

# Will food technology change farming as we know it?

04 FEBRUARY 2019

CATEGORY:  
[ARTICLE](#)



The global food tech market is [expected to grow to more than \\$250.43 billion](#) by 2022 according to a 2016 industry market report. In the first five months of 2018, VC's have invested \$1.3 billion in 2016 and 2017 in food tech.

It is meat of all kinds produced from ranches and small farm producers like [Crowd Cow](#) to plant-based and cell-based meats like Meatable and [Moving Mountains](#) in the UK to [Beyond Meat](#). And, growing food movement has brought new kinds of VCs and investors to the table such as [Quadia Fund](#) which focuses on funding for regenerative economy/sustainability/Foodtech startups in Switzerland and Paris-based [Five Season Ventures](#) that invests heavily in Foodtech. In 2018, Five Seasons Ventures released the [State of European Food Tech](#) to look at the growth of the market across Europe.

Biotech and life sciences markets are having an impact on the growth of this new food market in the form of plant-based and cell-based meats.

What is interesting about the build-out of the food market away from animal meat, is that both cell-based and plant-based are bookends in the food tech world.

[Meatable](#), a spin out of Cambridge University and Stanford University, is creating meat from animal cells, cell-based meat, which means there won't be a need to raise, farm and feed animals. Imagine the repercussions to the environment? Water waste and methane gasses would be a thing of the past. Cattle-breeding is taking a significant factor for these greenhouse gas emissions.

On the other end of this new food market, there's plant-based meat like Moving Mountains. Would a vegetarian eat meat if it wasn't farmed and or killed in the process? If someone is a vegetarian for ethical reasons and that component was eliminated, would the movement end?

If you grow meat, by example, it could be grown to spec. If we can create a beef that comes from beef cells but at the same time, we can make it leaner, and it becomes healthier for us all. Lab-grown meat would allow us to consume all the protein and nutrients from meat and reduce or eliminate those that don't have any nutritional value.

There is also the issue of global food sources and how we will feed ourselves in 50 years.

Moving Mountains is anchored by the health issue (healthier diets) and creating a purely vegan/ plant-based diet. Meatable is grown in a lab but still meat. Populations in developing countries begin to eat an increased meat-rich diet as they become wealthier; however, at the same time they can't rear enough animals and don't have enough water to keep pace. So, if you can grow meat, you can change all of that.

The regulatory side of this emerging food market has not caught up with the products entering the market which is driven by technology. For example, could you call it beef or meat if it wasn't from a cow or chicken?

This debate is already underway in the US. In July 2018, the Federal Drug Administration began considering [banning](#) the use of the word 'milk' with all non-dairy products, like soy, almond and oat milk.

The great thing about being an Intellectual Property (IP) lawyer is that we get to see new tech every day and the core assets of all these businesses and all their IP as they create new benchmarks in real time, a thing that hasn't been done before.

Our thoughts about food in the last 20 years are changing radically, and in ten years we will not have the same views we have today. We won't have the same ethical concerns, and food won't be such a burden to our environment.

The next industrial revolution will change farming, and food technology will be a critical part of that.