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## **WESTERN SYDNEY PUTS LAB-GROWN MEAT ON THE MENU**

Western Sydney could become a national base for the production of meat grown from animal stem cells under an ambitious plan supported by the NSW Government.

NSW Minister for Jobs, Investment and Western Sydney Stuart Ayres said North Parramatta startup VOW has been supported with a \$25,000 Minimum Viable Product grant from the NSW Government to develop its cell-cultivated meat technology.

“In a world first, VOW has created the first ever cell-cultured kangaroo meat grown from stem cells taken from a kangaroo,” Mr Ayres said.

“Western Sydney is the perfect base for Australia’s first cultivated-meat startup to take forward a global scale opportunity to generate a new food industry together with high-tech jobs in cell-based agriculture.

“We are on the doorstep of Asia and, with Western Sydney Airport now underway, the potential to develop a world class laboratory to manufacture high quality cultivated meat exports is massive. I look forward to seeing a flourishing industry.”

VOW has been co-founded by two entrepreneurs, former Cochlear design lead Tim Noakesmith and George Peppou from startup accelerator Cicada Innovations, to grow meat for consumption from animal cells.

“There is growing demand for meat globally with population growth and with rising middle classes in developing nations consuming more protein.

“Growing meat sustainably from stem cells will have a fraction of the footprint of traditional livestock farming in terms of land use and water use and there is no need for culling animals.

“We’re building a team of scientists, designers and technologists all on a quest to meet the world’s protein demands for the future in a sustainable manner. But we are not in competition with traditional livestock farming.

“There is plenty of room for traditional meat as well as plant-based and cell-cultured meat to provide greater choice for consumers.

“We hope to build a full scale factory in Western Sydney that will eventually mass produce many tonnes of cell-cultivated meat each year for Australia and for export.”

Mr Peppou said VOW was also building the biggest “Noah’s Ark” cell library in the world with cell samples that can be used to develop new food experiences.

“At the moment we have only domesticated for food production less than 1% of what’s in nature so there are many unlocked food secrets to explore in the other 99.6%,” Mr Peppou said.



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“Nature has incredible diversity so there is great potential to create new food experiences. Our cell library will discover and catalogue new flavour, texture and nutritional profiles that we can also combine to create amazing new food experiences.

“We have kicked off collaboration discussions with some top tier Australian chefs to design their own high impact dishes using cultivated meats, and will work with food regulators to hopefully have our first premium product available by the end of next year.”

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