

EAT THIS! BITES

Read all about provenance in foodservice in
this snackable edition of Eat This! Magazine

Scroll down and see more



Ready for the future, right from the source.

Before you lies the first issue of Eat This! Bites, the special, bite-size version of our Eat This! Magazine. It may be smaller than its bigger brother, but it's full of snackable content from Foodservice experts.

In this edition, we focus on sustainable food, transparency, and the origin of our fries, which have become increasingly important parts of people's dining experience. They want locally sourced, sustainably grown products in order to be able to fully enjoy what's on their plate. And they want you, as a foodservice professional, to be honest. From resources to production methods, transparency is key in satisfying current consumer needs.

To help you meet those expectations, we've invited several experts to share their thoughts on transparency and sustainable innovations. Find out what they're doing and what you can do to make your guests love their food even more!

Dennis Kabbedijk
Marketing Communications Manager EMEA

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Lucy van Rijswijk

As Potato Intelligence and Communication Expert at Lamb Weston / Meijer, Lucy is always on the lookout for useful data, which she combines to advise professionals from field to fork. Whether you're searching for the latest trends in potatoes or how the weather affects supply and demand, Lucy can tell you everything you need to know.

An intelligent potato for guilt-free indulgence

A serving of fried, golden-brown perfection is what lies at the end of the road, but it all begins with a seed potato. Back up a little more and you'll get to the actual source of this story: the wish to create the best possible potato variety. Potato optimisation requires lots of professionals working together to bring customers fries that their guests will love.



Changing times, changing potatoes

Now that the times are a-changing, we have to look towards the future. New socio-cultural and consumer trends predict future demand for potato products, while climate and regulatory changes have a major influence on the capricious raw potato market. “That’s why there’s always work to be done when it comes to creating better potatoes,” Lucy says. “You have to constantly adjust your predictions and chart what you believe to be the right course for the future. Especially when you consider that it can take up to twelve years to breed a new potato variety!”

“New potato varieties have to meet future demand”

Taking risks in growing

Not only does developing a new variety of potatoes take time, but it’s also a risky business wrought with uncertainty. The process all starts with data, market trends, and analysis. In collaboration with the breeders, Lamb Weston / Meijer sets out what traits a new variety should have, after which Lamb Weston / Meijer investigates closely whether a new variety has the potential to become a stellar fry. Testing for commercial processing starts with a selected ‘trial variety grower’. In a 3-year programme, the variety’s agronomical and processing performance are tested, whilst a playbook is developed on how to handle the new variety. A sensory panel then scrutinises the new potato, testing every inch of its contents, looks, and performance. “It’s quite challenging, really,” Lucy admits. “Out of every fifteen new species, only one or two make the cut.”

It’s all in the fry

Creating a real golden nugget isn’t a task to be taken lightly. For Lamb Weston / Meijer, most variables revolve around creating the perfect potato for fries. “We guarantee a certain minimum length for our French Fry products, which is a big challenge, as length depends on the conditions during the growing season.” Then there’s the underwater weight, which determines how crunchy the fries can get, and the colour is also important. With every new variety, you never fully know how the end product is going to turn out. It’s very important that our customers can serve appetising dishes, so the fries have to look tasty and radiate a golden-brown glow.” New varieties also have to be sustainable, profitable, and future-proof. They must have enough resistance against diseases to ensure a good yield, while needing little water and plant protection products. Last but not least, potatoes must be efficient to grow, store, and process in order to lose as little of their precious goodness as possible.

The end goal is to create a variety that lives up to its potential and meets the demands of future guests. A healthy, well-coloured, and tasty potato that can be used for delicious, crispy fries. Thanks to this ongoing process, we can share the benefits with partners throughout the chain: an ever-more sustainable potato, an efficient process, and a fry that will make your guests hungry for more.

Bitesize fact

Wasted potatoes or residual products? No thanks! At Lamb Weston / Meijer we use 99% of the potato. That’s why we repurpose our potato peels as cattle feed and starch as a natural coating to keep fries crispy and warm.

Tom Burnett

Tom Burnett is based at Staythorpe Farming in Newark, Nottinghamshire, UK, where, together with his father, he grows more than 500 ha of potatoes for Lamb Weston / Meijer. Their partnership, which has already lasted fifteen potato seasons, is still going strong.

Innovating together to harvest tonnes of goodness

Growing potatoes isn't something you do overnight. It's an intensive process that requires constant management. At Staythorpe Farming, Tom grows different varieties of potato with the support of Lamb Weston / Meijer, and because innovation plays a big role in optimising the growing process, knowledge is shared to decide where to look for new opportunities. With Lamb Weston / Meijer's potato supply accounting for 50% of their carbon emissions, growers like Tom can have a significant impact on sustainability in the chain. As part of an equal relationship, it's only fair to strive towards such goals together.



Farming for fries

So, what’s it like to grow fries? “Well, I’m a farmer through and through!” Tom laughs. “We grow wheat, maize, barley and beans, as well as Innovator, Challenger, Fontane, and Markies potatoes! These are all particularly lengthy varieties of potato that can be used to make long fries.”

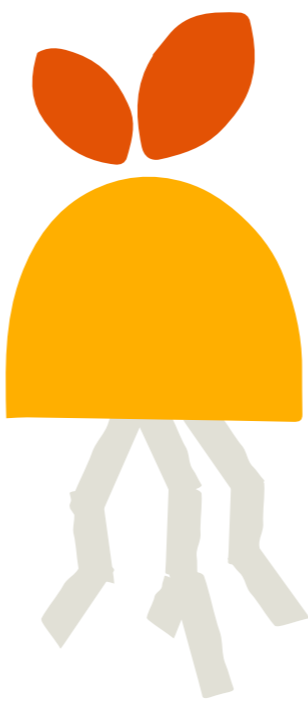
Season-round innovation

“Since we’ve started growing for Lamb Weston / Meijer, we’ve actually adopted a range of new practices in supplying potatoes to the business,” Tom explains. “They listen to us, and we get information from them, which makes for a valuable partnership.”

In farming, innovation needs to go hand in hand with seasonal change. It’s important to know what works in order to make sure that we can grow and harvest enough potatoes. “We started with drip irrigation, which is a way of feeding water directly to the roots of the crops, this uses much less water than other, more conventional irrigation techniques. Currently, we’re also working on implementing more cover cropping before planting the seed potatoes and humidified storage for after the harvest. During the harvest, we also use ‘jumbo bag trailers’, an innovation that minimises potato handling to help eliminate defects whilst also reducing the impact on our soil.”

Cover cropping involves planting crops such as mustards or radishes before the potatoes and these are then incorporated into the soil in the Spring to reduce disease pressure on the potatoes when they are growing. Humidified storage helps maintain the quality of the stored potatoes, reducing weight loss and therefore bruising.

Ultimately, all of these innovations support more efficient use of resources whilst also allowing Lamb Weston / Meijer to continue to supply high-grade, consistent frozen potato products to their Foodservice customers.



Future-proof food

Tom’s business continues to evolve. “It’s necessary,” he says, “as we are likely to see more extreme weather events, such as longer, drier, hotter periods and prolonged spells of rain. If we don’t continue to grow and work in a sustainable fashion, we won’t survive in the future. Innovation helps to mitigate risks and work more efficiently while reducing the impact of the food we produce. This will also reduce our carbon emissions and mean we produce less waste in everything we do!”

By managing our soil more carefully, using our inputs more efficiently, and potentially using less of them, the carbon footprint of each tonne of fries we supply will be reduced. That way, Foodservice professionals can serve their customers fries and other potato products that give them peace of mind and are packed with goodness!

Bitesize fact

A Lamb Weston / Meijer potato is always local. That’s because every growing area has a factory nearby, ready to turn the potato into frozen packed potato solutions.

More veggies, less waste!

If you're talking about honest food, known provenance, and sustainable dishes, Amsterdam-based restaurant 'Sababa' totally fits the bill. With their 'Hakuna Matata' philosophy and their vegetarian and vegan dishes, they combine middle-eastern cuisine with Dutch comfort food. By mixing vegetable-based dishes with perfect seasoning, bite, and texture, they offer true value in veggies. And you can't say veggies without saying fried potato!

Everything's better fried

Sure, you can fry up some meat-based snacks, but what about frying aubergine, halloumi cheese or falafel instead? It's healthier, for starters, but it also gives your customers the chance to indulge in their guilty, crispy pleasure without any of the guilt. Try serving sweet potato fries on the side for a deliciously surprising vegetarian or vegan alternative that your customers are bound to love!

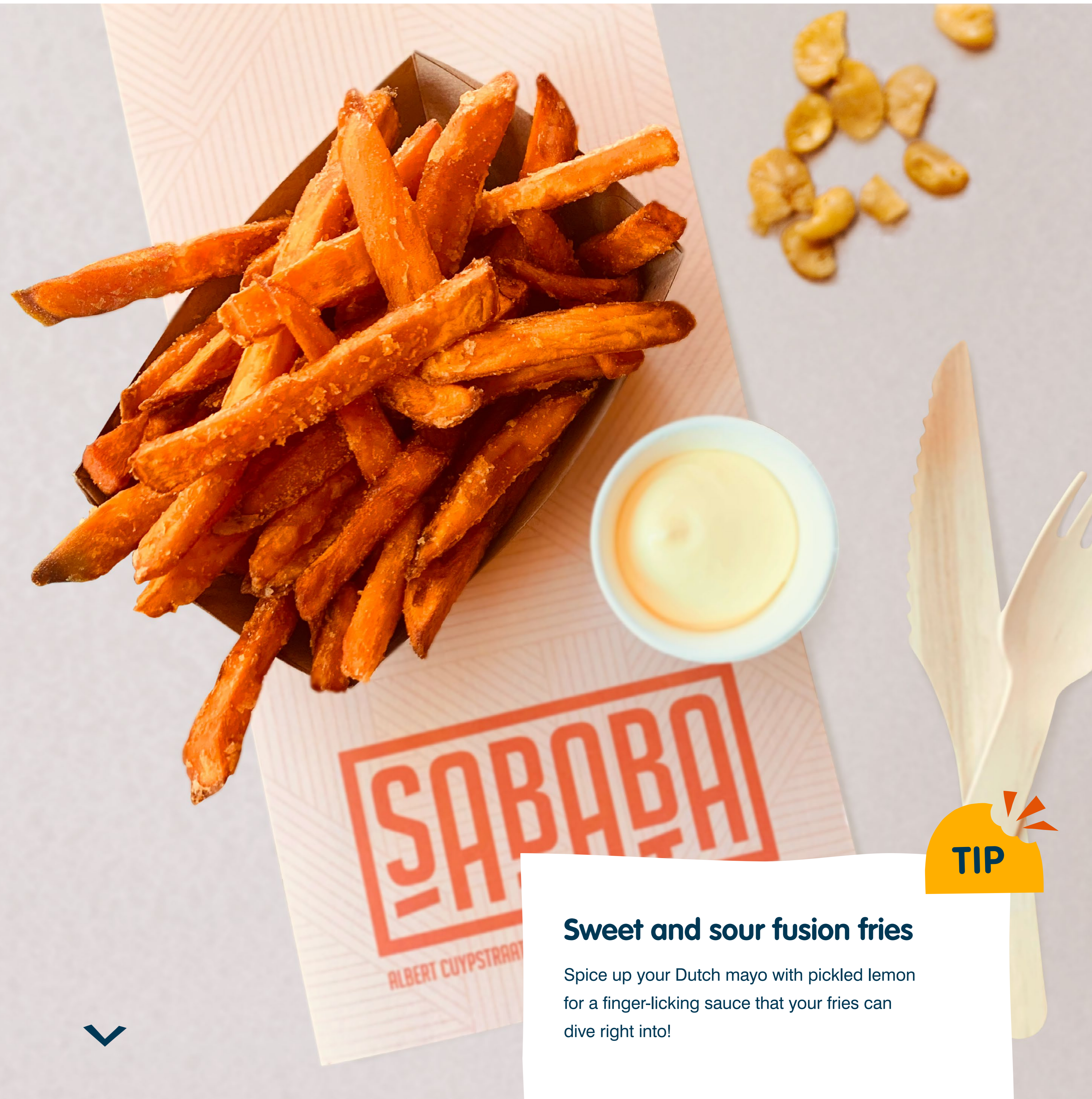
If life gives you lemons...

You put them in a jar and add some salt! A trip to Tel Aviv inspired Sababa to use pickled lemons as the base of their lemon mayonnaise to help reduce food waste.

It's an old way of storing food, but it's really effective and leads to surprising new flavours. Lots of vegetables lend themselves to pickling, so find whatever suits your dishes and experiment with seasoning to create some tasty ingredients!

Side dish in the mix

Side dishes like fries are an easy way to mix up your menu. Add homemade sauce to your fries, offer seasoned fried veggies, or create your own sweet and sour combination with pickled leftovers. In the end, it's really all about being as creative as you can. Seduce your customers with cool combinations and use herbs and spices to your benefit. Every kitchen can use a bit of fusion!

**TIP**

Sweet and sour fusion fries

Spice up your Dutch mayo with pickled lemon for a finger-licking sauce that your fries can dive right into!

In the next issue of Eat This! Magazine, we'll take you off-premises, talking about the perks and profits of meal delivery and takeaway and the latest trends in the foodservice market. Now that Dark Kitchens are on the rise, we'll give you a little sneak preview of our upcoming edition!

Sustainable service with data-driven dark kitchens

They're on the rise and here to stay: the ghost, cloud, or dark kitchens. These kitchens, which only do delivery and takeaway and are not part of a physical restaurant, are rapidly becoming an essential part of the foodservice industry. Unlike the big delivery chains, they're flexible in what they offer because they can combine different food concepts. It's an interesting type of business, which is highly data-driven. And, by using the overcapacity of existing kitchens, from local caterers to supermarkets and company kitchens, it's a sustainable concept as well.

As the ordering process happens online, keeping a tab of what is ordered is easy. A dark kitchen can always keep updating the menu because the business is so flexible. Virtual changes can be made in a matter of clicks, so operators can easily switch towards popular dishes or brands. They can also quickly cut out what consumers don't want, reducing food waste.

With a concept that is strongly based on efficiency, the dark kitchen thrives through smart online marketing and a user-friendly ordering app. With low overhead costs being as popular as they are, running a dark kitchen might just be the next big business opportunity!



The next Eat This! Magazine will be out on the 18th of October. In this upcoming edition, fellow foodservice professionals share how they took parts of the dark kitchen approach and used it to make their business grow. Make sure you don't miss it!

Colophon

Eat This! Bites is created by Lamb Weston / Meijer and is published twice a year, in addition to the regular Eat This! Magazine.

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