

Cooperating for the Future: We can only achieve food sustainability through synergistic cooperation

We believe that the challenges involving food sustainability are extremely complex. With a projected mid-century world population of nearly ten billion and currently about two billion people lacking food security, alternative strategies have to be developed. By choosing Expo Sub-theme Nr. 7, "Cooperation and Development," we communicate the importance of facilitating cooperated actions. Only a synergistic interdisciplinary approach will guide us to the exponential innovation needed to ensure sustainable food production.

Switzerland is in a key position for enabling exactly this cooperation. From its neutrality to its direct democracy, from its federalism to its cultural pluralism, Switzerland embodies a culture of cooperation both nationally and internationally. Through demonstrating the theme of cooperation in its pavilion at the Expo 2015, Switzerland reinforces its position as the international leader in negotiation and mediation.

From our Swiss perspective, cooperation is therefore central to all the other Expo themes, the means by which all other strategies come to fruition. We see valuable benefits in integrated approaches to agriculture, such as permaculture and organic farming, but we also acknowledge the imperative of technological advancements and radical improvements in efficiency for our global food future. Our goal is to demonstrate how a synergy of diverse opinions should be the leading model of cooperation, indispensable for a sustainable solution to our problem of feeding the planet.

We creatively interconnect dissonant food issues inspiring the visitor to stimulate resolution and redefine his own connection to food. We facilitate a necessary shift in paradigms, enabling visitor empowerment, not only as consumers, but as stewards of our ecosystem and citizens of our global community.

Architectural and Scenographic Concept

- interconnected rings, symbolizing a synergistic solution to the interconnected issues in food politics
- constructed from recycled steel and biodegradable mycelium – a strong mushroom-based material that is locally, affordably and efficiently grown from agricultural waste
- nanoparticle technology for a smooth durable coating
- clean energy technology, dynamic air purification and integrated deconstruction planning
- zero-waste policy, making use of gray water, recycling and the latest food waste management systems
- integrated active floors throughout the site that either produce electricity, trigger communication devices or provide a physical testing-ground for visitor cooperation
- ubiquitous exhibition: comprehensive indoor-outdoor installation; pervasive events eliminate waiting times
- myriad onsite and virtual interactive layers, accessible before, during and after the physical visit
- visitor generated content and personalized tracking for customized experiences; networked with all social media
- innumerable interactive video portraits synergistically orchestrating a diversity of opinions
- numerous short film sequences showcasing Swiss best-practices in the food industry from Max Havelaar and Pro Specie Rara to Agroscope and Tischlein Deck Dich, focusing on their cooperative contributions
- participative “adopt-a-wish”: Visitors voice theme-related wishes that are adopted by organizations, who financially sponsor the wish and integrate it into their corporate vision. Visible wishes chase through the pavilion and culminate in a three-dimensional representation in the center of the pavilion.
- animators ensure rewarding participative experiences
- Swiss food promotes personal, community and global health

Tales of the Expo: a father-son retrospective

“Last summer I took my son Luca to the World Expo in Milan. As an executive chef, I was searching for a new strategy for dealing with food waste in our restaurant chain. By the time we got to the Swiss pavilion Luca was hungry and bored. But the Swiss restaurant saved the day: Luca loved his crispy sticks of polenta ticinese and I was inspired by the innovative reinterpretations of Swiss cuisine. Afterwards Luca was full of energy again when he learned that the whole floor of the pavilion had built-in active sensors. He became a “floor expert,” activating different parts of the installation, while I took time to research restaurant food waste strategies on the Swiss pavilion app on my iPhone. I not only found new strategies, I also found a partner in Switzerland, who afterwards provided me with a state-of-the-art food tracking system, cutting my restaurant food costs by ten percent! All I did was make a wish for managed restaurant food waste and the Swiss company suddenly appeared as the sponsor of my wish!”

“During summer holidays, Papa and I went to the World Expo. The Swiss pavilion was totally cool. They had these huge ramps made out of real mushrooms, but it looked like a big plastic slide. Then there were these faces popping up everywhere talking to us. I got to make a wish and wished for a huge machine that makes it rain in the desert so we could grow more stuff and my wish raced all around the building like a firework. Then Papa was on his iPhone and I got to help this guy Lorenzo make a whole group of kids jump up and down at the same time so we could raise money to build wells in Africa. Each time ten of us jumped at the same time we could donate ten Euros! Then we got to watch a movie about kids in the villages where the wells are actually being built. I couldn’t believe that kids my age had to help their parents in the fields! I decided right then that I want to be a scientist when I grow up and invent a new magic food that doesn’t need water to grow so there won’t be any more hungry kids that have to work in the world.”