



Supplier Spotlight: Geflechtfabrik Tressa AG

Swiss straw braid has been used to make hats for centuries. Despite the name, however, not all of these special hatbraids are actually produced in Switzerland anymore. In fact, there is only one authentic Swiss straw factory left - Tressa.

For hundreds of years, straw braid was an important cottage industry in the Freiamt, a region of the Canton of Aargau in Switzerland. Wohlen, a town in the centre of this region, became a hub of high fashion and for

over two centuries its highly skilled merchants and artisans developed materials for the production and trimming of ladies hats. Ingenuously blending straw with horsehair, silk, hemp or cotton, their straw braids became known around the world for their unique and exquisite beauty.

Tressa is the oldest straw braid factory in the world and the only one still operating in Switzerland. In 1840, Marie Stäger founded Stäger + Co AG, a company which

made hatbraids and had over 100 employees. Although this business would eventually shift its focus to packaging, they acquired another braid factory in 1968 and renamed it Geflechtfabrik Tressa AG.

In 2001, Geflechtfabrik Tressa AG, also known as Tressa, became a completely independent entity specialising in the manufacture of braided products

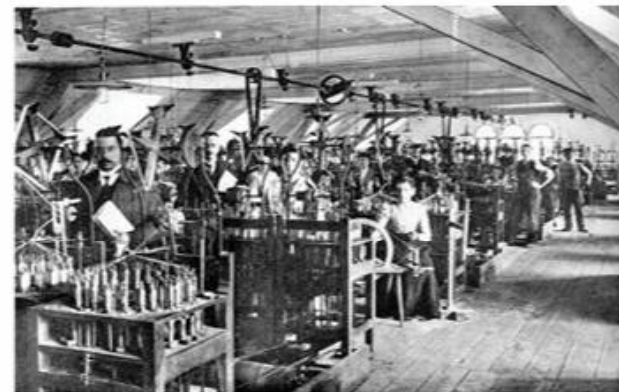
Markus and Karin Fischbach, pictured here with their two sons, began working at Tressa in 2004. Neither had a background in the field; Markus was a banker and Karin a housewife and bookkeeper. They began to learn the straw trade, however, and when an opportunity to purchase the factory arose, they took it.

As the new owners, the Fischbachs worked hard to expand their product offerings and build up their client base. They currently employ three people and ship orders worldwide.

Today, Tressa produce a wide range of braided products, all of which are made in the Swiss village of Villmergen. They've even created their own custom Paglina and Starbright braids, both of which incorporate an exclusive material which they call 'Faltbändel'.



Tressa: NOW and THEN





As well as hatbraids, Tressa manufacture many other natural and synthetic millinery materials, including crinoline (horsehair), tubulars, fancy braids and decorative ribbons. They also make shoelaces, elastics and cords for the domestic market and nylon core vents for foundries.

To see all of the speciality braided products available from Geflechtfabrik Tressa AG, go to www.tressa.ch. Orders can be placed by emailing info@tressa.ch.