

The REAL Food Act

Executive Summary

What It Is

The REAL Food Act (Regulating Engineered and Altered-food for Life Act) is proposed federal legislation to ban cell-cultured, lab-grown meat and known carcinogenic additives from the United States food and, separately, animal feed supply, and to close the regulatory loopholes that currently let bioengineered foods and shelf-life-extending chemical coatings reach grocery shelves without independent, long-term safety testing. It is authored by Nic Raven, a retired U.S. Air Force veteran and small business owner, through Raven Solutions, LLC in Greenville, Texas.

Why It Matters

No federal law currently requires long-term independent safety testing before a bioengineered crop, a cell-cultured meat product, or a novel food additive can be sold to the public. Companies can self-certify their own products as safe, using short-term studies, sometimes as brief as 90 days, and market them without ever submitting the underlying data to the FDA for review. Shelf-life coatings like Apeel reached the market this way. Cell-cultured meat is now FDA- and USDA-cleared for sale with no chronic feeding studies behind it at all.

At the same time, biotechnology and food-science companies are working to replace traditional agriculture outright, cultured meat instead of rancher beef, cultured cocoa butter instead of grown cacao, engineered crops instead of conventional ones. The REAL Food Act is built to stop that substitution before it becomes irreversible: to keep lab-made products that haven't been proven safe over the long term out of the food supply, and to protect the American farmers and ranchers whose livelihoods depend on real food remaining the default.

What the Bill Does

- Prohibits the sale of cell-cultured, lab-grown meat and seafood for human consumption.
- Bars bioengineered foods from market absent completion of an independent, long-term (minimum two-year) safety review with no financial ties to the manufacturer.
- Bans known human carcinogens, as classified by the International Agency for Research on Cancer or the National Toxicology Program, outright from both the human food and animal feed supply, with no case-by-case waiting period.
- Closes the "self-affirmed GRAS" loophole that lets companies certify novel additives as safe without ever notifying or submitting data to the FDA.
- Ends the animal-feed exemption that currently allows meat, milk, and eggs from animals fed exclusively bioengineered feed to avoid any disclosure at all.
- Creates a public, quarterly-updated federal registry of approved and pending bioengineered, cell-cultured, and novel-additive products.
- Applies every prohibition equally to imported products, so foreign-made substitutes can't undercut the standard.
- Requires plain-language disclosure of insect-derived ingredients, and establishes a dedicated premarket framework, with explicit consumer consent, before pharmaceutical-producing food crops can reach commercial scale.

Where It Stands

The full bill text, supporting policy proposal, public petition, and outreach materials are complete. Nic is currently building a coalition of supporting organizations and reaching out to Texas's congressional delegation to secure a sponsor for formal introduction.