

3D printing to boost plant-based meat production

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Producers of plant-based 'meat' are increasingly turning to 3D printing firms to help speed up the manufacturing process and create products that more closely resemble real meat.



As meat alternatives become more mainstream, 3D printing businesses have offered their technology to refine the manufacturing process, according to analyst GlobalData.

Many plant-based meat businesses use extruders to make their products, according to the research firm. As a result, they can't create fibrous or 'muscle-cut' substitutes and are forced to use ingredients that have been labelled as unhealthy by some – including soy and wheat gluten.

Making fibrous meat alternatives

Using 3D printing technology, producers can ditch these ingredients and replace them with more fibrous options such as pea and rice protein.

With companies such as Israel's Redefine Meat and Spain's NovaMeat offering novel applications of 3D printing technology for the creation of plant-based meat, investors have begun pouring money into the industry.

We spoke to NovaMeat chief executive Giuseppe Scionti [in this exclusive podcast](#), recorded at this year's YFoods London Food Tech Week, discussing his beginnings as a bio-medical engineer through to the global explosion of interest in his company in the past year.

'Faster-to-market use for the equipment'

Andy Coyne, food correspondent at GlobalData said: *"What these companies have now worked out is that their technology can help plant-based food manufacturers to make a better product. This is a more practical and possibly faster-to-market use for the equipment."*

"This is a classic case of the law of unforeseen circumstances. The 3D printing firms are on the cusp of solving a problem that they probably didn't know existed when they were perfecting their technology."

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Meanwhile, now is the **perfect time for start-ups in the alternative meat sector**, as a growing number of investors look to fund businesses within the market, according to Costa Yiannoulis, head of investment at CPT Capital.

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