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- 2017 OFFICIAL RECOGNITION OF PECORA CIUTA AS BREED
- 2024 450 ANIMALS REGISTERED IN THE OVINE AND CAPRINE REGISTRY

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- seasonal patterns:
- 2700m
- summer
- UP TO THE PEAKS
GRAZING ON STEEP AND
POOR ALPINE PASTURES
- 500m
- winter
- VALLEY PASTURES
HOUSED IN BARNs

The breed



- Small size: 30-35kg ♀ / 35-40 kg ♂ / 40-50 cm tall at the withers
- Straight fronto-nasal profile, medium-small ears carried horizontally
- Horns: spiral-shaped in rams, arched in females
- Fleece: straw-white, brown, black, spotted, short bi-colored
- 3 lambings in 2 years, newborn lambs weigh 2-3 kg
- Robust and thrifty, perfectly adapted to grazing in rugged pasture



Meat. Ciuta sheep are bred for meat production, which is consumed fresh or as transformed products. Fresh meat is typically consumed around Easter time (suckling lambs, 12-15 kg) and continues until late spring (heavy lambs, 20-30 kg). Traditional transformed products – *bresaola* and *violino* – are prepared by dry-curing of the leg and shoulder muscles of lambs, ewes and muttons. Salami production involves the use of sheep meat with the addition of ~10% of pork fat.



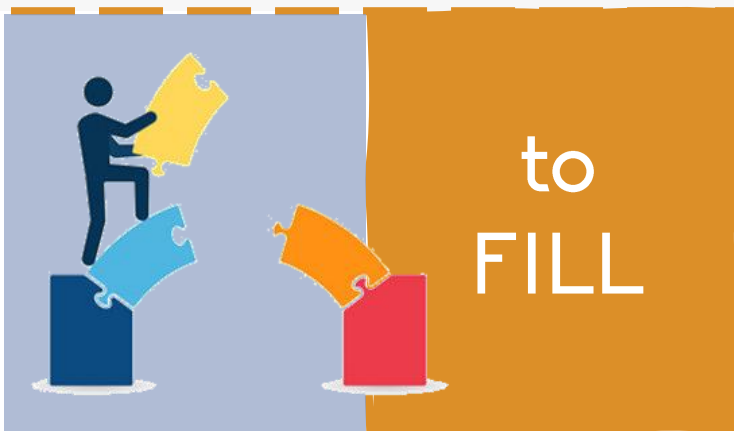
Milk. Nowadays, Ciuta sheep are not milked at all. However, writings from the late XIX Century recall it as a triple-purpose animal whose milk was used to produce a traditional cheese made by mixed cow, goat and sheep milk.



 No initiatives aimed at enhancing meat production and valorizing Ciuta sheep meat and typical products

 No knowledge on milk yield characteristics and animal reaction to milking

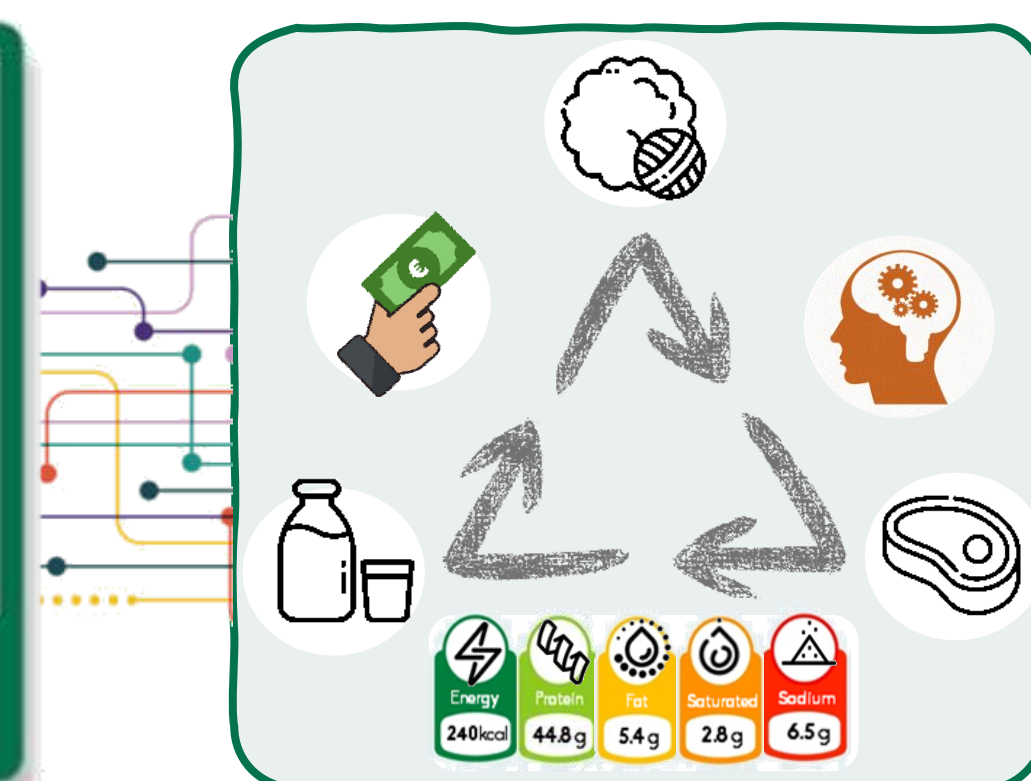
 No sustainability of wool production – treated as a waste product with high disposal and processing costs



- to evaluate the productive performance of the Ciuta sheep and the quality of its derived products (meat, milk, wool), with an economic study aimed at analyzing the market potential of each product;
- to guide production strategies towards market and consumer needs, fostering synergy with other sectors in the area and collaboration with research institutions;
- to promote added value for Ciuta sheep products, with positive outcomes for all agents involved in the sector, starting with the farmers of the partner companies

- A MEAT AND MEAT PRODUCTS**
 - characterization of Ciuta sheep meat and processed products and their nutritional properties;
 - pinpointing specific chemical markers for authenticity and traceability highlighting the connection with the rearing system (grazing, natural reproductive cycles, feeding exclusively on local forage) and attributing a unique and distinctive value.
- B MILKING ACTITUDE AND MILK QUALITY**
 - evaluation of the milking behavior of Ciuta ewes during lactation, as marker of animal welfare and individual sheep milking aptitude;
 - assessing milk quality (chemical composition and nutritional characteristics) through laboratory analysis
 - identifying unique molecules associated with specific nutraceutical properties as chemical indicators for the traditional farming system
- C WOOL**
 - Evaluation of the quality of Ciuta sheep fiber by through instrumental analysis to determine the average fineness, coefficients of variation – with distribution graph, average fiber length, and yield on scouring
 - Evaluation of animal welfare during shearing to assess animal's level of reactivity through behavioral observations

- collection of qualitative and quantitative data on the costs of the three potential production chains;
- a cost analysis of the three Ciuta sheep products – meat, milk, and wool;
- a market survey and analysis of the potential market for Ciuta sheep in the Valtellina area;
- a qualitative approach based on the involvement of stakeholders using semi-structured surveys or in-depth interviews in order to obtain a broader understanding of the market for typical local products from native breeds and the future developments of the production chain.



AZIENDA MARCO PAGANONI
TERRALPINA

AGRITURISMO La Pedruscia

LA PECORA NERA
azienda agrituristica

VAL3CIUTA

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERINARY MEDICINE AND ANIMAL SCIENCE

DiSAA
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI MILANO

Farmers
Increased knowledge about quality and economic valorization.

Local agricultural entrepreneurs
Greater interest and awareness in the decision to raise Ciuta sheep.

Environment and biodiversity
Enhancement of breed conservation and sustainability

Products and agrifoodism sector
Valorization and promotion of agrifood products from Ciuta sheep.



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2014-2020

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