

Should Home Cooks Be Required to Label Food Made with Lab-Grown Meat?

Lab-grown meat has moved from science journals to actual grocery shelves faster than most people expected. A handful of countries have already approved it for sale, and more are reviewing applications now. That speed has outpaced public understanding of what the product actually is. Any packaging containing lab-grown meat should carry clear labeling because consumers currently have no reliable way to distinguish it from conventionally farmed meat at the point of sale.

Singapore, the first country to approve lab-grown meat for commercial sale, requires labeling that specifies the product's cultivation method directly on the package. Surveys conducted there after the rollout showed that most shoppers wanted this information available, regardless of whether they intended to buy the product or avoid it. That distinction matters. Labeling isn't about steering consumers toward or away from lab-grown meat; it's about giving them the information to make that call themselves, the same way calorie counts or allergen warnings function on any other label.

Singapore's approach shows that clear labeling and market growth aren't in conflict, whatever early industry concerns suggested. Consumers adapted quickly once the information was simply available to them. Any country approving lab-grown meat for sale should treat labeling as a baseline requirement, not an afterthought added once complaints start rolling in.