



**Media release**

Basel, 24 February 2014

### **Bell Group improves its profit in 2013 – dividend remains the same at CHF 60**

**The Bell Group saw stable development in 2013. Sales grew by 3.7 % to CHF 2.62 billion. The net profit rose by 1.0 % to CHF 76.6 million. The dividend will be the same at CHF 60 per share.**

The Bell Group's sales strengthened in 2013 by 3.7 % to CHF 2.62 billion. This sales growth is mainly linked to rising procurement prices, which increased by around 7 % in total. Sales volume declined by 1.7 % to 218 million kg. A downturn in the seasonal business in the first half, some markets that are shrinking and the restructuring of Bell's product ranges were the main contributors to this decline.

Higher raw material prices pushed the gross profit margin down from 33 to 32.1 %. By constantly expanding the range of products with items with higher added value and removing unprofitable items, Bell improved the gross profit in Swiss francs by some CHF 8 million and partially compensated for the negative price and volume effects. Earnings before interest, taxes and depreciation (EBITDA) rose by around CHF 4.5 million to CHF 190 million. Adjusted for exceptionals (some CHF 9 million in the previous year), EBITDA was down around CHF 3 million on the previous year. At CHF 76.6 million, the net profit firmed by 1.0 %. Given this result, the Shareholders' Meeting will be asked to approve the same dividend as in the previous year of CHF 60 for the 2013 financial year.

#### **Bell Switzerland**

Bell Switzerland increased its sales revenue by 5.0 % to CHF 1.84 billion, while sales volume remained stable at 122.1 million kg. Sales growth was mainly driven by the high prices for raw materials. Independently of these developments, the poultry segment once again proved to be a strong driver of growth. Raw material prices increased by up to 30 %, which put strong pressure on margins. The weak barbecue season due to poor weather in the first half of the year had a particularly negative impact on the result for the Charcuterie Business Unit. Starting from an already high level, shopping tourism to neighbouring countries continued to grow in 2013, which once again substantially burdened Swiss production.

#### **Bell Germany**

Sales for Bell Germany declined by 1.6 % to CHF 482.8 million (-3.5 % in local currency). At 62.6 million kg, sales volume was down by 6.1 % on the previous year. In the scalded sausage, cured sausage and convenience segments, Bell was unable to escape the market-driven losses. Bell continued to push ahead with the optimisation of its product ranges. The air-dried ham product group continued to do well. Bell bucked the market trend to post substantial growth and expand its position as leader in the German market.



### **Bell Eastern Europe/Benelux**

At CHF 187.1 million, sales for the Eastern Europe/Benelux Division were up by 2.7 % (+0.8 % in local currency) while sales volume improved by 2.3 % to 20.3 million kg. In Poland, the Niepolomice plant reports very good capacity utilisation and sales volume exceeded 8,000 tonnes for the first time. Thanks to an optimised product mix, Bell posted an above-average increase in sales and raised the added value. In Hungary, sales volume grew by 3.6 % to 6,250 tonnes. Promising new product concepts with higher added value are in the pipeline and the organisational structure, processes and product ranges are continuously being optimised. The Novak Business Unit now manages 116 (+16) branch shops in the Czech Republic and Slovakia and business remains satisfactory. In Belgium, the restructuring of the product range initiated in 2012 led to a volume decrease of around 8 %. Bell Benelux is optimising its product portfolio in order to exploit the potential for top-quality specialities and clearly communicate their added value. This will also support the reorientation of Bell Benelux as a regional Bell sales organisation with fewer trading activities.

### **Bell France**

Bell France continued to grow in 2013. Sales increased by 8.9 % to CHF 106.0 million (+6.8 % in local currency). Sales volumes for the cured sausage and ham ranges in France trended very positively and improved by 1.8 % to 12.8 million kg.

### **Outlook**

As the 2013 scenario with several negative market influences colliding is unlikely to repeat itself in 2014, Bell is expecting the framework conditions to improve slightly in the current financial year. However, it remains a central challenge to introduce the price increases in the market made necessary by the high prices for raw materials. Bell will continue to consistently restructure its product ranges, and intends to finalise this process in 2014. This already started to boost efficiency and market performance in the past financial year and the effect will strengthen this year.

This media release can be accessed at [www.bellfoodgroup.com/en/media/press-releases](http://www.bellfoodgroup.com/en/media/press-releases).  
Photos and more information on the Bell Group can be found at [www.bellfoodgroup.com](http://www.bellfoodgroup.com).

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### **About Bell**

The Bell Group is one of the leading meat processors in Europe. Its range of products includes meat, poultry, charcuterie, seafood and convenience products. With the brands Bell, Abraham, Hoppe, ZIMBO and M<sup>o</sup>ssieur Polette, the Group meets a diversity of customer needs. Bell counts the retail and wholesale trade, food service sector and food processing industry among its customers. Some 6,500 employees generated consolidated sales of CHF 2.62 billion in 2013. Bell is listed on the Swiss stock exchange.

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## Bell Group – key figures for 2013 financial year

	2013	2012	+/-
Sales proceeds in CHF 1,000	2,620,490	2,526,520	+3.7 %
- <i>Switzerland</i>	1,844,525	1,756,243	
- <i>Europe</i>	775,965	770,277	
Operating income in CHF 1,000	2,597,788	2,508,378	+3.6 %
Sales volume in tonnes	217,951	221,705	-1.7 %
- <i>Switzerland</i>	122,145	122,504	
- <i>Europe</i>	95,806	99,201	
EBITDA as % of net income	189,658 7.3 %	185,138 7.4 %	+2.4 %
EBIT as % of net income	104,943 4.0 %	99,145 4.0 %	+5.9 %
Annual profit as % of net income	76,625 2.9 %	75,849 3.0 %	+1.0 %
Investments in production facilities	85,527	73,676	+16.1 %
Equity as % of total assets	731,458 50.8 %	675,472 51.4 %	+8.3 %
Total assets	1,440,074	1,315,218	+9.5 %
Net earnings per share	CHF 192	CHF 191	+0.7 %
Dividend per share (2013 proposal)	CHF 60	CHF 60	
Number of employees (in number of persons as of 31.12.)	6,606	6,469	+2.1 %
- <i>Switzerland</i>	3,513	3,414	
- <i>Germany</i>	1,178	1,306	
- <i>Czech Republic</i>	760	651	
- <i>France</i>	438	421	
- <i>Poland</i>	193	181	
- <i>Hungary</i>	185	166	
- <i>Other</i>	339	330	

Media conference on  
2013 financial results

24 February 2014; 10:30 hrs  
Bell Ltd, Elsässerstrasse 174, 4056 Basel