

## ‘Hybrid meat’: Will consumers embrace food made of both cultivated meat and plant-based protein?

In much the same way that hybrid vehicles acted as a bridge between the electric vehicle experimentation of the 1970s to their rapid commercialization today, hybrid meat products may do the same for cultivated meat. They could renew excitement in meat alternatives as the novelty of Impossible Whoppers and Beyond Meat McPlants wears off, while also giving the cultivated meat sector a testing ground for its grand ambition of one day ending conventional meat production.

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A product that’s 5 percent cultivated is going to cost a lot less to produce than the startups making 75 to 100 percent cultivated meat. “If we’re using low-single-digit by percentage, then all of a sudden, this crazy pipe dream doesn’t seem so crazy,” [New Age Eats CEO Brian] Spears says. “Because now you’re like 1/50th of the cost for the cell-based ingredients.”

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Embracing hybrid or cultivated meat, should it eventually show up in your supermarket aisle, will demand not just a willingness to try something new, but a fundamentally different relationship to what we eat and how it is made. It can intuitively feel as though alternative meats — plant-based, cultivated, or a mix of both — aren’t as good for the climate as “natural” meat. Some [environmental groups](#), [researchers](#), [analysts](#), and [food critics](#) dismiss plant-based meat partly on the grounds that we just don’t know enough about these newfangled meat simulacra to declare them an environmental win.

But we do. Hybrid meat or plant-based meat might seem unnatural and thus undesirable, but there is nothing natural or desirable about a conventional livestock industry dependent on spewing noxious pollution and torturing animals to produce pork chops and chicken nuggets.

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