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Meat, The Future: The Role Of Regulators In The Lab-Grown Revolution

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In The Lab-Grown Revolution

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Abstract

The United States is one of the largest consumers of meat globally. The production of meat contributes substantially to climate change due to the levels of greenhouse gasses emitted and the amount of land, water, feed, and other natural resources required to raise animals used for meat. Traditional meat production is another major source for the emergence of zoonotic diseases and antimicrobial-resistant pathogens. Nevertheless, Americans consume more meat now than at any time in the nation's history.

Advocates for policy change aimed at addressing the risks associated with meat production have typically focused on reducing meat consumption, alternatives to meat, or improving the standards of traditional meat production. These are laudable goals, but an emerging technology now promises meat production that may avoid these risks entirely. Enter “lab-grown meat”; meat cultivated in an efficient and controlled laboratory environment without the need for fields, feed, or even animals.

The technology has been in development for over 100 years but has seen exponential growth in the past 5 years. What was previously considered a science fiction fantasy became a reality in the US in 2023 when UPSIDE Foods and GOOD Meat received.

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