

Is lab-grown meat environmentally harmful?

U.C. Davis researchers concluded that producing cell-cultured meat could actually be more burdensome to the environment than its traditionally farmed counterpart – a finding that is at odds with the prevailing research. The study states that cell-cultured meat production generates around 25 times [the emissions of beef](#), which produces around [14% of global greenhouse gas emissions](#). Media outlets such as *New Scientist* ran with the damning stat. “There’s a big environmental downside to lab-grown meat,” read a [San Francisco Chronicle](#) headline. “New study is extremely embarrassing for lab-grown meat,” [proclaimed Futurism](#).

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GFI [[Good Food Institute](#)] recommends that media and consumers instead look to peer-reviewed studies, such as one published recently in the *International Journal of Life Cycle Assessment* that is based on data from more than 15 companies about their manufacturing. That meta-analysis, GFI explains, “found that cultivated meat produced at scale using renewable energy could reduce the carbon footprint by 92%, land use by 90%, and water use by 66% compared to conventional beef production.”

“It’s really kind of a crazy study,” GFI president Bruce Friedrich said on a panel at the Animal and Vegan Advocacy Summit, held in Los Angeles in July. “It’s a bit like saying electric vehicles will never catch on because there is no charging infrastructure, which means there never will be a charging infrastructure. There’s never been innovation which involved taking exactly how it’s done now and making that billions of times larger.”

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