

*Monday, May 18, 2009, 09:54 by Alan Deidun, Gudja*

## **Despicable conditions on some cattle farms**

Despite the incessant controls by local veterinary authorities and despite the plethora of EU directives aimed at safeguarding the dignity of slaughter farm animals, some of the 394 local cattle farms still operate under atrocious conditions.

I was recently shown a photo depicting mounds of refuse being deposited on a cattle farm in Msida, with the inclusion of tyres and plastic, and even the odd cow. The cow was not dead but in its death throes, chained to the ground in agony and left for days on end to live out its final days.

Animal welfare and veterinary hygiene standards must be upheld at all times on local farms; those in default, as the operator of the farm in question, should have their operating licence withheld, with the consequence that no dairy products or meat can be sold by the same operator till the set standards are met once again. This is especially pressing against the backdrop of massive improvement locally in the conditions farm animals are kept in, with many cattle farms investing in tent structures.