

HAMTRACE

NEWSLETTER

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THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA IN FOOD INTEGRITY

On 1 January 2026, the EU launched HAMTRACE under Horizon Europe - MSCA Staff Exchanges (Grant Agreement 101236645). Coordinated by Prof. Manuel Valiente (UAB), HAMTRACE connects research, authorities and industry across Europe to strengthen the integrity of premium dry-cured ham value chains. HAMTRACE's mission is simple: make premium claims verifiable, and enable traceability systems that can support PDO/PGI protection, enforcement, and consumer trust, especially in cross-border markets.

[Discover more: https://www.hamtrace.eu](https://www.hamtrace.eu)

THE CHALLENGE: AUTHENTICITY UNDER PRESSURE

PDO/PGI products are high-value and therefore vulnerable. Current traceability often relies on digital labels that can be copied or disconnected from the product's physical reality. This creates gaps when fraud targets origin, feeding regime, or curing practices. HAMTRACE responds to persistent pressures in the sector, including:

- Fraud exposure affecting parts of the market (reported ranges include 10-12% in Spain and 8-10% in Italy)
- Verification gaps where digital records alone cannot confirm product characteristics
- Uneven market access, as smaller producers may lack recognised transparency standards required for export competitiveness





HAMTRACE KICK OFF MEETING

Building a European Traceability Community, by UAB

HAMTRACE has successfully launched, bringing together a multidisciplinary consortium committed to advancing authentication and traceability in premium dry-cured ham value chains. During the first months, partners have focused on aligning scientific, technical, and communication activities, setting a strong foundation for collaboration, stakeholder engagement, and future impact.

"Europe's premium dry-cured hams represent centuries of culinary heritage, but protecting their authenticity in today's global market requires new approaches. HAMTRACE brings together science and digital innovation to provide reliable ways of verifying origin, strengthening trust for producers, regulators and consumers alike."

Prof. Manuel Valiente, UAB, HAMTRACE Coordinator

HAMTRACE IN ACTION

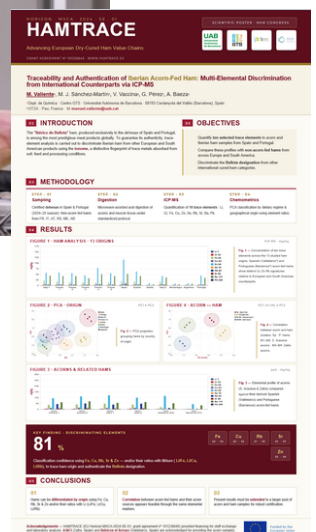
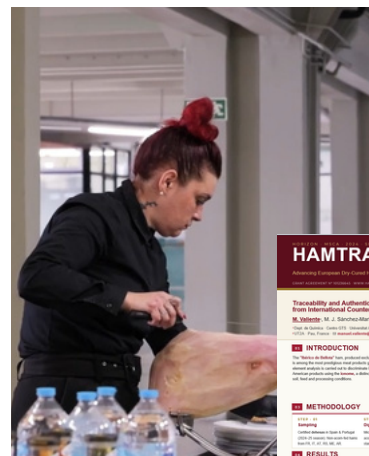
by UAB

The HAMTRACE project video is now available online, offering a clear and engaging introduction to its objectives, approach, and expected impact. It highlights how the project combines scientific methods with digital technologies to enhance transparency and trust across the food value chain.

▶ Watch here: <https://www.youtube.com/@HAMTRACE-EU>

HAMTRACE is preparing its participation in activities linked to the World Ham Congress as a strategic opportunity to connect with producers, sector organisations, experts and wider value-chain stakeholders. This visibility effort will help position the project in a highly relevant international forum and support dialogue on authentication, traceability and fraud prevention in premium ham markets.

📄 View the poster: <https://zenodo.org/records/19662847>





ADVANCING BLOCKCHAIN-BASED TRACEABILITY THROUGH SECONDMENTS

SECONDMENT & TECHNICAL WORK, *by DNET*

HAMTRACE partners are progressing with technical activities through secondments, including recent work led by DNET. During the first secondment at UDG, partners focused on preparing a blockchain-based environment to support secure and transparent traceability systems.

This work represents an important step towards implementing digital tools that ensure immutable data records and support future pilot demonstrations.

In addition to technical progress, the secondment strengthens collaboration across partners and contributes to capacity building within the consortium.

HAMTRACE ENGAGES WITH INDUSTRY AT MACFRUT 2026

by Food Hub

As part of its outreach activities, HAMTRACE partners actively participated in the MACFRUT international trade fair in Italy.

During the event, Food Hub engaged with leading companies specialising in digital traceability technologies, including Zuffellato SRL and Wisese SRL. These exchanges provided valuable insights into innovative solutions supporting transparency and traceability in agri-food value chains.

The event also featured a dedicated session on blockchain applications in agri-food.

This participation strengthens HAMTRACE's connection with industry stakeholders and supports knowledge exchange on emerging digital tools.



SETTING THE FOUNDATIONS FOR COMMUNICATION & DISSEMINATION

by EfB

During its initial phase, HAMTRACE has established the core elements of its communication and dissemination strategy. This includes:

- Development of the project visual identity
- Launch of the official website
- Creation of dissemination materials
- Stakeholder mapping and outreach planning

These actions ensure a consistent and effective communication framework to support the project's visibility and long-term impact.



LOOKING AHEAD

by UAB

HAMTRACE will continue building momentum through stakeholder engagement, outreach activities, and collaboration across the sector. Future actions will focus on strengthening visibility, promoting results, and supporting the adoption of innovative traceability solutions.



STAY CONNECTED

- Website: <https://www.hamtrace.eu>
- Zenodo: <https://zenodo.org/communities/hamtrace>
- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/@HAMTRACE-EU>
- LinkedIn: <https://linkedin.com/company/hamtrace>