2026 STATE OF THE INDUSTRY:

Cultivated

meat, seafood, and ingredients

Acknowledgments

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About the series

The State of the Industry report series is GFI's annual deep dive into the rapidly evolving alternative protein landscape. This flagship series provides a global snapshot of the industry, synthesizing company landscape and product trends, investment and sales data, new scientific advancements, and public investment and regulatory updates that highlight industry progress.

Tracking the technological and adoption readiness of the cultivated, plant-based, and fermentation sectors is a useful way to evaluate progress toward competing on price, taste, and availability with conventional meat. Readiness can be determined by assessing the progress, challenges, and overall risk across categories such as scientific feasibility, engineering viability, innovation capacity, value proposition, market acceptance, and license to operate. This series summarizes the current state of these factors using real-world developments from the past year.

Access the full suite of 2026 State of the Industry reports here.

Important notes

- All figures are expressed in U.S. dollars where the $ symbol is used. Other global currencies are clearly marked.
- The Good Food Institute is not a licensed investment or financial advisor, and nothing in this report is intended or should be construed as investment advice.
- Please note that recently published investment figures may differ from prior figures published by GFI as we and Net Zero Insights continually work to improve our dataset and reporting methodology.
- An update to the report titles: In past years, GFI titled each State of the Industry report with the year covered in report content. Starting in 2026, the report titles now reflect the publication year (content timeframe remains the same).

Editor's note

Cultivated meat—meat grown directly from animal cells—is a transformative agricultural innovation few people have tasted or even heard of. For now.

That's likely to change as more governments, companies, and researchers recognize the need to diversify protein production on a planet being pushed to its limits. If we are to meet growing global demand for meat while addressing some of the world's biggest challenges within the next two critical decades, we can't simply ramp up business-as-usual meat production. While multiple interventions will be needed, cultivated meat—as well as meat made from plants or via fermentation—is an essential globally scalable solution.

In the sector's first decade, cultivated meat grew from an idea to a reality just now beginning to reach plates. In 2025, similar to other innovations in their early days, the field experienced both challenges and breakthroughs. Funding constraints, regulatory roadblocks, and company closures occurred alongside major cost reductions, production innovations, and collaborations critical to scale up and affordability:

- In 2025, a handful of company closures drew headlines, while regulatory wins racked up. For example, Food Standards Australia New Zealand finalized a regulatory pathway for cultivated meat.
- While the funding environment proved challenging, unprecedented milestones delivered open-access assets like cell lines and cell growth formulations, likely saving significant R&D time and money.
- Questions about profitability surfaced, while behind the scenes, researchers leveraged AI and other technologies to streamline processes, cut costs, and optimize end products.

Then and now: Ten short years ago, the cultivated meat milestones of today may have seemed far-fetched. It can be grounding to stop and ask: how far have we come in a decade?

In 2015, just three cultivated meat companies were founded, and fewer than 10 patents were published. By 2025, the company count topped 140 with over 1,500 patents published. In the past year, the first cultivated meat product launched in U.S. retail, cultivated seafood hit menus at a handful of U.S. restaurants, and the first cultivated meat products were served in restaurants in Australia. Globally, bioreactor capacity in operation expanded. A decade in, the cultivated meat space is taking root and focusing on the fundamentals of production—bringing down costs, optimizing taste and texture, and minimizing environmental impacts.

And focus we must. Evidence that current methods of meat production exacerbate global challenges—from climate change to pandemic risk—is mounting. In December 2025, the UN Environment Programme published the Global Environment Outlook, 7th Edition. The report notes that alternative proteins have the potential to pay significant dividends for our environment.

Yes, hurdles to scaling cultivated meat production remain. This report, *Cultivated meat, seafood, and ingredients*, details headline-grabbing hurdles like early-stage funding constraints, technical and cost obstacles, and regulatory challenges. But the following pages also detail the less visible progress: cost reductions, consistent product performance, credible paths to increased scale, and regulatory traction.

At GFI, a nonprofit funded by philanthropy, we're committed to charting a path forward that feeds growing global demand for meat in restorative, resilient ways. Our annual State of the Industry series—including this report—equips food system stakeholders with knowledge of the innovations and developments that got us further down that path in 2025.

Thank you to all those who are in this work alongside us, and as such, helping to build a thriving world, fed sustainably.

Executive summary

In 2025, the cultivated meat sector experienced a mix of successes and struggles across the commercial, investment, technology, policy, and regulatory landscape. Major themes:

- **Regulatory path-to-market milestones bring new, diverse products to consumers.** Cultivated foods and ingredients, including foie gras, pork fat, and salmon, broadened the variety of cultivated products available to consumers. In 2025, a growing number of companies and research institutions worked to innovate and optimize cultivated meat products.
- **The funding environment tightened.** Investors are showing increased discretion, prioritizing companies who demonstrate progress on fundamentals like cost, taste, and scale. Cultivated meat and seafood companies raised $73.9 million in 2025, according to a GFI analysis of data from Net Zero Insights (down from $144 million in 2024).
- **Commercial production is starting to scale.** The largest cultivated meat facility in the world is now open in Sydney, Australia (details below).
- **Public investment is growing in some places, declining in others.** Governments facing supply chain constraints and product shortages are increasingly integrating cultivated meat into their national food strategies and biotechnology plans, recognizing the potential benefits to the economy, food system, and national security.

	Bright spot	*Challenge*
Commercial landscape	**Regulatory pathways are expanding:** Regulatory pathways for cultivated foods now exist in Australia-New Zealand, Singapore, and the United States, clearing the way for broader commercialization.	**Hurdles across industry, consumer awareness, and profitability remain:** Production efficiency, regulatory roadblocks, consumer acceptance, and overall profitability continue to pose challenges.
Investments	**Strengthening metrics key to industry development:** Bioreactor capacity in operation, sustained output over time, and run reliability and consistency were all strengthened in 2025. **IntegriCulture** announced that they achieved profitability by generating revenue from selling research tools and nonfood products, a common diversification strategy pursued by startups needing to demonstrate clear and early paths to profitability.	**Smaller, more targeted investments:** The three largest cultivated meat deals in 2025 were Aleph Farms' $29 million raise, Mosa Meat's $17.6 million round, and BlueNalu's $11 million in convertible notes and preferred stock financings. These deals, while significant, each rank outside the top 20 largest cultivated meat deals of all time.

	Bright spot	*Challenge*
Science and technology *Scientific feasibility*	**Bovine cells for the whole sector:** GFI announced the acquisition of eight cell lines developed by the former startup SCiFi Foods. Through a partnership with Tufts University, researchers within academia and industry now have access to the first publicly available set of suspension-adapted bovine cell lines, enabling the acceleration of commercially relevant research and saving potentially millions in R&D expenses.	**Several actions are still needed to reduce the risks associated with commercialization:** These include depositing cell lines in public repositories to increase accessibility (especially for aquatic animals), creating cell lines with desirable traits, such as adaptation to suspension, and research demonstrating the metabolic efficiency of cells in bioreactors to increase commercial relevance.
Engineering viability	**Scaling commercial production: Vow** achieved production at 20,000-liter scale at their facility in Sydney, Australia, which hosts 35,000 liters of total capacity and room for 10 more similarly sized production lines. This is the largest current cultivated meat facility in the world, placing their production near the same scale as the largest biopharma processes.	**Lack of reliable data points for the cost of equipment, facilities, and other infrastructure associated with manufacturing:** To reduce the risks associated with high implementation cost, more public knowledge will need to be generated for bioreactor and facility costs at different scales, and other equipment and operational costs, such as media preparation and sterilization, harvesting, waste management, and common consumables.
Innovation capacity	**Industry-academic collaborations:** Establishing shared pilot-facility infrastructure at research universities can also encourage industry-academic collaborations to validate processes and accelerate innovation. For example, Tufts University is opening an innovation hub on their Medford campus in 2026.	**Reducing the risks associated with slow or limited process validation:** More cultivated meat products need to be sustained on restaurant menus and, eventually, in grocery store meat cases. Companies should continue to publish research to share process validation results and help de-silo research findings.

	Bright spot	*Challenge*
Government and regulation	**China:** In May 2025, the state-owned State Development & Investment Corporation announced a commitment of over CNY 4 billion ($555 million) to advance biomanufacturing infrastructure development through investments in domestic biotechnology companies. “New proteins” feature prominently.	**United States:** The U.S. drastically scaled back all federally funded R&D in 2025. As a result, new federal investments in cultivated meat and enabling technologies in the United States declined. In doing so, the United States bucks the global trend of investing competitively in food biotechnology and biomanufacturing.

Conclusion

In 2025, the cultivated meat industry earned multiple regulatory green lights. A total of seven companies have received regulatory clearance to sell different cultivated meat products, and signals of global market expansion are emerging. As of publication, cultivated meat can be sold in Singapore, the United States, and Australia. Private investments, however, are tightening, hindering continued innovation and commercial scale up. Access to critical research tools like cell lines has been made available, but far greater access is needed. Government support is strong in some regions, but is being curtailed in others.

The underlying case for cultivated meat is stronger than ever: rising demand for meat, climate and land use pressures, and the need to diversify protein supply chains. Many governments are prioritizing cultivated meat and other alternative proteins in their national food strategies and bioeconomy plans to achieve a range of goals, from climate mitigation and food security to economic competitiveness and public health. To fully realize the planetary and public health benefits that come with mainstream adoption of cultivated meat and other alternative proteins, governments, industry, and the research community must prioritize support for innovation that can help these new foods reach more plates.