

**Textile- and Clothing Industry Switzerland: Business in 2009 not Bright, but Supported by Textile Innovations**



The annual media conference of the TVS Textilverband Schweiz

([www.swisstextiles.ch](http://www.swisstextiles.ch))

took place on 28

April in the Blumenhalle (flower hall) in Zurich. Despite the nice name of this place the president of the association Max R. Hungerbühler was not able to report of bright business results for the total branch in 2009. However, he stressed that a certain amount of optimism was justified for the economic perspectives of the member companies. Due to the fact that Switzerland according to the European Innovation scoreboard from March 2010 – a publication of the EU-commission – has the highest innovative performance of 33 European states, this is also a credit to the innovative TVS-member companies.

 weba  
Weberei Appenzell AG



Alexander Barberi, director sales and marketing of the weba Weberei Appenzell AG ([www.weba.ch](http://www.weba.ch)), Appenzell, talked about

“Swiss Organic Fab-

rics“(SOF). The new TVS-collective brand, registered in 2009 as national brand ([www.swissorganicfabrics.com](http://www.swissorganicfabrics.com)), stands for highest Swiss quality (9 member companies TVS so far). Cultivated according to strict guidelines, the natural fibers (with the current focus on cotton) are subject to mandatory ecological requirements in all steps of production. All factories are certified according to the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS). For the

producers of the raw material is mandatory that they have to keep well-defined social standards. The brand Swiss Organic Fabrics stands for 100% sustainable ecological textile production and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). All production steps, except for the cultivation of certified Organic Cotton, are carried out exclusively in Switzerland (Made in Switzerland).

 Christian Fischbacher  
S O F F A B R I C S



Michael Fischbacher, CEO of the Christian Fischbacher AG

([www.fischbacher.ch](http://www.fischbacher.ch)), St. Gallen and his wife Camilla D. Fischbacher

– product manager –

presented together the new Benu PET-collection ([www.benu.fischbacher.com](http://www.benu.fischbacher.com)). In an unique technological process yarn is being produced out of empty (Polyethylenterephthalat)-bottles and afterwards woven to be high-quality fabrics for furnishings. The yarns go through a strict quality control, are dyed, woven and finished to functional requirements. The innovative cover fabrics receive additionally a nano-finish. By that, a super-hydrophobic surface is produced. The moisture and dirt repellent materials are used for upholstery and the finest of deco materials. For each woven m of fabric are up to 17 bottles of 500 ml processed. The new Benu PET-collection fulfills the set standards of the Cradle to Cradle-committee and received already many awards. It is characterized in production by the low energy use and economical water use and does not least add to the reduction of mountains of trash.

**GESSNER AG** After the lectures two factory tours took place. The Jacquard weaving mill Gessner AG ([www.gessner.ch](http://www.gessner.ch)) in Wädenswil produces with 53 employees - including six designers plus archives of the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century – high-quality, fashionable and functional Jacquard fabrics for furnishings, upholstery, women's wear and biologically circulation-capable Cradle to Cradle-cover fabrics for climatized seats according to the principles of eco-effectivity with the worldwide copyrighted brand "Climatex" ([www.climatex.com](http://www.climatex.com)).



In the area furniture and drapery fabrics exist good contacts to important enterprises in Europe, USA and Asia – export share 98%. Their motto is "Interior is Fashion – Fashion is Interior". The company, founded in 1841, is owned by the family Isler, and endowed with capital stock worth 2.4 Mill CHF. Managing director Frey Baumeier explained after a factory tour that Climatex is a mixture of three fibers, namely farm wool, ramie and Redesigned Lenzing FR – a flame-retardant cellulosic fiber especially designed for Climatex made from European Common Beech. No chemical treatments or coatings are necessary. This innovation already makes up 30% of the total production. From this total production two-thirds go to furnishing fabrics and one-third to clothing fabrics, where Japan as buyer is leading in jacket qualities since 15 years. In the weaving mill 52 electronic Jacquard-loom work in a 24-



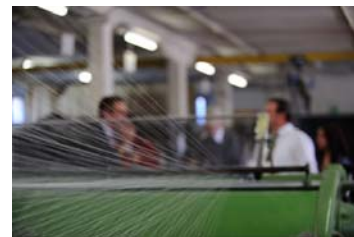
hours-cycle. 200 t of finished yarn are processed per year.



As further TVS-member Jenny Fabrics AG – loom weaving mill for high-quality raw weaves ([www.ziegelbruecke.com](http://www.ziegelbruecke.com)) – in Ziegelbrücke was visited. The family-SMB exists since 1834 and is led nowadays by the sixth generation, as COO Ralf Itzek explained. Fritz + Caspar Jenny AG is the parent company and deals mainly with real estate marketing. With a yearly sales of around 30 Mill CHF they produce at Jenny Fabrics on a 15,000 sqm factory area, and there about 7 Mill running meters or about 11 Mill sqm raw weave. Yearly they process around 1.7 Mill kg yarn (ca. 85% natural fiber, mainly cotton). The weaving mill works in three shifts the whole week, other departments in two shifts. About 30% of the yearly production is manufactured in two weaving mills in Eastern Europe



(Czech Republic). 120 employees are working there, three of them trainees. Altogether are 95 most modern weaving looms installed there. 48 machines have been newly bought alone in 2007 for 7 Mill CHF. The raw weaves are used for shirts and blouses (about 60%), women's wear (around 20%), home textiles (about 15%) and semi-technical textiles (around 5%). Jenny Fabrics has the certificates Oeko-Tex 100, Oeko-Tex 1000, Oeko-



Tex 100plus, GOTS, Swiss Organic Fabrics, Swiss Cotton and is CO<sub>2</sub>-reduced.

*Gert Krockert  
Translation: Dr. H. Arndt*