



The Fight Against Lab-Grown Meat Has Officially Begun

Technocrat scientists are bent on transforming the food system of the entire planet, using science-based solutions, in this case, lab-grown meat. Cattle ranchers are attempting to stop the threat against them before it takes hold. □ TN Editor

What is meat?

Back in the day, the distinction was simple. Animals are meat, and plants are not. But now, it's getting a lot more complicated thanks to cultured, or what some might call "fake," meat.

Companies like Impossible Foods and Beyond Meat are using science labs and farms, rather than animal meat, to create products that rival traditional grilling staples like burgers and hot dogs.

The U.S. Cattlemen's Association is looking to draw a line in the sand and launch what could be the first salvo in a long battle against plant-based foods. Earlier this month, the association filed a 15-page petition

with the U.S. Department of Agriculture calling for an official definition for the term “beef,” and more broadly, “meat.”

“While at this time alternative protein sources are not a direct threat to the beef industry, we do see improper labeling of these products as misleading,” said Lia Biondo, the association’s policy and outreach director. “Our goal is to head off the problem before it becomes a larger issue.”

Not everyone sees it that way. Ethan Brown, founder and CEO of Beyond Meat, said consumers already know what they’re looking for when they’re browsing the grocery store aisles. But he doesn’t necessarily see the petition as a bad thing.

“I think it actually could help us more than it could hurt us because it starts the national dialogue around what really is meat, and if the origin of meat really matters to the consumer,” said Brown.

The cattle ranching group contends that if a product is going to be labeled “beef,” it should come from the flesh of cattle. And that means products like veggie burgers and Tofurky won’t make the cut.

While these foods are commonly dubbed “fake meat,” there’s a little more to the meat-substitute market than that. The Good Food Institute, which advocates a sustainable food supply, breaks it down into two categories: clean meat and plant-based meat.

Clean meat refers to “meat” grown in a lab from a small amount of animal stem cells. This kind of meat isn’t on the market yet, but it’s in development. Plant-based meat is anything that mimics traditional meat but is made mainly using plant ingredients.

For example, Beyond Meat is a plant-based protein producer that manufactures food products in a factory without using animals. Its Beyond Burger is so “meat-like,” it even made its way into the meat aisle of grocery stores.

And it’s not just vegetarians eating the plant-based burgers.

“From the consumers we see going to the meat case to buy our plant-based burgers where they’re sold, we see about 70 percent of those are

at least flexitarian, people that have meat in their diet as well as non-meat protein,” said Brown.

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