

NARRATIVE LABELS (PP6 - NAMAA)

Work Package 4 Market-driven pilot initiatives

Activity 4.2.3 Realization of narrative labels

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MedSNAIL NARRATIVE LABELS is an initiative implemented in the framework of MedSNAIL and inspired by Slow Food methodology -an international grassroots organisation that promotes traditional food with a strong focus on the preservation of biodiversity and respect for local land and culture.

This initiative works to strengthen the productive network of Balqa', MedSNAIL pilot area in Jordan, making visible the attributes of local products through a distinctive labelling system that values their origin, production process and elaboration.

This action aims to raise awareness among local citizens of the added value of these local products beyond their industrial labelling, highlighting the way in which they have been produced and processed. In addition, this initiative brings these local products closer to consumer profiles that are aware of responsible and local consumption, as well as introducing them into new sales channels.

Producers who have participated in this initiative are committed to the preservation of the local identity and its ecosystems.

The products selected for narrative labeling respond to traditional harvesting and processing methods, are closely linked to the pilot area where MedSNAIL has been developed or have been directly proposed by the producers most involved in the project activities.



Breads and sweets

Khabeesa

Kafah Arabiat (Taj lafdal entaj)

Product

Khabeesa is one of the classic sweets made from the traditional grapes of the area, the Salti Grapes. The custom of making the Khabeesa product is connected to the custom of picking and preparing the grapes, both are deeply rooted within the local community history.

Place

Zay is in the highlands around the city of Salt with steep hillsides and semi-arid conditions, the area is well known for its cultivation of fruit trees such as olives and grapes, with large areas of agriculturally exploited lands, whether rainfed or forested where the people depend on agriculture. Due to its proximity, the Salti grapes vineyards surrounding the city of Salt extend into Zay area where the vineyards have flourished due to the areas semi-arid conditions.

Ingredients

To produce khabeesa the producer uses Salti Grape juice from their vineyards as the base, added to it wheat flour and sesame from the fields, and hab kriesh (Aleppo Pine) from the forests around them.

Processing

The grapes are juiced, and then strained and cooked in large pots, once it boils; whole wheat flour is added and stirred until the mixture thickens to which sesame seeds and Hab Kriesh (Aleppo Pine) are added. The mixture is poured on cloth sheets and spread to a thin layer then hung to dry in the sun, the cloth is moistened with water and the ready Khabeesa is peeled off. Then it is folded or rolled.

Production period

Grapes are left on the vine till end of the grapes season between September and October, after the harvest the entire family gets involved in preparing the Khabeesa, as it requires the family collaboration in juicing, cooking and drying.



Cheese and Dairy products

Laban Jameed

Eman al Saleem (Um Mahdi)

Product

Jameed is a dried fermented milk product that is widely used in Jordan, Jameed is in the form of stone hard balls or other shapes, it tastes as has sharp, acidic, and salty with a strong buttermilk flavor. It is dehydrated to be used mainly as a sauce, the main ingredient used in making *Mansaf*, the national dish of Jordan.

Territory

Al Arda area part of Salt area in Balqa, the area is semi-arid with rain-fed agriculture, the area is well known for its cultivation of fruit trees, as well as its forests of coniferous trees surrounding it, large areas of agriculturally exploited lands, whether rainfed or forested where the people depend on agriculture and raising goats and sheep.

Animals and welfare

It is traditionally produced by the milk of local sheep Awassi or Baladi goats or a mix of both, the producer buys milk from the neighbors who are shepherds, their flocks usually graze and feed on native wild vegetation around the area.

Processing

After boiling the milk to sterilize and cooling it, The milk is inoculated with yogurt from a previous batch (*Tarweeb*), then it is incubated for a few hours and then churned to separate the yogurt from the butter. This yogurt is boiled until it thickens then it is set aside to cool at room temperature, that's when the whey is drained in a cloth sack (*Khareeta*) for a week or more. After which it is salted Kneaded into a paste that is shaped into discs (*the signature shape in the area*), and placed under the sun for four days or more until it is completely dry.

Production period

Jameed is produced from spring to the beginning of winter when the milk of the sheep and goats is abundant, and preserved to be consumed all around the year as it lasts a long time.



Cheese and Dairy products

Samneh Baladieh Balqawieh

Motjat Ajdadan (Miasar Haiyari)

<https://www.facebook.com/Ajdadna.io/>

Product

Samneh Baladieh Balqawieh is a traditional type of ghee that differs from ghees from other parts of the world due to the usage of a mix of wild herbs “Hwajeh” giving it its unique color and flavor. What makes the *Samneh Balqawieh* special is that it is boiled for longer which makes it thicker than in any other area, and they use their special wild herb mix that gives a distinctive flavor. *Samneh Baldieh* has been traditionally used since ancient times, to prepare most of the popular sweets and traditional dishes, in the place of cooking oil and poured hot over the dishes to enhance the taste. It is a staple ingredient in every household.

Territory

The valley of Wadi Shoaib is near the city of Salt, it is rich in vegetation due to its tropical nature and the richness of natural water sources. makes the area a perfect grazing grounds for the sheep and goats.

Animals and welfare

It is traditionally produced by the milk of local sheep Awassi or Baladi goats or a mix of both, the producer uses mixed milk to produce the Samneh and buys milk from neighbors who are shepherds, their flocks usually graze andeed on native wild vegetation around the area.

Processing

Butter is melted in a pot with the area's special *Hwajih* of dried wild herbs. Once melted, the milk separates from the fat which is poured slowly into a new pot on its own, where it is boiled for 10 min in with a small amount of soaked *Jareesheh* to help get rid of the excess milk liquid (*Tagsheed Al Samneh*). When the *Jareesheh* is cooked completely the Samneh is ready to be poured out slowly and portioned in glass containers for storage and selling.

Production period

Samneh is produced from spring to the beginning of winter when milk of the sheep and goats are abundant, and its preserved for the rest of the year.



Vegetables, fruit, legumes and their processed products (oil, wine...)

Grape Molasses/ Dibs Enab

Asma Healthy Products

<https://asmashhealthyproducts.com/>

Variety

Grape molasses in the area is made from Salti grapes which take its name from Al-Salt City. these grapes are yellow-green in color and tend to be large oval in size, and tend to be sweet in taste.

Territory

The city of Salt in Balqa is located on hilltops, and large areas were planted with grapes, the city was surrounded by vineyards around its four sides.

Cultivation

The producer buys Salty Grapes from the locals who grow grapes surrounding their households or in vineyards at the borders of the city.

Harvest

The grapes used to make molasses are usually kept on the vines longer to insure their sweetness, they are picked at the end of the grape harvest and until Mid October. traditionally families used to relocate during the season and camp in tents at the vineyards to harvest the grapes.

Processing

The grapes are pressed and squeezed to extract the juice which is then filtered twice and cooked till it reduces to a sticky liquid similar to honey which usually takes up to 8 hours. The molasses is filled while it's hot into a storage container either a bottle or glass jar.



Vegetables, fruit, legumes and their processed products (oil, wine...)

Pomegranate Molasses/ Dibs Romman
Miasar Haiyari (Montjat Ajdadan)
<https://www.facebook.com/Ajdadna.jo/>

Variety

The molasses is made by boiling down the juice of a certain variety of pomegranate the sour variety such as Zarouri or sweet-sour variety such as Shwashy, the result is a thick, dark reddish brown, deeply flavorful liquid. Usually, the sour is selected to produce the sour molasses, and the sweet-sour to produce mild molasses.

Territory

The valley or Wadi Shoab near the city of Salt is rich in vegetation due to its tropical nature and the richness of natural water sources. Many fruit tree varieties grow in the area including pomegranate.

Cultivation

The locals grow pomegranates surrounding their households or on their land and they produce their own pomegranate molasses. Pomegranate trees are cultivated in spring and the beginning of Autumn, and start bearing fruit in around three years after that.

Harvest

Pomegranate molasses is produced during the pomegranate harvest season starting in October and extending up to 4 months.

Processing

The traditional firewood cooking method is used to make this product. After the seeds are separated from the white pulp they are pressed and squeezed to extract the juice which is then filtered and cooked till it reduces to a thick dark red syrup this usually takes up to 8 hours. The molasses is filled while it's hot into a storage container either a bottle or glass jars.



Vegetables, fruit, legumes and their processed products (oil, wine...)

Sumac

Um Wael & Abu Wael Al-Hajahjeh

Variety

Sumac Baladi (local) Sumac is produced from the Sumac plant shrub. The fruits are compressed hard reddish drupes clusters with seeds that are little, hard, and brown in color. Once the clusters are dried up they produce a tangy purplish spice bearing the name of the tree Sumac. Sumac has a good spicy smell and its taste can be described as tart and sour, with slightly astringent overtones where it can replace Lemon in many recipes.

Territory

Sumac naturally exists in the northern part of Jordan and grows in steep hillsides and semi-arid conditions. In Al-Balqa Sumac can be found mostly in the highlands around the city of Salt mainly in Zay and adjacent Alan areas.

Cultivation

Sumac exists naturally and locals spread the seeds that are left after the production process on their land for new trees to grow, Sumac trees start bearing fruits in seven years. Sumac is a small-scale production, as producers are normally families that have trees on their land.

Harvest

All the family helps during the Sumac harvest which starts in August and continues until the end of September, fruit clusters are picked from the trees and laid to dry in the sun before processing into the final product.

Processing

The traditional methods of preparing Sumac are still used now, after picking the fruit clusters they are left for a couple of days under the sun to dry. Once dry the berries are separated, then sieved many times. The berries are ground by centrifuge, then sieved. The final product is a coarse powder that is packed in plastic bags or glass jars.

