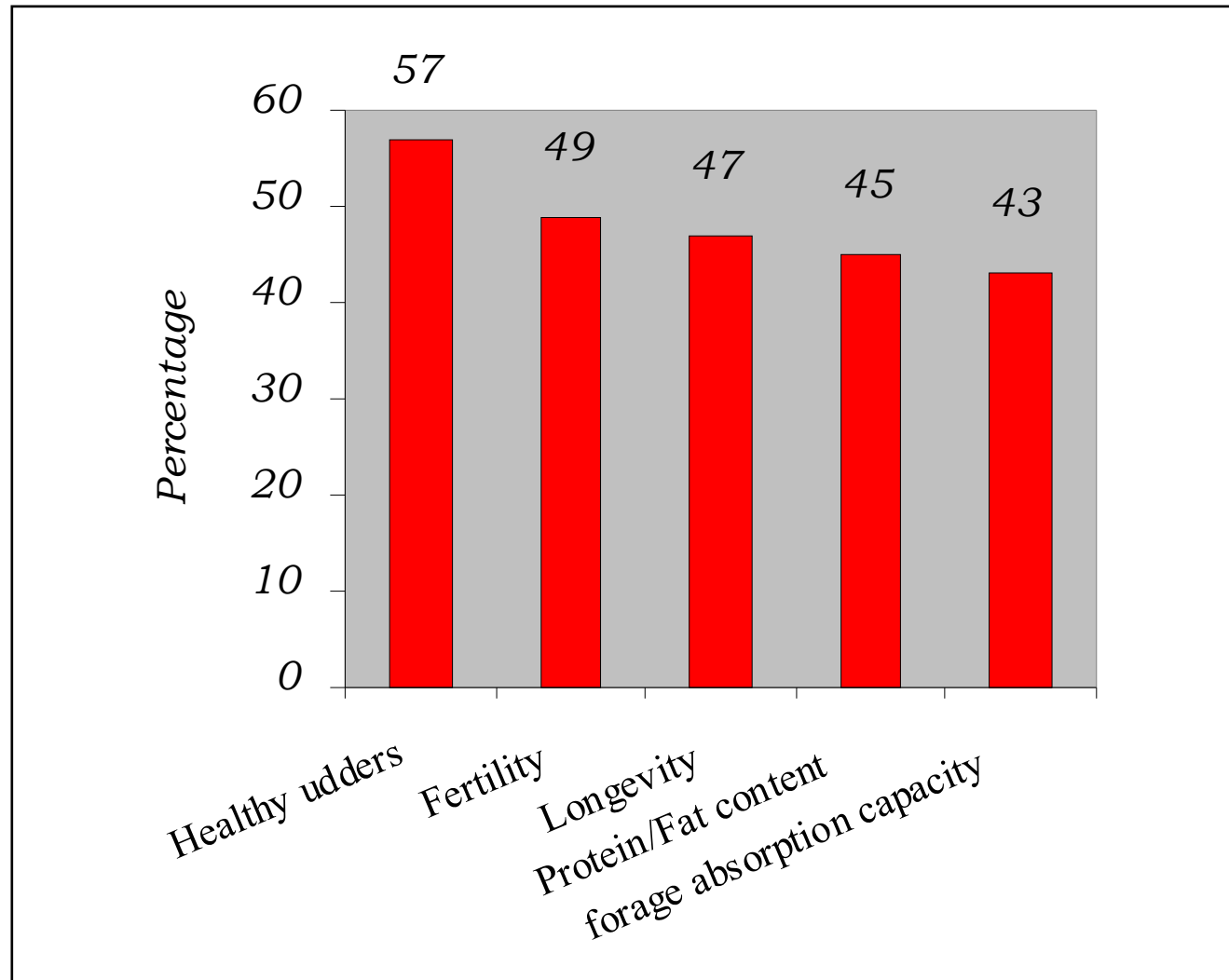
Problems occurring on Swiss organic dairy farms



The knowledge and the helpfulness of the Ecological Breeding Index (EBI)



Criteria which need more weight within the Ecological Breeding Index



Characterization of the farms having problems

NO *<=50 kg of concentrate*
Problem *< 15 % herd replacement*

Health problems *French speaking part of Switzerland*
Converted to organic farming before 1985
Natural service

Fertility *26-35 % Herd replacement rate*

Characterization of the farms according to their selection criteria

Milk Production

*Progeny test farms
> 20 cows
Farms in the valley*

Protein/Fat content

*> 7000 kg milk
Progeny test farms
> 20 cows*

Ease of milking

Fleckvieh

Fertility

<= 50 kg concentrate

Meat performance

*Fleckviehhalter
< 6000 kg milk
Mountain farms*

Milking Persistence

*French speaking part of Switzerland
> 400 kg concentrate
> 7000 kg milk
> 20 cows
Farms in the valley*

Disease Resistance

*French speaking part of Switzerland
Natural Service*

Characterization of the farms according to their EBI knowledge

EBI known

German speaking part of Switzerland

6000-7000 kg milk

Herd-book farms

Progeny test farms

Brown Swiss farms

Artificial insemination

EBI unknown

French speaking part of Switzerland

< 6000 kg milk

Not herd-book farms

Not progeny test farms

Fleckvieh farms

Characterization of the farms according to the Ecological Breeding Index usefulness

EBI considered as
helpful

≤ 50 kg concentrate

EBI considered as
useless

> 7000 kg milk

> 30 Ha

Characterization of the farms according to the different needs of improvement of the EBI

Milk production

French speaking part of Switzerland
> 400 kg concentrate
6000-7000 kg milk
Converted to organic farming after 2000

Protein/Fat content

> 400 kg concentrate
Progeny tests farms
Mountain zone 3
Farms having alpine cattle keeping

Longevity

Not Herd book farms
Natural service farms

Morphology

> 7000 kg Milk

Pasture adapted animals

< 6000 kg Milk

Conclusion

- Organic dairy farmers show high interest for cattle breeding
- The path for the organic dairy cow is traced but not finished yet.
- Existent solutions have to be improved (EBI) and new alternatives have to be found

