

US regulators outline oversight on meat grown in lab dishes

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In this Sept. 12, 2011 file photo, Simmental beef cattle feed on hay in a pasture near Middletown, Ill. Startups developing cell-cultured meat say their products would be more humane and environmentally friendly, since they don't require raising and slaughtering animals. (AP Photo/Seth Perlman)

Burgers made by growing cow cells in a lab dish have a clearer path to reaching supermarkets as U.S. regulators on Thursday outlined how the emerging food category will be monitored.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture said [meat](#) from cultured [animal cells](#) will have to undergo agency inspection, as with other meat and poultry products. Carmen Rottenberg of the USDA said she expects inspections to be similar to those for other meat-processing plants, but noted that a lot remains unknown since companies haven't yet scaled up to commercial production.

Rottenberg also says the agency expects a new label will be required for cell-cultured meat, meaning it likely won't be able to simply use terms like "[ground beef](#)" or "hamburger."

Startups developing cell-cultured meat say their products would be more humane and environmentally friendly, since they don't require raising and slaughtering animals. It wasn't known how cultured meat would be regulated until November, when the USDA and Food and Drug Administration said they would share oversight.

The agreement on joint oversight, formalized Thursday, says the FDA will regulate the first stages of the process, including cell collection and growth, before handing off oversight of production and labeling to the USDA. The agencies say they'll continue working out details of how to regulate the products.

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