

# MILL-BIČĊERIJA

The Official Newsletter of the Public Abattoir

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## ĠEWWA L-BIČĊERIJA Ġurnata fil-ħajja ta' Bičċier Ewlieni

Qabel ma jisbaħ fuq il-Marsa, il-hsejjes ritmati tal-metall jibdwu jidwu b'mod ħafif minn bejn il-ħitan tal-Bičċerija. Fost dawk li jqumu kmieni hemm Senior Foreman Charles Seguna, li l-esperjenza tiegħu testendi fuq kważi erba' deċennji, u li l-preċiżjoni u l-kburija tiegħu huma mnaqqxa f'kull qatgħa li jagħti l-approvazzjoni tagħha bħala l-biċċier ewlieni tal-biċċerija.

“Is-skieken huma l-għodda tiegħi, imma għajnejja u jdejja huma l-kompass tiegħi,” jgħid b'nofs tbissima hekk kif jilbes l-fardal u jiddiżinfetta l-boots u jdejh. Fl-4.30 ta' filgħodu, l-biċċerija tkun mimlija b'intensità kwietta. Mhux biss kwistjoni ta' effiċjenza — iżda li tingħata għeħ il-proċess, u l-annimal. Seguna jibda billi jikkonferma r-rwoli u jieħu postu, flimkien mal-biċċiera l-oħra kollha li jkunu xogħol dakinhar.

Kull marka tas-sikkina tirrakkonta storja. “Titgħallem tara l-annimal għal dak li hu — nutriment, tradizzjoni, responsabbiltà,” jispjega Seguna hekk kif jidentifika kull dettall f'kull pass tal-proċess: il-karkassa li timxi minn sezzjoni għall-oħra tal-linja tal-produzzjoni f'sinfonija ta' biċċerija li taqta', tirranġa u tivverifika s-sigurtà u l-kwalità għal mill-eċċellenza garantita.

L-iġjene u s-sigurtà huma fost il-fatturi ewlenin li Seguna jzomm f'moħħu. B'sistemi ta' tkessiħ avanzati, il-majjal frisk jinħażen għall-ghada filgħodu.



Seguna jispjega li l-ipproċessar taċ-ċanga huwa identiku fir-rigward tal-istandards u fatturi mhux negozjabbli tal-iġjene u l-prattika — madankollu t-teknika hija kompletament differenti, u teħtieġ sett ta' biċċiera mħarrġa b'ħiliet speċifiċi u differenti.

Sezzjonijiet u prodotti sekondarji differenti jiġu separati tul il-linja: l-ġewwieni jintbagħtu lejn direzzjoni waħda għall-ipproċessar futur, ix-xaħam jinħażen f'sezzjoni ddedikata, u l-qatgħat primarji taċ-ċanga jintbagħtu għat-tkessiħ wara li jiġu himbrati, ittikkettjati u spezzjonati għall-kwalità. L-ipproċessar ċanga isir kull nhar ta' Tlieta.

Kull nhar ta' Erbgħa, jiġu pproċessati n-nagħaġ u l-mogħoż. Il-popolarità tal-laħam tan-nagħaġ żdiedet b'mod qawwi, kif ukoll l-interess fil-produzzjoni ta' prodotti ta' kwalità oghla; bil-filett tan-nagħaġ u l-fwied tan-nagħaġ tal-Bičċerija jispikkaw bħala prodotti ewlenin li jiġbdu l-attenzjoni.

*“Li taħdem fil-Bičċerija tani esperjenza. Għallmitni nuża għajnejja u nifhem kif għandu jidher, jinħass u fl-aħħar mill-aħħar jittiekel laħam ta' kwalità għolja.”*

*“L-esperjenza Prattika fuq il-post tax-xogħol tippermettilek tkun proattiv, issib soluzzjonijiet qabel ma l-problemi jinqalgħu, u dejjem tfittex modi kif ittejjeb l-istandards tas-saħħa, is-sigurtà u l-kwalità, kemm fl-industrija kif ukoll fis-suq.”*

## INTERVISTA MALL-MINISTRU ANTON REFALO

Din l-intervista tiffoka fuq l-importanza tat-trobbija tal-bhejjem bħala parti mill-wirt agrikolu Malti, u kif il-Ministeru qed jappoġġja lill-bdiewa u r-raħħala permezz ta' inizzjattivi, innovazzjoni u sostenibbiltà. Tishaq ukoll fuq l-iżvilupp ta' teknoloġiji godda u prodotti innovattivi, bħall-mazzit, li jżidu l-valur u jnaqqsu l-ħela fl-agrikoltura lokali.

*Aqra iktar f'pagna 5...*



# IL-VUĊI TAL-BIDWI

## In-Nisa fil-Bidja: Mill-Għalqa sal-Furketta

Redianne ilha parti mill-komunità agrikola minn ċkunita mill-età ta' 10 snin, meta kienet tgħin lil missierha fl-għalqa tal-familja b'xogħlijiet sempliċi bħat-tahlib tal-bhejjem u l-għalf tal-frieħ. L-influenza bejn il-generazzjonijiet ġejja min-nannu ta' Redianne, li kien dak li nissel din l-imħabba u r-rispett f'Redianne lejn l-annimali u t-trobbija tal-bhejjem — b'mod partikolari l-baqar.

Redianne u huha huma bdiewa tat-tielet generazzjoni, li ħadu r-responsabbiltà f'idejhom mingħand missierhom wara li hu kien wiritha min-nannuwhom.

Ġurnata tipika fl-għalqa teħtieġ direttiva waħda ewlenija: id-dedikazzjoni. Dedikazzjoni murija kemm lejn il-baqar tal-ħalib kif ukoll lejn il-baqar tal-laħam.

Redianne u t-tim tagħha jużaw is-siġħat bikrin ta' filgħodu biex jitingħu l-bhejjem, inadffu l-maqjel, jnaddfuhom u jieħdu ħsiebhom — filwaqt li kontinwament jiżguraw li l-baqar ikunu b'saħħithom u jkomplu jiffjorixxu. Wara li tintemm ix-shift ta' filgħodu, Redianne tieħu fuqha lir-rwol l-ieħor tagħha bħala omm.

Minbarra x-xogħol ta' kuljum fejn is-saħħa tal-annimali huwa r-rekwiżit ewlieni, Redianne kienet involuta wkoll fit-twelid tal-frieħ tal-baqar — tosservahom jieħdu l-ewwel nifs tagħhom, jreddgħu minn ma' ommhom u jikbru biex isiru bhejjem ta' kwalità għolja.

*"Is-sodisfazzjon li tara barri żgħir jikber u jiżviluppa huwa ta' premju kbir daqs li kieku tara l-familja tiegħek tikber. Dawn il-baqar huma parti mill-ħajja ta' kuljum tagħna u nieħdu ħsiebhom b'għożża kbira,"* tgħid Redianne.

Minkejja l-ħafna aspetti pożittivi, hemm ukoll xi sfidi.

L-ikbar tbatija emozzjonali hija meta jasal iż-żmien li l-bhejjem jintbagħtu għall-qatla u minkejja li hemm rabta emozzjonali.

Id-dedikazzjoni tagħhom lejn is-settur, l-impenn għall-produzzjoni ta' laħam ta' kwalità għolja u t-tradizzjoni li ilha teżisti għal generazzjonijiet twal, huma dak li jzommhom għaddejjin.



Redianne tkompli tgħid li wieħed mill-ikbar kuncetti żbaljati fis-settur huwa t-ttrattament ħazin tal-annimali.

*"Dan ma jstax ikun iktar 'il-bogħod kemm mill-verità! L-annimali tagħna huma bħal familja għalina. Inħobbu l-baqar tagħna u nittrattawhom b'rispett, mħabba u għożża. Meta jasal iż-żmien li nwasslu l-bhejjem tagħna lejn Il-Bieċerija, inkunu nafu x'inhuma l-passi li jmiss u nafu wkoll li l-proċess isir b'rispett kemm lejn l-annimal ħaj kif ukoll lejn il-kwalità tal-laħam li rabbejna."*

L-aktar element importanti f'dan is-settur huwa li jinżammu standards għoljin. Bil-korsijiet u t-taħriġ estensiv offrut minn istituzzjonijiet bħall-MCAST, il-possibiltajiet biex wieħed jidhol fil-ħajja agrikola jsiru aktar sempliċi u aċċessibbli. Iż-żieda fl-interess fl-iżvilupp tal-ħiliet tal-popolazzjoni fl-agrikoltura, is-saħħa tal-annimali u metodi tal-biedja se tissalvagwardja tradizzjoni u wirt li Malta għandha tkun tassew kburiya bihom.

*"Meta tkun trid tilhaq xi ħaġa fil-ħajja, tasal. Ma jimpurtax meta jew kif... jew min int. Bħala mara f'dan is-settur, nixtieq nara aktar rappreżentanza femminili, fejn aktar bdiewa żgħażaġh u veterinarji jiddedikaw il-karriera tagħhom għat-trobbija tal-bhejjem."*

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# MAZZIT

A country's cuisine is often a reflection of the geographic and economic realities that its people face. Limited resources often force creativity in the effective use of all available resources which leads to the variety of dishes found in the world. Malta is no exception to this rule and there is perhaps no better example of this creative adaptation than the Mazzit.

Mazzit has been produced on the Maltese islands for a good chunk of Maltese history, with reference dating back to the time of the Knights of St John. Its earliest definition is given by Gian Francesco Agius De Soldanis' *Damma tal kliem kartaginis mscerred del fom tal Maltin u Ghaucin* where it is confirmed that the Mazzit was already being made with the use of animal blood.

The use of blood is indicative of the poor conditions which many Maltese faced throughout much of Malta's poverty. Mazzit served as a principal protein source for the lower societal strata in Maltese society as purchasing prime cuts of meat was practically always outside of the means of this social class.

Facing a lack of access to meat, it is likely that the Mazzit was conceptualised as a way to extract as many edible agricultural products as possible from each carcass processed.

This mentality survived up until the post-second world war period where various historical interviews confirmed that the Mazzit was produced in great quantities during this period. Farmers that took their animals to be processed at the Public Abattoir were often involved in the production of Mazzit, choosing to gather the blood themselves for processing rather than letting it go to waste. This provided the farmer with an additional revenue stream while it also continued to make protein more accessible to the lower societal strata. Mazzit was often enjoyed on Sunday family meals, fried in flours and served alongside a serving of chips.

The Public Abattoir, recognising the historical importance of Mazzit, kicked off its effort to revitalise and protect this piece of Maltese Culinary Heritage in 2022. Efforts towards obtaining a PGI status for Mazzit were started along with investments into a Mazzit production plant which allows small-scale producers to produce Mazzit in a safe and hygienic environment under the eye of the Public Abattoir's HACCP officers, and using machinery designed to emulate traditional methods of production, easing the workload on producers while respecting the heritage of the Mazzit.

The process of acquiring the PGI entailed long hours of research through various historical repositories of Malta in order to trace its history throughout the ages. In addition, the Research Team at the Public Abattoir also conducted extensive interviews with varied Mazzit Producers which have been deposited at the Memorja Archive in order to protect these historical stories for future generations — ensuring that knowledge transfer with regards to Mazzit is safeguarded for posterity.

Thanks to this historical research the Public Abattoir pushed forward an application to grant Mazzit PGI status, meaning that it will be protected at EU level as a recognised part of Malta's culinary history, traditions and identity. This would also translate into new revenue streams for farmers and other parties integrated within the Mazzit value chain which will help to further safeguard our agricultural sector and workers through higher profits and returns.



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# INTERVISTA MALL-MINISTRU ANTON REFALO

It-trobbija tal-bhejjem u l-annimali tibqa' pilastru essenzjali tal-wirt agrikolu ta' Malta. B'liema modi l-Ministeru jfittex li juri d-dedikazzjoni u l-hiliet tal-bdiewa u r-raħala tal-pajjiż?

*It-trobbija tal-bhejjem u l-annimali hija waħda mill-pedamenti tal-wirt agrikolu ta' Malta, b'istorja twila li tmur lura sa żminijiet preistoriċi. F'dan ir-rigward, bħala Ministeru aħna impenjati bis-shiħ li nonoraw u nappoġġjaw id-dedikazzjoni tal-bdiewa u r-raħala tal-pajjiż.*

*Nagħmlu dan billi naħdmu b'mod attiv fuq inizjattivi li jippromwovu t-trobbija lokali tal-bhejjem, jiproteġu r-razez lokali u r-riżorsi ġenetiċi tagħhom, u jiffacilitaw l-iżvilupp tal-hiliet u t-trasferiment tal-ġharfien bejn il-ġenerazzjonijiet, sabiex inżommu l-komunitajiet rurali tagħna haġġin u nħarsu lejn il-futur tagħhom.*

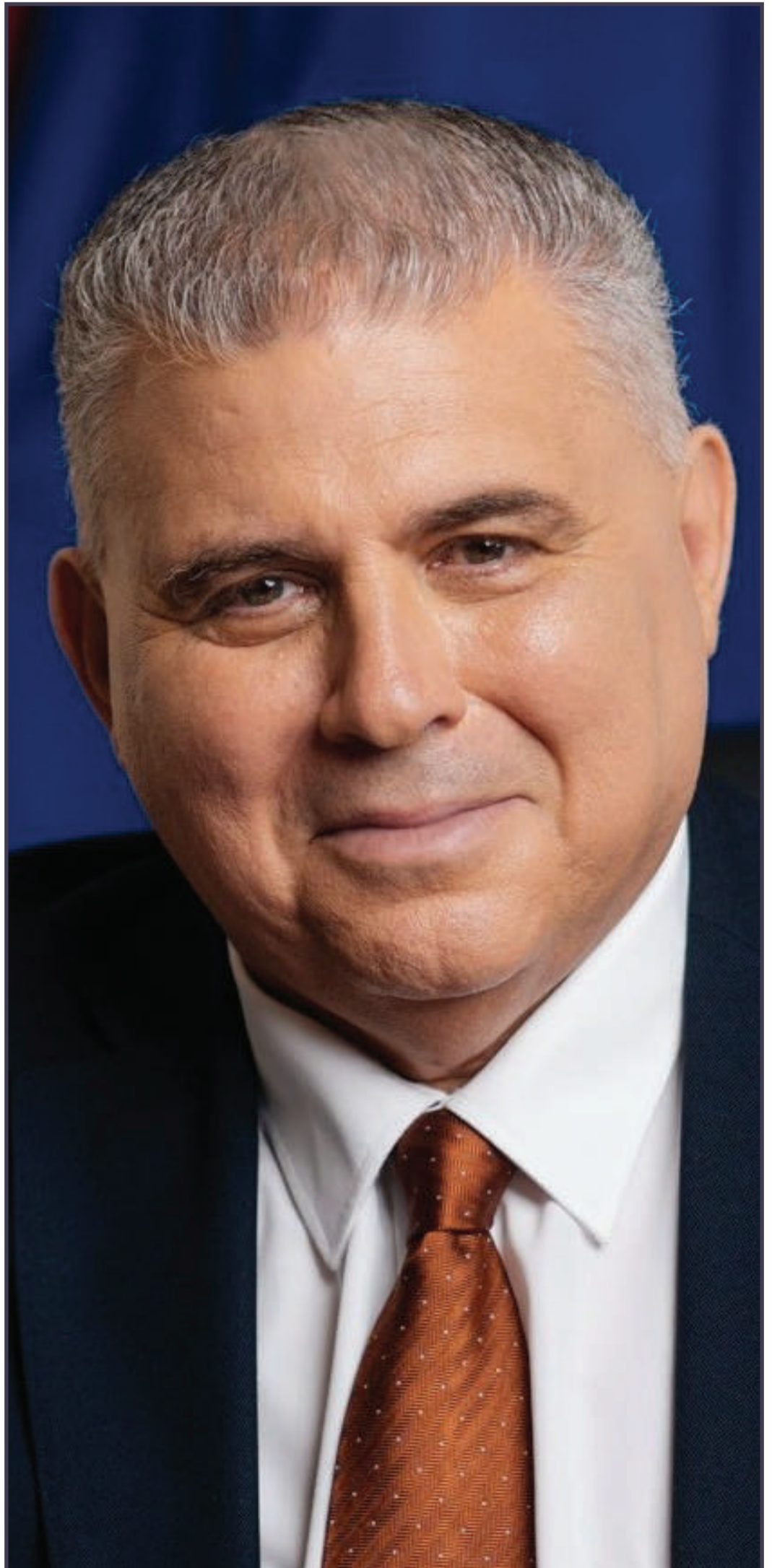
*Permezz ta' avvenimenti nazzjonali, kollaborazzjonijiet ma' kooperattivi agrikoli, u ħidma ddedikata lejn komunikazzjoni mall-pubbliku— inkluż l-partecipazzjoni mill-fieri u diversi proġetti — niżguraw li x-xogħol tar-raħala u l-bdiewa jkun viżibbli, apprezzat u rikonoxxut bħala parti fl-identità kulturali Maltija.*

L-innovazzjoni u s-sostenibbiltà qed isiru dejjem aktar ċentrali fl-agrikoltura moderna. Liema teknoloġiji jew prattiki jindikaw il-futur tal-biedja f'Malta?

*L-innovazzjoni u s-sostenibbiltà huma ċentrali għall-viżjoni fit-tul tal-Ministeru għall-agrikoltura iġenerali, u partikularment ta' dak li qed turi l-Biċċerija Pubblika permezz tal-ħidma tagħha. Investejna miljuni ta' ewro permezz ta' fondi tal-UE u fondi nazzjonali biex niffacilitaw investimenti kemm fuq l-irziezet kif ukoll tul il-value chain, sabiex ngħinu lill-bdiewa u r-raħala jużaw teknoloġiji moderni li jnaqssu t-tbattija mix-xogħol tagħhom u jottimizzaw il-produzzjoni, filwaqt li jnaqqsu l-konsum tal-ilma, l-enerġija u l-fertilizzanti. Dawn l-investimenti diġà qed jiffurmaw il-kapitlu li jmiss tal-biedja Maltija.*

*Jekk inħarsu b'mod speċifiku lejn ix-xogħol tal-Biċċerija Pubblika, dan qed juri kif l-innovazzjoni u s-sostenibbiltà jistgħu jgħallqu prodotti godda li jiġġeneraw valur miżjud għar-raħala, filwaqt li fl-istess ħin inaqqsu l-ħela tal-ikel u, konsegwentement, l-effetti ambjentali negattivi tal-produzzjoni agrikola lokali. Il-mazzit huwa eżempju ċar ta' dan. Riċerka fuq metodi tradizzjonali ta' produzzjoni giet ikkomplementata b'riċerka u żvilupp intern sabiex jinħoloq il-makinarju meħtieġ biex jiġi żgurat il-ġbir iġeniku tad-demm, id-defibrinazzjoni u l-ippakkjar. Dan ta' haġġa ġdida lil-hiliet ta' pproċessar li kienu qegħdin f'risku li jintilfu għal dejjem, iffacilita' l-użu tad-demm li altrimenti kien jintrema, u poggja dan il-prodott fis-suq mill-ġdid.*

*L-innovazzjoni ma waqfitx fuq it-teknoloġija biss, iżda estendiet ukoll għall-użu tal-mazzit f'prodotti godda li jappellaw għal segmenti differenti tas-suq, inklużi kroketti, pàté u anke muffin. Matul l-aħħar sentejn, huwa stmat li ġew użati madwar 15-il tunnellata demm kull sena, li kkontribwew għall-produzzjoni ta' madwar 30 tunnellata mazzit fis-sena. Approċċ bħal dan jindika triq li jistgħu jsegwu setturi oħra fl-agrikoltura lokali. m'hemmx limiti ta' x'jista jisir.*



Għaż-żgħażaġh li qed jikkunsidraw karriera fit-trobbija tal-bhejjem jew fil-produzzjoni tal-ikel, liema messaġġ ta' inkoraġġiment tagħtihom?

*Liż-żgħażaġh li qed jikkunsidraw karriera fit-trobbija tal-bhejjem jew fil-produzzjoni tal-ikel ngħidilhom dan: nittama li taċċettaw l-isfida. Jista' ma jkunx faċli, iżda l-agrikoltura llum hija taħlita eċċitanti ta' tradizzjoni, xjenza u innovazzjoni.*

*Kemm jekk għandkom passjoni għat-trobbija tal-animalli, għat-teknoloġija, għas-sostenibbiltà jew għall-wirt tal-ikel, dan is-settur joffri xogħol sinifikanti b'impatt reali fuq il-pajjiż, l-ambjent u s-soċjetà tagħna.*

*L-opportunitajiet iwarjaw minn biedja Prattika għal riċerka, żvilupp ta' prodotti u entrepreneurship fis-settur tal-agrikoltura u ikel. Fuq kolloxx, se tkunu qed tingħaqdu ma' komunità kburija bil-wirt tagħha u lesta tilqa' lill-ġenerazzjoni li jmiss ta' professjonisti hilijin, b'harsa 'l quddiem.*

Il-Ministeru dejjem aktar qed jaħdem biex iġib flimkien partijiet interessati minn tul il-katina agroalimentari kollha. Kemm hija importanti l-kollaborazzjoni bejn il-bdiewa, il-produtturi, ir-riċerkaturi u dawk li jfasslu l-politika għar-reżiljenza tas-sistema tal-ikel ta' Malta?

*Ir-reżiljenza tas-sistema tal-ikel tagħna tiddependi fuq kollaborazzjoni b'saħħha bejn kull ħolqa tal-katina agroalimentari. Il-bdiewa, il-proċessuri, ir-riċerkaturi, dawk li jfasslu l-politika u l-edukaturi kollha jgħibu magħhom ħiliet u għarfien differenti — mill-esperjenza Prattika fuq il-post tax-xogħol sal-għarfien xjentifiku u l-ippjanar strateġiku.*

*Meta dawn il-partijiet jaħdmu flimkien, insaħħu l-agrikoltura tagħna u, b'estensjoni, il-komunitajiet rurali lokali, intejbu l-istandards tal-produzzjoni u ngħinu l-innovazzjoni.*

*L-isforzi tal-Ministeru tagħna biex jiffacilitaw sħubijiet, inklużi inizjattivi kongunti ma' kooperattivi, universitajiet u partijiet interessati ohra, jirriflettu t-twemmin tagħna li approċċ ikkoordinat tul il-katina kollha huwa essenzjali biex nassiguraw is-sigurtà tal-ikel fit-tul ta' Malta.*



L-Biċċerija Pubblika kienet dejjem aktar fuq quddiem fil-promozzjoni tal-ikel lokali u fit-tisħih tat-traċċabbiltà tal-prodott lokali. Għaliex huwa importanti li l-konsumaturi Maltin jifhemu aħjar il-vjaġġ mill-għalqa sal-platt?

*L-Biċċerija Pubblika ħadet rwol dejjem aktar attiv fil-promozzjoni tal-ikel lokali għaliex nemmu bis-sħiħ li t-trasparenza ssaħħaħ il-fiduċja.*

*Meta l-konsumaturi jifhemu minn fejn ġej l-ikel tagħhom — inklużi l-istandards tas-saħħa tal-animalli tul il-proċess tal-produzzjoni tal-laħam, l-eċċellenza fl-iġjene u fil-kwalità, u kif il-prodott jitwassal fis-suq — ikunu jistgħu jagħmlu għażliet infurmati li jappoġġjaw lill-bdiewa lokali u l-ekonomija rurali ta' Malta.*

*L-enfasi fuq it-traċċabbiltà ssaħħaħ ukoll il-valur tal-prodotti tradizzjonali u l-istandards għoljin li jinżammu tul il-katina tal-provvista.*

*Dan ir-rwol, inklużi l-partecipazzjoni f'avvenimenti nazzjonali, fieri u inizjattivi simili, jgħin biex jerga' jinforma lill-pubbliku bir-realtajiet u r-responsabbiltajiet wara l-produzzjoni ta' laħam lokali sikur u ta' kwalità għolja.*

Il-produzzjoni lokali huwa ċentrali għall-identità kulinarja ta' Malta. Fl-opinjoni tiegħek, kif għandna nsaħħu r-relazzjoni bejn l-agrikoltura u s-settur gastronomiku tal-pajjiż?

*Aħna dak li nieklu. Dan huwa minnu lil hinn mill-fatt ovvju li l-ikel jipprovdilna n-nutrijenti meħtieġa biex ngħixu. L-ikel u l-gastronomija huma espressjonijiet kulturali li jirriflettu ġeografiji, klimi u ambjenti speċifiċi, u jikkomunikaw sens ta' rabta mal-passat, b'mod partikolari meta platti tradizzjonali jgħaddu minn ġenerazzjoni għall-ohra.*

*Qatt ma nistgħu nagħmlu biżżejjed biex insaħħu din ir-rabta bejn il-bdiewa u l-kokijiet fil-ħolqien ta' ikel b'valur miżjud, u biex ninkoraġġixxu użu akbar ta' ingredjenti Maltin fis-settur tal-ospitalità. Inizjattivi li jpoġġu fid-dawl il-laħam lokali, preparazzjonijiet tradizzjonali u prodotti b'karattru reġjonali distint (bħall-mazzit, iż-zalzett tal-Malti u ohrajn) jgħinu biex jissahħaħ is-sens ta' awtentiċità u jingħata spinta lis-settur agrikolu lokali.*

*Sħubija aktar mill-qrib bejn il-bdiewa, il-proċessuri u l-kokijiet tiżgura li l-kċina Maltija tkompli tiżviluppa filwaqt li tibqa' fidila lejn l-għerua tagħha — u li nkomplu noffru lill-viżitaturi ta' Malta esperjenza awtentika u tassew olistika.*

# Recipe: Goat Rack with Turnip, Carrot Hot Sauce & Pickled Walnut Ketchup, Chef Steve Scicluna, Risetto



This dish was created to celebrate local produce, from the turnips to the carrots standing out as elegant condiments to the star of this simple, yet complex dish: the local goat.



## Ingredients

### For Goat Loin

- 150g goat loin (deboned French rack)
- Neutral Oil
- Seasoning (salt & pepper)

### For Bone Jus

- 500g bone (trimmed goat rack)
- 500ml water
- Seasoning (salt, pepper & bayleaf)
- Aromatics (garlic & onion)

### For Turnip

- 100g turnip; finely diced
- 100ml turnip juice
- 100ml rice wine vinegar
- Aromatics (dill, mustard grain & peppercorn)
- 1% agar agar powder (1g per 100ml of liquid)

### Preparation

- 1 teaspoon wholegrain mustard
- 2 sprigs dill, finely chopped
- 50g mayonnaise

### For Carrot Hot Sauce

- 100ml carrot juice
- 250g carrot purée (carrots cooked in chicken stock & blended)
- 2 tablespoons rice wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon smoked rice vinegar (optional)
- ½ teaspoon togarashi powder
- 1% agar agar powder

### For Pickled Walnut Ketchup

- 1 jar pickled walnuts
- 100g pickled walnut liquid
- 50g raisins
- 50g light brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 teaspoon mustard powder
- Seasoning (salt)
- 1% agar agar powder

## Method

- 1) Start by preparing the pickled turnip. Juice 100-150g of fresh turnip for 100ml of turnip juice, add aromatics and rice wine vinegar and boil with 1% agar, blend and set to a gel. Finely dice 100g of fresh turnip into small cubes; add to pickled turnip juice and set aside. Mix all the ingredients together.
- 2) Keep your juicer handy, and prepare 100ml of carrot juice. Add the remaining ingredients to a pan and boil with 1% agar. Let set in the fridge and blend to a gel consistency.
- 3) For the ketchup, blend everything to a smooth consistency apart from the agar. Put everything in a pan including the agar, bring to a boil, let set and blend into gel consistency.
- 4) When it comes to the goat, start by extracting the loin from your French Rack. Save the bones for the jus and the loin for the main component of the dish. Alternatively, ask your butcher to handle this for you.
- 5) In a heavy saucepan, roast the goat bones in a neutral oil, followed by aromatics and seasoning. Deglaze with Pernod and flambée. Add water or stock and allow to reduce by half. Strain and save for final plating.

**Prep like a Pro:** top kitchens function on high-quality preparation. This allows dish components to develop flavour and also adds efficiency to a busy kitchen. Steps above can all be prepared 1 day in advance, giving you a smooth and easy process, perfect to elevate your next meal. Remember to store all components in airtight containers in the fridge.

- 1) Pre-heat your oven to 180°C. This cut will finish cooking in the oven.
- 2) Allow your goat loin to come to room temperature, coat with neutral oil, season and seal in a hot pan. Be sure to brown all edges of the loin to retain all the natural oils and juices, roll the cut every 2-3 minutes.
- 3) Place in an oven-proof dish and roast for 15 minutes for a succulent medium rare. Allow the goat loin to rest for 10 minutes.
- 4) Strain your pickled turnips, combine with dill, wholegrain mustard and mayonnaise. Set aside.

**Plate like a Pro:** as the Maltese saying goes; *l-ewwel ma tiekol l-għajn*, which in this case means, presentation is your first-impression, and means everything. Give it your best shot and let your inner artist out. Tag @agrikolturamt for your chance to be featured.

- 1) Heat your bone jus for plating.
- 2) Plate the carrot hot sauce, the walnut ketchup and the pickled turnip; leaving room for the goat loin to take centre stage.
- 3) Slice your goat loin, season with a pinch of salt and plate.
- 4) Pour goat bone jus over loin and serve.

# Recipe: Lamb Loin with Lamb Belly Ragu & Spiced Greek Yoghurt, Sheldon Sammut, Scala



## Ingredients

### For Lamb Loin

- 300g lamb loin
- 50g butter
- Neutral oil
- Seasoning (salt & pepper)
- Aromatics (garlic, rosemary & thyme)
- Butcher's twine

### For Lamb Belly Ragu

- 100g lamb belly
- 100g dried green lentils
- 1lt stock
- 20g carrots; finely chopped
- 20g celery; finely chopped
- 10g tomato paste
- ½ cup soft herbs; finely chopped (chive, parsley, mint)
- Local olive oil
- Seasoning (fresh ground pepper)

### For Bone Jus

- 200g bone (trimmed lamb rack)
- 300g pork shank
- 500ml water
- Seasoning (salt, pepper & bayleaf)
- Aromatics (garlic & onion)

### For Spiced Yoghurt

- 100g Greek yoghurt
- 100g soft goat cheese
- 5g ras el hanut powder
- 5g cumin powder

## Method

- 1) Debone your lamb loin from the rack, trim the belly and set each cut aside. You can also ask your butcher to prepare this for you.
- 2) Use butcher's twine to create a cylindrical shape, tying it tightly, starting with a double knot and using consecutive loops. This will create a more uniform cooking for a juicer finish. Set your lamb aside.
- 3) In a saucepan, sauté green lentils in a neutral oil, add carrots, celery, tomato purée and stock and simmer until *al dente*. Cut the pork belly into a small dice; fry it off in its natural juices for about 5 minutes. Finish the dish with the soft herbs, a drizzle of local olive oil and some fresh ground pepper.
- 4) Prepare a jus from the lamb bones by combining aromatics, seasoning and some stock. Reduce by half for a glossy sauce. Set aside.

**Cook like a Pro:** when cooking fresh meat, it is vital that you reach optimum temperatures while ensuring maximum flavour, juiciness and richness is retained. Multiple cooking methods, such as searing then oven-finishing is a go-to technique for top chefs. But their secret... resting the meat after it's done cooking.

- 1) Pre-heat your oven to 180°C. This cut will finish cooking in the oven.
- 2) In a large pan, sear the trussed lamb loin in neutral oil, on a high heat. Add whole springs of rosemary and thyme as well as a whole clove of garlic. Add butter and brown, basting as the lamb sears all round.
- 3) Finish your dish in the oven for 15 minutes. Allow herbs and garlic to cook with the loin to add more aroma to the lamb.
- 4) Remove from the oven and rest for 10 minutes for a perfect medium rare.

**Plate like a Pro:** as the Maltese saying goes; *l-ewwel ma tiekol l-ghajn*, which in this case means, presentation is your first-impression, and means everything. Give it your best shot and let your inner artist out. Tag @agrikolturamt for your chance to be featured.

- 1) In a medium-sized bowl, combine equal parts Greek yoghurt and soft goat cheese with ras el hanut and cumin. Whisk until combined; adjust seasoning to taste. Set aside.
- 2) Warm up your reduced jus, the lamb belly ragu and get ready to plate.
- 3) Plate your spiced yoghurt and lamb belly ragu, creating a bed for your lamb loin.
- 4) Slice the lamb loin on the grain, season lightly and plate.
- 5) Finish with the lamb bone jus and serve.

# SUSTAINABILITY SPOTLIGHT

## Closing the Loop: How We're Repurposing Byproducts

At Il-Biċċerija, sustainability begins where others often stop. Beyond the prime cuts and culinary favourites lies a world of potential resources too valuable to waste. Through careful planning, modern partnerships, and a deep respect for the animal, Malta's national abattoir is redefining what it means to be efficient, ethical and ecologically responsible.

*"We don't see byproducts as leftovers,"* says Director General Stefan Cachia. *"We see them as part of a complete cycle—an opportunity to honour the whole animal."*

Organs, prized in traditional Maltese cuisine, are carefully prepared for specialised butchers. Even blood is repurposed, supporting artisanal production of dishes like mazzit. The aim of Il-Biċċerija is to create a no-waste system; finding new markets to utilize tallow, bone, cowhide and any other byproducts; creating a truly circular setup honouring every animals' sacrifice.



### The Power of By Product

The Public Abattoir, in collaboration with the University of Malta, has recently started a project named RACE wherein both partners are exploring potential use of animal by-product in concrete production. Professor Ruben Paul Borg from the Faculty for the Built Environment is overseeing this initiative that explores how pig bristles, which are traditionally discarded and often burnt, can instead be incorporated into concrete to enhance its strength. By repurposing this by-product, the project contributes to a circular economy approach, reducing CO2 emissions and supporting a zero waste strategy.

Alongside the use of pig bristles, biochar- a carbon-rich material is being explored as an add-on in cement production. Biochar has demonstrated the ability to improve concrete durability, making it a highly promising sustainable material in the construction industry.

As part of the RACE project, ongoing research is assessing whether biochar can be produced from animal bones previously discarded at the Malta Public Abattoir. This initiative could divert animal bones away from the waste stream and create new revenue opportunities for farmers while enhancing sustainability within the agricultural as well as the construction sectors.

The project has received strong support from the Agriculture Minister, Anton Refalo and the European Funds Minister, Stefan Zrinzo Azzopardi, who highlighted its important role in transforming waste into valuable resources and investing in a more sustainable future.

## Malta's Mazzit Muffin

The Malta Public Abattoir is taking a forward-thinking approach to food innovation through the development of Mazzit Muffins, a modern twist to the traditional Maltese product, Mazzit.

This initiative showcases how local meat products can be elevated through creativity and carefully crafting the right recipe, highlighting their versatility beyond their customary uses. By keeping the core ingredients of the Mazzit as a base and adapting it into a muffin format, the product becomes more appealing to a wider audience especially those who may be hesitant to try Mazzit in its traditional form. Notably, this innovative concept also enables the Abattoir to engage a new target market, particularly younger consumers who are more likely to be intrigued by a modern variation of a traditional Maltese delicacy.

The muffins were first introduced to the public during Fresher's Week in October 2025, where they received very positive feedback from attendees. One student described them as *"surprisingly delicious with an authentic taste,"* while another noted that they offered *"a perfect balance of sweet and savoury, with a subtle hint of Mazzit- something different, yet still feels familiar."*

In addition to their unique flavour, the muffins are high in protein, making them a nutritious option. Overall, the Mazzit Muffins demonstrate how tradition can be preserved while evolving to meet changing consumer preferences.

## WHAT'S INSIDE MAZZIT?

Traditional Maltese Blood Sausage

