



To :  
TRIS – European Commission

wePlanet™

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**Contribution to the draft act prohibiting the production and placing on the market of laboratory-grown meat**

WePlanet is a non-governmental organisation that aims to defend the science behind pragmatic solutions that can tackle environmental problems in our food system. We disseminate evidence-based science and knowledge to support the development and implementation of EU policies that have a positive impact on society and the environment.

We would therefore like to provide our input on the TRIS notification 2024/0394/HU – 'Draft act prohibiting the production and placing on the market of laboratory-grown meat':

The Commission has previously stated that cultivated meat has the potential to contribute to achieving the objectives of the EU's Farm to Fork strategy for fair, safe, healthy and environmentally sustainable food systems. A 2024 [study](#) by the European Parliamentary Research Service found cultivated meat could cut the [climate impact of meat](#) by up to 92%, reduce air pollution by 94%, and use up to 90% less land, offering a more sustainable and resilient alternative to conventional meat production.

Although not yet widely available, research and investment are accelerating progress. Cultivated meat is already approved in [Singapore](#) and the [USA](#) and is gaining [momentum](#) in Europe. In April this year, [Meatable](#), an innovative Dutch food tech company on a mission to bring cultivated meat to scale, successfully hosted the first legally approved cultivated meat tasting in the European Union. In July, [Gourmey](#), a food startup based in Paris, became the first company to apply for a novel food authorisation for a cultivated food product in the European Union.

#### On the Hungarian arguments



*"There are a number of concerns about the production and placing on the market of laboratory-grown meat. Answers to the questions raised will only be possible on the basis of a comprehensive impact assessment.... It is not clear how the safety of cell-based technology can be guaranteed in order to avoid potential health risks for consumers and it is therefore necessary to introduce regulation".*

European [food safety standards](#) are globally respected, with the EU's robust regulatory framework ensuring top levels of safety, consumer protection, and transparency. These standards serve as a benchmark for other nations and foster strong consumer trust, influencing international markets. The high level of consumer protection and rigorous safety standards have led to strong consumer trust in the EU's food system, which in turn influences international markets.

Cultivated meat in the EU is regulated under the [Novel Food Regulation](#) and must undergo a rigorous approval process by the European Food Safety Agency (EFSA). Once approved, it can be sold across all 27 EU countries, with the process typically taking at least 18 months. EFSA [ensures](#) the latest scientific evidence is incorporated in assessing new food technologies like cultivated meat.



iven the existing EU legislation and the role of EFSA, it is clear that the impact assessment procedures for cultivated meat are already covered and any doubts about safety will be addressed through existing food safety agencies and processes. The EU's regulatory framework is designed to provide a comprehensive evaluation of novel foods, and EFSA's rigorous, science-based assessments offer a reliable mechanism for mitigating any potential risks. As a result, the system ensures that any doubts about the safety, nutritional value, or environmental impact of cultivated meat are thoroughly scrutinized before it reaches consumers.



*Increased production of laboratory-grown meat can have an adverse impact on the agricultural sector and rural living conditions as a whole.*

There is no evidence to suggest that cultivated meat poses a threat to traditional agriculture, rural life, or the prosperity of farmers.

A [report](#) from the Royal Agricultural University (RAU) explores how integrating the two sectors could benefit farmers, offering new opportunities rather than competition. Farmers could play an important role in this sector as cultivated meat production requires growth media rich in nutrients like amino acids, sugars, and other growth factors. Farmers could transition to growing crops specifically tailored for this sector and being included in the supply chain.

This transition would allow farmers to diversify their crops and enter a new supply chain, potentially creating stable and sustainable revenue streams. Rather than threatening the traditional agricultural sector, cultivated meat production could help farmers adapt to changing consumer demands and environmental challenges, ensuring that they remain key players in the future of food production.



*Representative population surveys show that consumer opposition to laboratory-grown meat exceeds the rejection of foods containing insect protein.*

With the support of a well-informed campaign that highlights the environmental benefits of cultivated meat, European consumers should have the ability to make free and more sustainable choices once these products are approved by EU regulators.

A [recent survey](#) by YouGov on the attitudes of Dutch consumers towards cultivated meat, commissioned by the Good Food Institute Europe (GFI Europe), a non-profit organisation and think tank, showed that 59% of those surveyed would be interested in trying cultivated meat.

Another [survey](#), also conducted by YouGov and GFI Europe, of 16,000 consumers in 15 European countries found that 69% of respondents in Portugal, 58% in Spain, 65% in Germany and 57% in Belgium said they would be in favour of allowing cultivated meat to be sold if food regulators found it to be safe and nutritious.

Although cultivated meat is not yet available on the European market, there is clear momentum and growing consumer interest, largely driven by a desire for more sustainable and ethical food products. Increased awareness of animal welfare issues and environmental concerns has sparked a shift towards alternatives to conventional meat, particularly among younger generations who prioritize cruelty-free and sustainably produced options.



Given this rising consumer demand, we contend that the Hungarian government's position on cultivated meat should be supported by robust data, rather than speculation. Consumer interest is evident, and data-driven arguments will ensure that policy decisions reflect both public sentiment and the potential benefits of this emerging technology.

## Possible impact to the European single market

The free movement of goods, a core principle of the EU, is enshrined in Article 5 of the General Food Law and ensures the removal of non-tariff barriers through harmonized national regulations. Hungary's draft law banning the production and sale of cultivated meat could impact the EU single market and violate this principle once cultivated meat is authorized by the EU.

While the EU sets common food safety rules, national authorities enforce them, often with varying interpretations to protect public health. However, concerns like those raised by Hungary must be based on reliable scientific data and real risks, not hypothetical ones.

Under the EU's Precautionary Principle, Member States can suspend or provisionally restrict the marketing and use of any novel food, if they believe it to constitute a health hazard according to the safeguard provisions of the General Food Law. However, the General Food Law Regulation outlines the precautionary principle only comes into play after an evidence-based assessment has been carried out, applying when "...the possibility of harmful effects on health is identified, but scientific uncertainty persists". As cultivated meat has not yet been approved for sale, these principles would be violated through a ban, as there is no risk for human health from a product that consumers cannot access, and nor has any potential health risk from cultivated meat been identified or even seriously postulated.

We hope that our contributions will be carefully considered.

On behalf of WePlanet,

Yours sincerely,

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SECRETARY GENERAL WEPLANET

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