FAKE MEAT FACTS

National Cattlemen's Beef Association

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On March 7, 2019, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced a formal agreement for regulating lab-grown fake meat products. Here is a rundown of which #FakeMeatFacts questions were covered and what we learned from the agreement.

Question	Covered?	Comments
Will the FDA conduct a pre-market safety evaluation?	✓	• The FDA will conduct premarket consultation processes to evaluate production materials and processes, including evaluation of all components and inputs.
Will a USDA veterinarian oversee cell collection?	✓	• The agreement states that the FDA will oversee initial cell collection and does not mention the presence of a USDA veterinarian. The agreement further states that USDA will rely on FDA oversight for all "pre-harvesting activities."
When and how will oversight transition from FDA to USDA?	✓	• The agreement reiterates that an oversight transition will occur at the cell harvest stage, but does not provide specifics. The agencies committed to developing a "more detailed joint framework or standard operating procedure" related to the harvest stage. USDA will be responsible for inspecting any facility that harvests cells, which is a win for consumers.
How will antibiotics be used in production?	✗	• More clarity is needed regarding how antibiotics are used in lab-grown fake meat production.
How will food safety risks change when products are manufactured at scale?	✗	• FDA committed to conducting premarket consultations to evaluate all production processes but did not provide further details.
Is the finished product safe?	✗	• Evaluating the safety of the finished products will be critical before the products are sold.
How does the finished product compare to real beef?	✗	• Manufacturers should provide evidence to justify their claims of equivalence.
Have independent scientists analyzed the products?	✗	• Manufacturers should make samples available for independent, objective analysis.