

Agricultural Commodity Investing: A Controversy

Commodities investing has become very popular in recent years, greatly transforming the structure of participants in commodity futures markets. Over the **last decade, investments in commodity products grew** from 10bn to more than 400bn USD. Due to increasing amounts of managed money being invested in commodity markets and a simultaneous rise in commodity prices, a public debate started over the **threats and benefits of commodities investing**. The debate is most controversial in **agricultural commodities** where several NGO's and independent organizations suggest that food prices and food price volatility are related more to the popularity of commodity ETFs and investment funds, than to rising demand and tight global supply. As a result of public and media pressure criticising investors of causing hunger in the world, several **asset managers** in France and Germany decided to **pare down their exposure** to the food sector.



The debate is **highly relevant also to Switzerland**, as Swiss-based investment companies are actively involved in commodity investing. In order to **discuss the controversy on agricultural investments in a fair and balanced manner**, the three organizations **Commodity Club, Green Buzz and Club of Rome** (please find details at the end of the document) joined forces to organize a panel-discussion in Zurich. Be aware that **registration is required**.

Format:	Panel-discussion, followed by an apéro
Date:	Wednesday, August 28th, 2013
Time:	18:30 (doors open at 18:00)
Location:	Hotel Krone Unterstrass , Schaffhauserstrasse 1, 8006 Zürich
Costs:	20.- CHF (incl. apéro; paid at the door or via Eventbrite)
Registration:	Required at http://eventbrite.com/event/7791040211

Join the debate with a **high-level panel** of dedicated experts with **different backgrounds** and expertise in agricultural investments:

- [Ian Johnson](#), Secretary General of the **Club of Rome**
- [Dr. Thomas Braunschweig](#), Specialist for trade policy and agricultural commodity markets, **The Berne Declaration**
- [Dr. Stéphane Graber](#), Secretary General of **GTSA** (Geneva Trading and Shipping Association)
- [Prof. Dr. Heinz Zimmermann](#), Professor for Financial Market Theory at the **University of Basel**

The panel will be **held in English** and will be moderated by [Dr. Bernd Schanzenbächer](#), Managing Partner at EBG Capital.

The dialogue will focus on the following **topics**:

- **Role of speculators** in rising soft commodity prices (causes and effects, role of investors, functioning of markets, etc.)
- Need for and extent of **regulatory actions** (position limits, reporting standards and others)
- **Measures** that could be helpful in this debate (more transparency, strategic storage, etc.)
- Concrete measures to **fight global hunger** effectively

We are happy to welcome you to this interesting discussion and to share opinions with you during the apéro after the panel.

The event is kindly supported by [Swisslinx](#) and the [Center for Responsibility in Finance \(CRF\)](#).

Peter Sigg
President, Commodity Club

Falko Paetzold
President, Green Buzz

Ian Johnson
Secretary General, Club of Rome

Organizers

Commodity Club Switzerland: The business club aims to bring together business professionals and leaders who are actively involved in the [commodity industry](#) in Switzerland. The club fosters the exchange of interdisciplinary know-how and innovative ideas. www.commodityclub.ch

Green Buzz: The association brings together 800+ professionals involved and interested in [sustainability](#), across all industries and sectors, with the aim to enable multipliers and changemakers to learn, connect and be most effective. www.greenbuzz.ch

Club of Rome: The Club of Rome was founded in 1968 as an informal association of independent leading personalities from politics, business and science with a common concern for the future of humanity and the planet; [long-term thinkers](#), interested in contributing in a systemic interdisciplinary and holistic manner to a better world. www.clubofrome.org

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The [commodities](#) practice is well established in the firm, dating back to 2002. Our client base is composed of commodity trading and producing firms as well as companies providing associated services both up and down the production chain. Further, we work with the best [alternative investment companies](#) in Switzerland and abroad, choosing a client base that includes Hedge Funds, Private Equity Houses, External/Independent Asset Managers, Family Offices and Investment Managers since 2004. <http://www.swisslinx.com/>



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