

Report of Reflection and Proposal

Enhancing the Value of End-of-Life Animals and Evolving Consumption Practices

1. Initial observation: consumption focused on young animals

In current practices, meat consumption largely favors young animals, particularly in the case of sheep, with lamb leg highly valued for its tenderness and mild flavor.

However, from an anatomical perspective, an adult sheep has exactly the same cuts, including the leg. The difference lies mainly in:

- a firmer texture
- a stronger flavor
- the need for adapted culinary preparation

This technical reality leads to the underutilization of adult animals, which are rarely found on market stalls—not due to impossibility, but due to a lack of adaptation in processing and consumption practices.

2. Technical possibilities: aging and culinary transformation

It is established that:

- aging (maturation) improves meat tenderness
- although it does not match that of a young animal

On the other hand, slow and gentle cooking is a major solution:

- transformation of collagen into gelatin
- gradual tenderizing of fibers
- improved digestibility

This principle, already present in traditional cuisine (stews, braising), allows for the full valorization of meat from adult animals.

3. Flavor management: techniques to reduce strong taste

The more pronounced flavor of adult animals is a barrier to consumption. However, it is technically possible to significantly reduce it, or even turn it into a culinary asset.

3.1 Trimming fat

A large part of the strong flavor is concentrated in the fat:

- removal of visible fat
 - elimination of fat during cooking
-

3.2 Marinades

Marinades are a key tool:

- base of wine (red or white), garlic, onion, herbs
- addition of acidic elements (vinegar, lemon)

Effects:

- tenderizing
 - reduction of strong flavors
 - enhancement of aroma
-

3.3 Soaking

An effective traditional method:

- cold water (changed regularly)
- or soaking in milk

Helps extract part of the strong flavors.

3.4 Blanching

A simple process:

- brief boiling
- discarding the cooking water

Result:

- removal of impurities
 - reduction of strong taste
-

3.5 Slow cooking and seasoning

The addition of herbs and spices helps balance flavors:

- thyme, bay leaf, rosemary
 - cumin, coriander, cinnamon
 - vegetables (carrots, onions)
-

3.6 Culinary pairings

Certain accompaniments naturally soften the taste:

- root vegetables
- legumes
- balanced sauces

👉 Thus, the flavor of adult animal meat is not a fixed constraint, but a controllable parameter.

4. Ethical consideration: encouraging respect for the life cycle

A reflection is necessary regarding the place given to animals in production systems.

It appears consistent to:

- allow young animals to live as long as possible
- prioritize the consumption of animals at the end of their life cycle
- restore a balance between production and respect for living beings

This approach is based on:

- human responsibility
 - more complete use of resources
 - a gradual, non-coercive evolution of practices
-

5. Current barriers

The main obstacles identified are:

- consumption habits
- lack of culinary knowledge
- perceived preparation time as too long
- perception of flavor as too strong

These barriers are cultural and organizational, not technical.

6. Proposed solutions: transformation, innovation, and dissemination

6.1 Development of ready-to-eat products

It is relevant to develop:

- prepared meals based on meat from adult animals
- slowly cooked and ready to reheat

Examples:

- stews
- braised meats
- shredded meats
- revisited traditional dishes

Objective:

👉 to make these products accessible without preparation constraints

6.2 Ethical and educational positioning

Clear communication must support these initiatives:

- transparency about the origin of the meat
 - promotion of respect for the life cycle
 - gradual consumer awareness
-

6.3 Training and knowledge transfer

Change relies on:

- training professionals
- spreading best practices
- promoting traditional know-how

When methods are understood, change becomes natural.

7. Perspectives

Such an evolution would allow:

- better valorization of farmed animals
- a reduction in early slaughter
- diversification of the food supply
- more responsible consumption

It also opens the way to:

- new economic models
 - innovative businesses
 - a reconnection between humans, food, and the living world
-

Conclusion

The difference between lamb leg and mutton leg illustrates an imbalance between consumption habits and biological realities.

However, concrete solutions exist:

- technical (cooking, processing, flavor reduction)
- economic (prepared meals, catering services)
- educational (training and information)

Encouraging the consumption of animals at the end of their life, while allowing more space for young animals to live, constitutes a coherent, realistic, and meaningful approach.

This transition is based on:

- understanding
- adaptation
- and a gradual willingness to evolve

It invites us to rethink our relationship with food, not only in terms of production, but also in terms of respect, responsibility, and transmission.

It is in no way through laws that this transition can be encouraged, but through education, and by demonstrating and sharing the best techniques and practices.
