

Jul 28, 2021

Committee Secretary  
Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport Legislation Committee  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
AUSTRALIA

Dear members of the Committee:

I write today regarding the Committee's inquiry into the definitions of meat and other products. Impossible Foods Inc. is a plant-based meat company based in Redwood City, California, with plans to enter the Australian market in the near future. I am submitting this letter as part of the inquiry as the terms of reference are relevant to the products we produce and plan to provide as an option to Australian consumers.

Impossible Foods makes delicious foods from plants, including the Impossible™ Burger, which debuted in 2016 and is now available in restaurants and grocery stores across the United States, as well as in Canada, Hong Kong, Macau, and Singapore (note that in Hong Kong, Macao, and Singapore our retail product is called Impossible™ Beef Made from Plants for consumer understanding purposes). We also produce Impossible™ Sausage Made from Plants, which is available in the United States.

Made for meat-lovers, Impossible Burger is made primarily of soy protein, potato protein, deflavorized coconut and sunflower oil, and with soy leghemoglobin, which is responsible for Impossible Burger's "meaty" smell and flavor.

We received Food Standards Australia New Zealand approval for Soy Leghemoglobin in February 2021. In the approval, the Ministerial Forum noted that, "to permit soy leghemoglobin supports greater consumer choice for meat analogue products with a source of iron which may benefit consumers wanting to reduce or eliminate animal products from their diet. Approval of the application also supports greater consistency with international food regulations, industry innovation and creates trade opportunities for Australia and New Zealand." We are eager to enter the Australian market and bring our superior product option to consumers.

The Impossible Burger and the other foods we plan to make are not animal meat, they are plant-based meat. Our entire reason for existence is to make delicious food from plants that replicates the taste, texture, and aroma of meat from animals, and we want consumers to know it. We would never try to trick consumers into thinking they were eating meat from livestock – we do the exact opposite by clearly emphasizing to consumers that our food comes from plants. That is the whole point.

Since launching in restaurants in 2016 and in retail stores in 2019, we have been highly sought after because of what we are—made from plants. Our retail labels display the highlighted words

“made from plants” with the same prominence as “burger” or “beef”, as applicable, right on the front of the label. Some of our product labels include statements like “All flavor. No cow.” Or “100% Animal-Free” or “Contains No Animal Products.”

If we aren’t able to accurately describe our product in words consumers understand, they won’t buy it. Calling the burger “plant-based meat,” or telling consumers that it is “made from plants” combined with the minced beef appearance of the burger, lets home cooks know what to do with the product when they unwrap it: cook it like they would minced beef.

If we were prohibited from using common food terms consumers understand, consumers will have a more difficult time understanding how to prepare our products when they take them home. Similarly, “pork” describes a specific sensory experience, and if we were to rename Impossible Pork Made from Plants to “Impossible White Protein Made From Plants,” consumers would wonder if it will taste like pork, chicken, turkey, etc.

There is no evidence that consumers are confused by what “plant-based meat” means. Consumers understand that turkey bacon comes from turkey, cauliflower rice comes from cauliflower, and peanut butter comes from peanuts. “Plant meats” come from plants just like coconut meat comes from coconuts and nut meat comes from nuts. No one is confused that coconut meat comes from an animal even though there is ‘meat’ in the name. It is properly qualified that the product is from coconuts. The same can be said of ‘plant meats’ and ‘plant-based meat’.

Thank you for considering our perspective as part of the inquiry. I stand ready to answer any questions or provide more information at your request.