

Voluntary Report – Voluntary - Public Distribution

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Report Name: Israeli Government Finds Cultivated Beef to be Safe for Human Consumption

Country: Israel

Post: Tel Aviv

Report Category: Agricultural Situation, Agriculture in the News, Biotechnology and Other New Production Technologies, Livestock and Products

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Report Highlights:

In January 2024, the Israeli Ministry of Health’s National Food Services found that cultivated beef is “safe for human consumption.” The decision comes after a January 2023 determination that cultivated meat can be considered kosher. With this 2024 approval, Israel has become the first country to approve the sale of cultivated beef.

The cultivated meat industry (commonly referred to as lab-grown meat or cell-based meat) has grown in recent years, and there are several cultivated meat companies around the world, including in the United States,¹ Israel,² the Netherlands,³ and elsewhere. Cultivated meat is produced by growing animal cells in a laboratory instead of raising and slaughtering animals. It is a type of meat that is not harvested from live animals and aims to provide a more sustainable and ethical alternative to traditional livestock farming.

One producer is [Aleph Farms](#) (Rehovot, Israel), which used a one-time collection of fertilized eggs from a Black Angus cow from a breeding farm in California to source the requisite cells to culture meat. Aleph Farms explains the process on its website. First, the cells taken from the developed egg are preserved at sub-zero temperatures. A limited number of starter cells are then moved to a cultivator to live and grow. Afterwards, the cells are transferred to another cultivator where they are matured into muscle and collagen cell types with the help of a plant-protein mix. After several weeks the “cuts” are ready to be packaged. For more information, see <https://aleph-farms.com/our-recipe/>.

Cultivated Beef Deemed to be Kosher

In January 2023, after visiting Aleph Farms, Israel’s Chief Rabbi (and Israel’s pre-eminent Jewish authority), David Lau, declared that cultivated meat could be considered kosher. He explained that because the product does not come from a slaughtered animal and does not have blood, the product should be considered *Kosher Pareve* (i.e., a product that is neither dairy nor meat and can be consumed either with dairy or meat) even though it has a trace of stem cells from an animal source. For more information, see [IS2023-0002: Israeli Chief Rabbi Rules Cultured Meat is Kosher](#).

While this announcement was welcomed news by the Israeli cultured meat sector, the product is defined as a “new food,” meaning the product still had to undergo a complex individual approval process to safeguard public health (before it could be commercialized).

Government Finds Cultured Beef Safe for Consumption

After a review by the [Ministry of Health’s National Food Services](#), Aleph Farms was granted a “No Questions” letter in January 2024, acknowledging that cultivated beef is safe to eat.⁴ The Head of the Food Risk Management Department noted, “{t}he approval comes after a range of critical factors {were} examined, including toxicology, allergenic potential, nutritional composition, the microbiological and chemical safety of the new food, and all aspects of its manufacturing process, from initial isolation of the cells to processing and packing of the final food product.”⁵ With this approval, Aleph Farms became the first company in the world to be granted a pre-marketing approval for cultivated beef.⁶

¹ See, e.g., <https://www.goodmeat.co/> and <https://upsidefoods.com/>.

² See, e.g., <https://aleph-farms.com/about/>, <https://supermeat.com/our-meat/>, <https://www.steakholderfoods.com/products/cultivated-meat>, <https://www.believermeats.com/our-meat>, and <https://www.believermeats.com/our-meat>.

³ See, e.g., <https://meatable.com/faq/> and <https://mosameat.com/growing-beef>.

⁴ See <https://aleph-farms.com/journals/aleph-farms-granted-worlds-first-regulatory-approval-for-cultivated-beef/>

⁵ See <https://www.gov.il/en/departments/news/17012024-02>

⁶ NOTE: There are several non-beef producing companies that have been granted marketing approvals for cultivated meat. For example, [Upside Foods](#) and the [Good Meat Company](#) were granted approval in 2023 for their poultry products.

The company reportedly intends to continue with the regulatory process for getting their production facility approved as safe for food production.⁷ Furthermore, the company intends to move forward with commercializing its “petit steak,” which will be marketed under the brand “Aleph Cuts.”⁸

Attachments:

No Attachments.

⁷ See, e.g., <https://forward.com/news/576840/israel-approves-lab-grown-beef-is-kosher/>.

⁸ See <https://aleph-farms.com/aleph-cuts/>