

Legislative Analysis



PROHIBIT LABELING LAB-GROWN MEAT SUBSTITUTES AS MEAT

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<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

House Bill 4076 (H-1) as reported from committee
Sponsor: Rep. Jerry Neyer
Committee: Agriculture
Complete to 5-13-25

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4076 would amend the Food Law to prohibit labeling or identifying a laboratory-grown meat substitute as *meat*.

The Food Law now defines *meat* as the edible part of clean, sound striated muscle of cattle, swine, sheep, deer and other cervids, goat, turkey, duck, ratite (flightless birds such as emus), or chicken slaughtered in compliance with all applicable laws, with or without the accompanying and overlying fat, and sinew, nerve, gland, and blood vessels that normally accompany the muscle tissues and are not separated from it in the process of dressing. Meat does not include specified risk materials as defined in federal regulations.¹

The bill would provide that a person who sells a laboratory-grown meat substitute must include one or more of the following terms on the label of that product:

- Cell-cultured.
- Lab-grown.
- Cultivated.
- Cell-cultivated.
- Another similar, accurate qualifying term or disclaimer intended to clearly communicate the contents of the product to a consumer.

MCL 289.7129

BACKGROUND AND DISCUSSION:

While lab-grown meat is created using cells from animals, it is not slaughtered, so it appears to fall outside the definition of meat presently contained in the Food Law. However, muscle cells from animals traditionally butchered for their meat are cultured in labs for eventual consumption, and manufacturers have labeled their products as meat.

This has led to pushback from those who raise animals for meat and say that the products derived from their animals, which are butchered and prepared for sale in a traditional sense, fall within the current definition of meat and should be the only products allowed to be labeled and sold as such. Advocates for transparency in food labeling also support these measures, saying that consumers should be aware of where their products originate and the manner in which they are created.

¹ <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-9/chapter-III/subchapter-A/part-310/section-310.22>

Opposing efforts to revise labeling laws are anti-animal cruelty advocates and those who believe that adding qualifiers to labels of laboratory-grown meat products is intended to create a stigma around products that they say are essentially identical to traditional cuts of meat and can be made without killing an animal.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would add additional program responsibilities for MDARD which would potentially require additional resources including staffing. The amount of additional department cost cannot be readily estimated at this time.

POSITIONS:

The following entities indicated support for the bill (4-17-25):

- Good Food Institute
- Michigan Farm Bureau

VEGMichigan indicated opposition to the bill. (4-17-25)

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.