

From veganism to ‘post meat’ foods: The six varieties of meat substitutes

Civilians often clump the alternative meat companies and labs together in some kind of big meatless meatball, but, just like different kinds of self-driving car systems, they’re quite distinct...I see six levels of cellular agriculture.

...

Level 0: Just Be Vegan

Some plants...taste great just the way they are.

Level 1: Go Alternative

This kind of protein substitute is a meat alternative—a plant-based protein that starts to mimic the experience of eating meat. Veggie burgers fall into this category.

Level 2: Get Cultured

These meat alternatives are also plant-based, but they contain some “cultured” proteins that are produced using a new scientific process...[Impossible Foods’ Impossible Burger falls into this category because its key ingredient is a protein called heme that is produced by genetically engineered yeast.](#)

Level 3: Post-Vegan

Foods at this level are made of plant-based ingredients combined with cultured animal cells (as opposed to the products of bacterial fermentation). In other words, cells as ingredient, plants for mass.

Level 4: That’s a Spicy Meatball

Level 4 alternatives are pure cultured animal cells...most of the mass here is animal cells.

Level 5: Tastes Like Chicken

Now we get something actually like a chicken thigh or T-bone steak...It is very much the goal of the alternative meat effort, and no one has achieved it yet.

Level 6: ZOMG What Is This?

Tasty fake meat is exciting, but not nearly as exciting as the idea of a completely new food system with a diversity of inputs and completely new outputs...in other words, instead of just trying to recreate meat, scientists develop completely new ingredients that are actually “post-meat.”

Read full, original article: [Fake Meat, Served Six Ways](#) (behind paywall after 3 free articles)