

(English version)

**Question for written answer E-002888/26
to the Commission
Gerald Hauser (P/E)
(13 July 2026)**

Subject: Lab-grown meat — unanswered questions on health and consumer protection

Mindful to protect consumer health and preserve traditional food production, Italy has spoken out against the production and marketing of lab-grown meat. At EU level, meanwhile, discussions are still underway about authorising novel foods. Serious doubts abound as to whether the health effects of lab-grown meat have been sufficiently probed. In particular, there are no long-term findings on the likely consequences of regular consumption. Unanswered questions include those concerning the stability and safety of the cell lines used, possible production residues, the use of growth factors and culture media, possible microbial contamination, and potential allergenic or other previously insufficiently investigated effects on the human body. In line with the precautionary principle, food should only be authorised for widespread use once its safety has been fully established through scientific evidence.

1. Why does the Commission not follow Italy's lead and advocate an EU-wide ban on lab-grown meat?
2. What long-term scientific studies form the basis of the Commission's assumption that the regular consumption of lab-grown meat poses no risk to consumer health?
3. In view of the scientific misgivings that exist and the precautionary principle, does the Commission consider it prudent to authorise lab-grown meat, or will it decline to grant such an authorisation in order to protect EU public health?

Submitted: 13.7.2026

**Answer given by Mr Várhelyi on behalf of the European Commission
(7 September 2026)**

Lab-grown meat is regulated in the EU under Regulation (EU) 2015/2283⁽¹⁾ on novel foods. That regulation requires prior authorisation following a stringent scientific risk assessment carried out by the European Food Safety Authority (EFSA) for any new novel food that an applicant wishes to place on the EU market.

It is for the applicant to demonstrate the safety of its product through a comprehensive dossier covering, among others, the production process and compositional, nutritional and toxicological data, including, where necessary, data on longer-term consumption⁽²⁾.

To date, two applications for cell-based meat have been submitted to the Commission under Regulation (EU) 2015/2283 — for one EFSA is conducting the scientific risk assessment, while for the other further information is awaited to complete the application dossier.

The Commission must apply the procedures laid down in the regulation when an application is submitted, while ensuring a high level of health protection and the proper functioning of the internal market.

The Commission is aware of the societal debate surrounding cell-based meat, including ethical, socioeconomic and environmental considerations.

Other legitimate factors than food safety may also, where appropriate, be taken into account in the decision-making process. However, the Commission cannot prejudice the outcome of that process, in which the protection of public health will remain the primary consideration.

⁽¹⁾ Regulation (EU) 2015/2283 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 November 2015 on novel foods, amending Regulation (EU) No 1169/2011 of the European Parliament and of the Council and repealing Regulation (EC) No 258/97 of the European Parliament and of the Council and Commission Regulation (EC) No 1852/2001.

⁽²⁾ EFSA has adopted comprehensive technical and scientific guidance for the compilation of application dossiers and their assessment: <https://efsa.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.2903/j.efsa.2024.8961>.