

Lab-Grown Meat: The Food of the Future [C1]

Questa azienda californiana è stata una delle prime a commercializzare carne ottenuta da cellule animali coltivate in laboratorio. Dal microscopio al piatto, la carne coltivata sta rivoluzionando l'industria alimentare.

There is a restaurant in San Francisco where you can order chicken that doesn't come from an actual bird. US regulators have approved the sale of meat made from animal [cells](#); it isn't vegan alternative made from plants, it's actual chicken, made from chicken [cells](#) that come either from a living animal, a fertilised egg or a special bank of stored [cells](#) that are grown in [steel tanks](#). As it is cultivated outside an animal's body, there is no need to [breed](#), [feed](#) or [slaughter](#) animals.

MORE ETHICAL

[Advocates](#) of cultivated meat say that it not only eliminates the suffering of animals bred for their meat, but that the impact made on the environment is radically reduced. Globally, more than 150 companies are working on producing cultivated meat, not just chicken but also [beef](#), pork, [lamb](#), [duck](#) and even [seafood](#). Last summer, the US Department of Agriculture authorised two companies based in California, UPSIDE Foods and Good Meat, to sell cultivated meat, specifically chicken.

MAINLY CHICKEN

The two companies have introduced their chicken through two restaurants: UPSIDE Foods through Bar Crenn in San Francisco, California and Good Meat through China Chilcano in Washington, D.C. [In time](#), they plan to sell other types of meat too, in both restaurants and supermarkets [nationwide](#).

IN EXPANSION

To find out more, Speak Up met with Eric Schulze, vice president of global regulatory and public policy with UPSIDE Foods. The company operates a 53,000-square-foot [facility](#) in the city of Emeryville near San Francisco, and plans to expand its operations in the near future. Schulze began by explaining how cultivated meat is different from vegan alternatives: **Eric Schulze (American accent):** The difference is simply that we are actual meat. This is the same muscle [tissue](#), connective [tissue](#) and [fat](#) you would find in an animal, just produced differently. So compared to a plant-based alternative, it is the opposite of that. It is not an alternative to meat. It is meat. The only alternative part of this process is just simply the method by which we produce it, which is in a cultivation system rather than an animal's body. We've had over a thousand people try it over the years, and I myself helped design the product. So I've been eating it routinely, as a meat-eater. And I think the simple answer is, it's chicken. I mean, as beautifully mundane as that is. It's chicken and it tastes just like it.

CONTROLLED

In traditional red and white meat production, animals and birds may be treated cruelly, [pumped up](#) with hormones, and exposed to nasty pesticides. Cultivated meat can be a healthy and ethical alternative. **Eric Schulze:** The entire production process is controlled and every variable, more or less, can be monitored from the beginning, from the choice of the [cells](#) to all of the final characteristics, the nutritionals of the product, there's a lot more control and in this case, elimination of things that aren't needed in order to keep an animal healthy. The idea that you're keeping animals off the hoof is another tool in fighting climate change.

MULTIPLE MEATS

[As yet](#), there are few cultivated meat products available. But Schulze believes this [will](#) change within a decade or two. **Eric Schulze:** [A fair estimate](#) is somewhere in five years or less. Eventually, over the next five to twenty

years, we have multiple species and multiple products, and you can buy any type of cultivated meat that you desire.

GETTING USED TO IT

The idea of cultivated meat may be off-putting for some, admits Scultze, but eat it every day and you'll end up not noticing the difference. **Eric Schulze:** As a professional scientist myself, I think it's really important to admit that this is a new idea and it can be a bit odd to think about. When we think about meat, we think about an animal. This is the first time that the idea of meat isn't linked directly to an animal. So I just think one, education and exposure is really important for consumers. For me, eating it every day, I don't even think about it anymore because it's just meat to me. And the people that have [tried it] overwhelmingly love it because again, we've gone to great lengths to make sure this is just a chicken. If you just don't like the taste of meat... then you're not going to like this product. It tastes like meat. Tastes exactly like it. So that's not for you. But for the vast majority of people on this planet, nine out of ten people on this planet, this will meet exactly their taste buds.

THREAT TO FARMING

And, he claims, the agricultural community will adapt to and may even profit from this scientific innovation. **Eric Schulze:** Interestingly, the agricultural community historically has been the metronome of human progress. We found ways to feed more and more people more efficiently or cheaper through technological and scientific innovation. And they recognise that this is just another step in that innovation. Meat demand is going to double by 2050 and there's a large share of the pie that's available.

IS IT VEGAN?

So, how do vegans feel about it? **Eric Schulze:** It's a wonderful debate in the animal rights and vegan community as to whether this product is vegan or not. I've heard many arguments. Our official position is these products are

not vegan, they are animal products. However, I've heard [compelling](#) arguments that they could be considered vegan. That said, if you don't like the taste of animal meat, this isn't going [to win you over](#). If you're an ethical vegan or you, for any reason, you have an ethical abhorrence, but you do enjoy meat products and protein, we're going [to be right up your alley](#). But to be [candid](#), the most important consumers of this product are meat-eaters, the nine out of ten people on this planet.

A HUGE WIN FOR THE PLANET

While it may not [replace](#) the traditional meat industry entirely, cultivated meat offers meat-eaters an authentic and ethical alternative. **Eric Schulze:** As a [reluctant](#) omnivore, as a proud Texan as well I am motivated to find another way to eat meat. I know that I'm not of strong [will](#) enough to not [eat meat]. I consider myself a reducetarian and find ways to reduce my consumption of meat. However, I know I'm not going [to give it up](#) completely, and I feel like a lot of people feel the same way I do. And instead of [shaming folks](#) like myself into finding a new way to doing it, I think giving them an alternative that meets all of their demands, a lot of people [will](#) jump on that. If it's the right price, if it's available and it tastes great, I think a lot of people are going [to switch over](#) to it, and I think it'll be an easy switch for most people, in which case that's a huge win for us as an industry and [for] the planet.

Glossary

- **a bit odd** = un poco strana
- **to give it up** = rinunciare
- **nationwide** = nazionale
- **tissue** = tessuto
- **share of the pie** = la fetta di torta
- **to switch over** = passare
- **profit** = trarre vantaggio
- **to win you over** = convincere, conquistare
- **cells** = cellule
- **slaughter** = macellare
- **candid** = sincero
- **will** = volontà
- **taste buds** = papille gustative
- **compelling** = persuasivo
- **to be right up your alley** = essere di proprio gradimento
- **replace** = sostituire
- **Advocates** = sostenitori, difensori
- **beef** = carne bovina
- **lamb** = agnello
- **exposure** = pubblicità, esposizione
- **reluctant** = riluttante
- **As yet** = fino ad ora
- **to great lengths** = fare grandi sforzi
- **folks** = persone
- **breed** = allevare
- **feed** = alimentare
- **seafood** = pesce, frutti di mare
- **fat** = grasso
- **steel tanks** = cisterne di acciaio
- **duck** = anatra
- **In time** = con il tempo
- **off-putting** = sgradevole
- **shaming** = costringere, mettere in imbarazzo

- **facility** = struttura
- **pumped up** = pompare
- **A fair estimate** = una stima attendibile
- **overwhelmingly** = in grande maggioranza