

Public Comment
for
Advisory Committee on Biotechnology and 21st Century Agriculture Meeting

Submitted by
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As the AC21 has been established to inform and advise the Secretary of Agriculture on “the expanding dimensions and importance of agricultural biotechnology,” I would like to inform the committee of an emerging field of research: cellular agriculture.

Cellular agriculture is the production of agricultural products such as meat, milk, eggs, flavors, fragrances, textiles, from cell cultures as opposed to whole plants or animals.

These cell cultures could be microorganisms such as yeast, bacteria, or microalgae, engineered to produce proteins or fats. For example, omega-3 fatty acids made by algae, or milk proteins made by yeast cultures.

Or these cell cultures could be animal cells cultured to create tissue-based agriculture products, like meat or leather.

I am the CEO of New Harvest, a 501(c)(3) charitable organization funded entirely by individual donations. We are a research institute at the heart of the cellular agriculture community. We support cellular agriculture through catalyzing research, convening stakeholders, and informing the public.

New Harvest believes that a resilient and food-secure future depends on the coexistence of diverse agricultural production systems. In a world with 1) a population reaching 9 billion by 2050; 2) a growing need for protein; and 3) increasingly unpredictable weather and disease outbreak events, we believe that cell-based systems offer an important opportunity for sustainable and resilient agricultural production worthy of exploration.

New Harvest, founded in 2004, is the leading organization advancing breakthroughs in cellular agriculture. Since the beginning of our work we have engaged, informed, and worked alongside researchers, entrepreneurs, members of large food corporations, US regulators, and research funding agencies via workshops conducted under Chatham House Rules.

We are eager to work with AC21 and the USDA to include cellular agriculture as an important facet of the American agricultural portfolio.

I hope that I may serve as a resource during your ongoing consideration of advanced agricultural biotechnology and welcome the opportunity to engage in these important discussions. I invite members of the committee to contact me at isha@new-harvest.org with any questions about cellular agriculture and/or New Harvest’s work.