

Future Foods: A (critical) law and policy perspective on cultured meat production for climate change mitigation

Dr Mariela de Amstalden¹ & Dr Neil Stephens² University of Birmingham

¹ Birmingham Law School, m.deamstalden@bham.ac.uk

² School of Social Policy, n.stephens@bham.ac.uk



UNIVERSITY OF
BIRMINGHAM

Cultured meat (aka cell-based meat, cultivated meat) is a technology that seeks to **grow meat in vats** from animal cells, without the need to keep and slaughter livestock. It is intended to help address environmental issues by producing meat with lower use of land, water, energy and greenhouse gases. It is also intended to significantly lower global animal slaughter numbers and produce meat free of antibiotic use and zoonotic disease.

At present, however, cultured meat is an **early-stage technology** that **is only legally available** to purchase in small quantities **in Singapore**. While regulatory efforts are ongoing across jurisdictions – particularly in the United States and in the European Union- **legal pathways to market** are currently uncertain. Arguably, cultured meat will only become available for mass consumption after **robust legal frameworks** are adopted. The importance of **smart, responsive regulatory design** that reflects social realities and anticipates potential legal risks is crucial.

As an emergent technology, designing appropriate policy responses must contend with **significant uncertainty** over production methods – including its environmental impact – and changes to society that may result. **Key socio-political issues** include **public responses** (including religious perspectives), **economic impacts** on other sectors (including **labour market change**) **food security, food justice** and the **concentration of power** within the food sector, as well as potential impacts on **rural communities** and landscape change. **Where, when** and **if** these impacts may be felt is also vital, but remains unclear.



Image: GOOD Meat



Image: New Ages Meats



Image: Upside Foods



Image: BlueNalu

All image show cultured meat prototypes and the company that produced them.