

Press release

Reinach, 11 January 2016

100 years of global brands for Switzerland

The Haecky Group is celebrating 100 years of business. The family-owned company represents about 190 brands in Switzerland and even markets its own brands in its product range. The anniversary was celebrated on Monday, 11 January with an aperitif at its headquarters in Reinach/BL. About 200 people were present, amongst them guests from politics and business as well as partner companies.

The Haecky Group's celebratory centennial aperitif took place on 11 January 2016 in the logistics area at the head office in Reinach. Invitees included Haecky employees, retired employees, representatives from partner companies as well as prominent individuals from business and politics. Present were Anton Lauber, Sabine Pegoraro, Monika Gschwind, Thomas Weber and Christoph Brutschin. Shareholders and members of the Board of Directors were also amongst the guests.

In his personal greeting, Anton Lauber (District President for the canton of Basel and surrounding area): "You can count on Haecky. Haecky values long-term partnerships with their suppliers."

In his personal address, Christoph Brutschin (Government Council for the canton of the City of Basel) provided a glimpse of the first 50 years of the company's history and reminded the audience of Haecky's innumerable construction projects on Laufen street.

Peter Haecky (Chief Administrative Officer for the group) took a (customarily) humorous and eloquent look at the past and future in his speech and noted: "I am proud of both my grandfather's achievements and what we as his descendants, with the help of our employees, have achieved.

Markus Wehrli (CEO of the Haecky Group) provided a synopsis of the corporate culture and business values: "Haecky is happiness -- as the CEO, that's more than just our slogan. It is a privilege to work with such committed employees as well as with such wonderful products and to be able to provide small pleasures for other people in their everyday lives. A privilege that lives in Haecky."

Turning difficulties into a success

Their story of success began at a time when very few people founded a company: 1915, in the middle of the First World War. The thriving hotel owner Jean Haecky was managing the Lucerne's old and worthy "Hotel des Balances". Because of the war, it was becoming increasingly difficult to fill the hotel to capacity. Jean Haecky realized, however, that even in times such as those, there was a demand for exclusive products. The businessman recognized his chance to diversify. He used his connections to wine makers in France and began importing French wine. And that was extremely successful. On 22 April 1916 the "Jean Haecky Hotel & Imports AG" was founded, which serves as the cornerstone for today's Haecky Group. In time, the business of importing wines, spirits and food became more important for the hotel owner. As such, an increased number of distributors for exclusive brands were taken on.

One hundred years later the Haecky Group is a flourishing and modern family business with 270 employees in four locations and many internationally thriving brands of their own. There are now more than 2,000 products in their assortment. From its head office in Reinach/BL, Haecky rolls out over 190 brands in Switzerland, many with international reputations.

Global brands for Switzerland

The first distributors were big name brands like Vielle Cure, Courvoisier, Heidsieck-Monopole and Cordial Médoc. These were followed by Dewar's and Gordon's in 1920 and Colman's one year later. Haecky was also the first company to bring caviar to the European market after the war and the Russian Revolution. The year 1923 saw the import of Grand Marnier and further renowned brands. By 1924 Haecky was already representing 18 companies and employing 15 members of staff.

HAECKY IMPORT AG

Duggingerstrasse 15, Postbox, 4153 Reinach BL 1 / Switzerland
Tel. +41 61 716 81 81, Fax +41 61 716 81 00, E-Mail: haecky@haecky.ch
www.haecky.ch

In 1928 there was a special coup. On 30 April, Jean Haecky signed a "Memorandum of Agreement" with the American ketchup maker H.J. Heinz. However, sources say that Haecky had already been marketing the cult product since 1921. This makes the Haecky Group the oldest Heinz importer worldwide.

This was to be indicative of the next 100 years: importing select and exclusive brands for the Swiss market. Then came the distribution of many more big names, such as Tabasco (1959), Tio Pepe (1957), Amaro Montenegro and Molinari (1989), Rose's (1999) and in 2015 alone, 15 more brands, including Vecchia Romagna, Bowmore Yamazai and Laphroaig.

Today the company represents over 190 brands in Switzerland. Amongst them are in-house brands such as Casa Lo Alto (Spanish wine), Deliciel (pastries), Picoso (mushrooms), Sandro Vanini (fruit delicacies) or Rum Coruba.

Peter Haecky (President of the Board of Directors): "With the utmost modesty I dare say that there is probably a Haecky product in every Swiss household. This makes me proud. And it also shows that our family business has done many things right in the last 100 years."

A modern family business

The company is still owned by the founding Haecky family today. The family identifies with the group of companies, which the renowned consulting company "Ernst & Young" attested to be an "exemplary Swiss family" in 2010. Haecky's Board of Directors is made up of 3rd and 4th generation family members as well as external experts. This ensures continuity, a value for which the name Haecky stands. According to Peter Haecky: "Partnerships are important to us. For example in 1957, this led to an invitation from the company Gonzalez Byass to become a minority shareholder." (see history 1992)

A considerable amount of the Haecky Group's success is due to its employees. In Peter Haecky's words: "This is not the typical cliché, but has been a way of life for the past 100 years. We train apprentices, take care of the people who work for us and also regularly invite those who are already retired."

Specialisation, innovation, continuity, identification and a high degree of transparency -- these are crucial points for success according to Markus Wehrli (CEO Haecky Group). "We maintain close, active and open communication with our partners and with both clients and trademark owners. As a distributor and a manufacturer of branded goods, we have a deeper understanding for the needs of our partners."

With the construction of the Sandro Vanini production facility in Ticino and the integration of pastries and baked goods from manufacturer Deliciel AG, the Haecky Group has consciously made some very strategic moves in the last few years. In addition to their trade of high-quality foods, spirits and champagnes, they have also managed to strengthen their own brands. Brands produced by Haecky itself are also exported, especially Sandro Vanini.

The Haecky Group is presenting itself in 2016 as the optimum mix of yesterday, today and tomorrow: an old and worthy establishment with modern infrastructure and progressive thought and action.

Since its founding, the Haecky Group has been 100% family owned. A team of 270 employees generate sales of approximately 100 million CHF with high-quality food and beverages (spirits and sparkling wines). The head office is in Reinach/BL which is also the location of Haecky Import AG. Further subsidiaries can be found in Widnau (Haecky DistriFresh AG), Rivera (Sandro Vanini AG) and Birmenstorf (Deliciel AG). Its product range consists of internationally recognised brands, which are either produced by Haecky in Switzerland or are imported from all over the world. Haecky is happiness! Further information is available at www.haecky.ch

HAECKY IMPORT AG