



Master in Life Sciences

A cooperation between
BFH, FHNW, HES-SO, ZFH

Module Title	Agriculture and Forestry in Mountain Areas
Module Code	MCLs245
Module	AF-51
ECTS Credits	5
Workload	150 h: Contact 50 h; Excursion 50 h; Self-study 50 h
Module Coordinator	<p>Name Jean-Jacques Thormann</p> <p>Phone +41 31 910 47 21</p> <p>Email jean-jacques.thormann@bfh.ch</p> <p>Address Bern University of Applied Sciences, School of Agricultural, Forest and Food Sciences, Laenggasse 85, 3052 Zollikofen</p>
Lecturers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandra Contzen • David Raemy • Jean-Jacques Thormann • Beat Reidy • Christian Willisch • Guest lecturers
Entry Requirements	Literature for preparation will be provided.
Learning Outcomes and Competencies	<p><u>Professional competencies:</u></p> <p>After completing the module, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the ecosystem services and public services provided by silviculture, agriculture and alpine transhumance in mountain areas and evaluate them through case studies. • Characterise the general principles of semi-natural, multifunctional forest management based on a mountain forestry operation. • Characterise the main features of agricultural and forestry policy and evaluate the impact on forest holdings, alpine pasture holdings and other agricultural holdings. • Understand Swiss mountain forestry and forest management in its historical context and compare it with that of other countries in the Alpine mountain region. • Assess the relationships between game species and the forestry and farming sectors and develop solutions to problems. • Characterise the physiographic, cultural-historical and production conditions of alpine and mountain farming. • Analyse the situation of agricultural and alpine pasture holdings in mountain areas from a sustainability perspective (economic, social and ecological) by means of examples. <p><u>Social, personal and methodological skills:</u></p> <p>After completing the module, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise, analyse and present the interplay of various factors. • Put themselves in the shoes of another person / group of actors and view, analyse and understand a situation from their perspective.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critically scrutinise their own perspective.
Module Content	In the module, the basics of agriculture and forestry in mountainous areas in Switzerland are elaborated and explored in depth in the context of field trips and a case study.
Teaching and Learning Methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theory inputs, group work, field trips • Group work on a case study
Assessment of Learning Outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Group documentation of a case study (group grade) (1/3) 2) Oral exam (individual grade) (2/3)
Bibliography	
Language	English and German (field week): students must be able to interact in German with local stakeholders.
Comments	There will be a field week (Monday - Friday) during calendar week 42 in October.
Last Update	January 2026