Viewpoint: Who is behind reactionary European movement to hobble lab grown meat revolution?

Vienna, Paris and Rome, along with nine other EU countries, are set to argue that meat grown in a laboratory is a threat to “genuine food production methods”, a claim a diplomatic source told Euractiv is “exaggerated and premature”.

Lab-grown meat “does not constitute a sustainable alternative to primary farm-based production”, and raises ethical, economic, social and public health questions that “are essential for the future society”, the note to the Council of Ministers [argues].

“These practices represent a threat to primary farm-based approaches and genuine food production methods that are at the very heart of the European farming model,” the document reads.

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The stance of the 12 countries could open a rift in the Council.

“It’s a sector that does not yet exist, at this point it’s about innovation in a lab. Suppressing this now only hinders the kind of innovation that is precisely necessary for sustainability,” they continued.

Currently, there is no cell-based meat marketed in Europe, and the authorisation could come only after the assessment by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA), according to the provisions of the so-called Novel Food Regulation.

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