

Will we ever eat lab-grown meat? Infant industry faces technical hurdles and fickle consumers

Blood, sweat and tears are a given, but we'll also need to see significant movement in the price and availability of key raw materials before the [cell-based meat] industry can produce truly meaningful quantities of meat cost-effectively, said KC Carswell, PhD, VP process development at cell-cultured meat startup Memphis Meats, during a keynote speech at [the October 19] virtual [Cultured Meat Symposium](#).

"To convince our customers and investors that we're a viable industry, we have to be able to show a clear path to profit at scale," said Dr Carswell.

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To provide some context of the scale of the challenge, she said, "In the US alone we produce approximately 100bn lbs a year of beef, pork and poultry.

"Even the total global biopharma cell-culture capacity is a drop in the bucket when it comes to the scale of food."

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As for consumer acceptance, "It doesn't matter how efficient or cost-effective our technologies are, or how smoothly the regulatory path functions if nobody's interested in the products," she noted.

However, she claimed, research suggests that "roughly two-thirds of US consumers would eat cell-based meat and many of those consumers are planning on eating it regularly... Massive segments of the population in countries throughout the world are hungry for cell-based meat."

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