TRENDING

Scientists Create Meat from Human Cells, but Claim It's Not Cannibalism?

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"You are what you eat" is a popular saying and it's getting more and more literal, at least in the case of this DIY meal kit designed for growing your own steak using human cells.

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This kit was also nominated by the Design Museum in London for a Design of the Year three years ago.

The Ouroboros Steak was named after the circular symbol of a snake eating itself-, tail first. It includes everything you need to use your own cells and grow small human meat steaks.

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Really?! Who would want to eat themselves?!

Cannibalism or Not?

A lot of criticism appeared for this kit due to its association with cannibalism; however, according to one of the designers, Grace Knight, people usually associate eating oneself with cannibalism, but technically, this isn't what's actually the case with this product.

This product isn't available for commercial purchase. The creators are Andrew Pelling, artist Orkan Telhan, and industrial designer Knight.

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It was commissioned by the Philadelphia Museum of Art for an exhibit in 2019. Growing this type of steak requires three months with the use of cells that are taken from inside the cheeks. For the sample steaks that were displayed in the museum, the team used human cell cultures that they bought from the American Tissue Culture Collection.

They grew them with donated blood which had expired and would've been destroyed. The final product was preserved in resin. Knight explained that expired human blood is considered a medical waste so it's cheaper and more sustainable than fetal bovine serum, but less accepted by society.

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What Is the Purpose of the Ouroboros Steak?

According to their website, growing oneself is great to make sure that you and those around you always know what the origin of your food is. Consumers would also know how the food has been raised and whether the cells were acquired consensually and ethically.

According to a statement of the designers, this project was made to express criticism toward the lab-grown meat industry which they don't consider as animal-friendly as it's representing themselves.

Unfortunately, lab-grown meat uses fetal bovine serum for the creation of animal cell cultures, even though some companies claim that they've found alternatives.

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The fetal bovine serum is made using calf fetus blood after the slaughter of pregnant cows. Yikes. The good news is that lab-grown meat hasn't been approved for human consumption yet.

If you want to taste the latest combination of biotech and food, there are some non-meat options you can try. Currently, cell-based meat remains unavailable to the public.

According to Pelling, since the industry of lab-grown meat is growing fast, such designs are showing some of its underlying issues so that people can see what's hidden beyond the hype.

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Sources:

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