

NEW FOOD CONFERENCE

Re-Thinking the Food Industry
Berlin, 21-22 March 2019

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NEW FOOD, NEW RISKS — ENSURING CONSUMER SAFETY ON NOVEL FOODS

What is novel food?

What are the criteria for guaranteeing consumer safety?

What are the conditions for new plant-based foods?

What is so special about cultured meat?

What methods maximise marketability?

500 Years Columbian Exchange — 20 Years Novel Food

Potato, maize, tomato and cacao novel in 1500

Kiwi fruit novel 1970

Chia seeds and pili nuts novel now

Regulation (EC) No 258/97, in force since 15 May 1997

Regulation (EU) 2015/2283, in force since 1 January 2018

Objectives: (prophylactic) consumer protection and internal market (Article 1(2)), innovation, environment and food security (recital 29)

What is novel food?

Any food that was not used for human consumption to a significant degree within the European Union before 15 May 1997 falling under one of 10 legally defined novel food categories

What are the criteria for guaranteeing consumer safety?

- The food does not, on the basis of the scientific evidence available, pose a safety risk to human health
- The food's intended use does not mislead the consumer, especially when the food is intended to replace another food and there is a significant change in the nutritional value
- Where the food is intended to replace another food, it does not differ from that food in such a way that its normal consumption would be nutritionally disadvantageous for the consumer

Labelling requirements (instructions for use, consumption patterns, allergen warnings), also with a view to vulnerable groups of consumers

What are the conditions for new plant-based foods?

Same as for any other novel food

Facilitated by the possibility of notifying "traditional food from a third country" with a history of safe food use overseas

Granted: decorticated grains of *Digitaria exilis* (Commission Implementing Regulation (EU) 2018/2016)

Pending authorisations: fonio, haskap berries and *Moringa Stenopetala*

What is so special about cultured meat?

Test-case for food innovation while EU law remains untested thus far

7 March 2019: Joint regulatory oversight agreed between the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

Statements originating from the EU (few):

Joint Research Centre 2013 — “Could cultured meat reduce environmental impact of agriculture in Europe?”

Lab-Meat EP-STOA citizens survey 2018 — “What if all our meat were grown in a lab?”

Written Question E-004200-18 “Potential risks of lab-produced synthetic meat: protecting producers and consumers”

Cultured Meat concerns all strands of food policy

- Food Security: safety of supply, also with a view to long-term developments, and sustainability
- Food Safety: cultured meat is a novel food
- Food information: cultured meat and the denomination 'meat'
- Nutrition: cultured meat's nutritional value

Cultured Meat — Novel Food

Article 3(2)(a)(vi) of Regulation (EU) No 2015/2283 on novel foods stipulates that food consisting of, isolated from, or produced from a cell culture or tissue culture from animals, plants, micro-organisms, fungi or algae is considered as one of the novel food categories listed in the regulation

Cultured meat is novel food *par excellence*

Generic authorisation of cultured meat as a category is unlikely, more likely to be product by product

Cultured Meat — Denomination ‘Meat’

Regulation (EC) No 853/2004 (Hygiene Regulation – animal products) defines ‘meat’ as edible parts of animals including blood

Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 (food information) defines ‘meat’ as skeletal muscles of mammalian and bird species recognised as fit for human consumption + connective tissue

Applied on production methods of cultured meat (stem-cell technology, cells taken from a live animal and placed in a growth medium in a bioreactor where they proliferate independently) = biologically identical with the animal species from which its base material was taken; not stated that it must come from an animal whose life has ended by slaughter

Future: Conventional meat ↔ Cultured meat dichotomy — or culture war ahead?

What methods maximise marketability?

Consumer acceptance

Reservations of the conventional food sector

No way around market authorisations, but new prospects for EU food policy offered 2019-2024:

- Novel food = litmus test for innovation in the food sector
- Return of the food sustainability debate
- SME-friendly procedures necessary
- EFSA 2.0 (amendment of Regulation (EC) No 178/2002)

cf. EVU Position Paper “Novel Food” September 2016 (on-line)