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It turns out that mimicking the complex biological processes that generate what eaters know as meat is mind-bogglingly difficult, and massive technological hurdles to doing it at scale remain. Rebecca Vaught, founder of Van Heron Labs, a biotechnology company that works with medical and cell-meat companies to streamline their cell-growth processes, argues the engineering challenges associated with cultured meat “are nearly on par with the engineering challenges with taking a man to the moon.”

The regulatory caveats aren’t trivial, either—these novel products have yet to pass muster with the US Food and Drug Administration and agriculture department, which in 2019 [agreed](#) to jointly oversee regulation of cell meat.

Excitement about cell-based meat may be flourishing. But the gap between current aspiration and ultimate achievement is not a notion you’re going to find spelled out on a press release heralding the imminent debut of lab-grown chicken nuggets at a restaurant near you.

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