An initial analysis of the emerging cultivated meat supply chain

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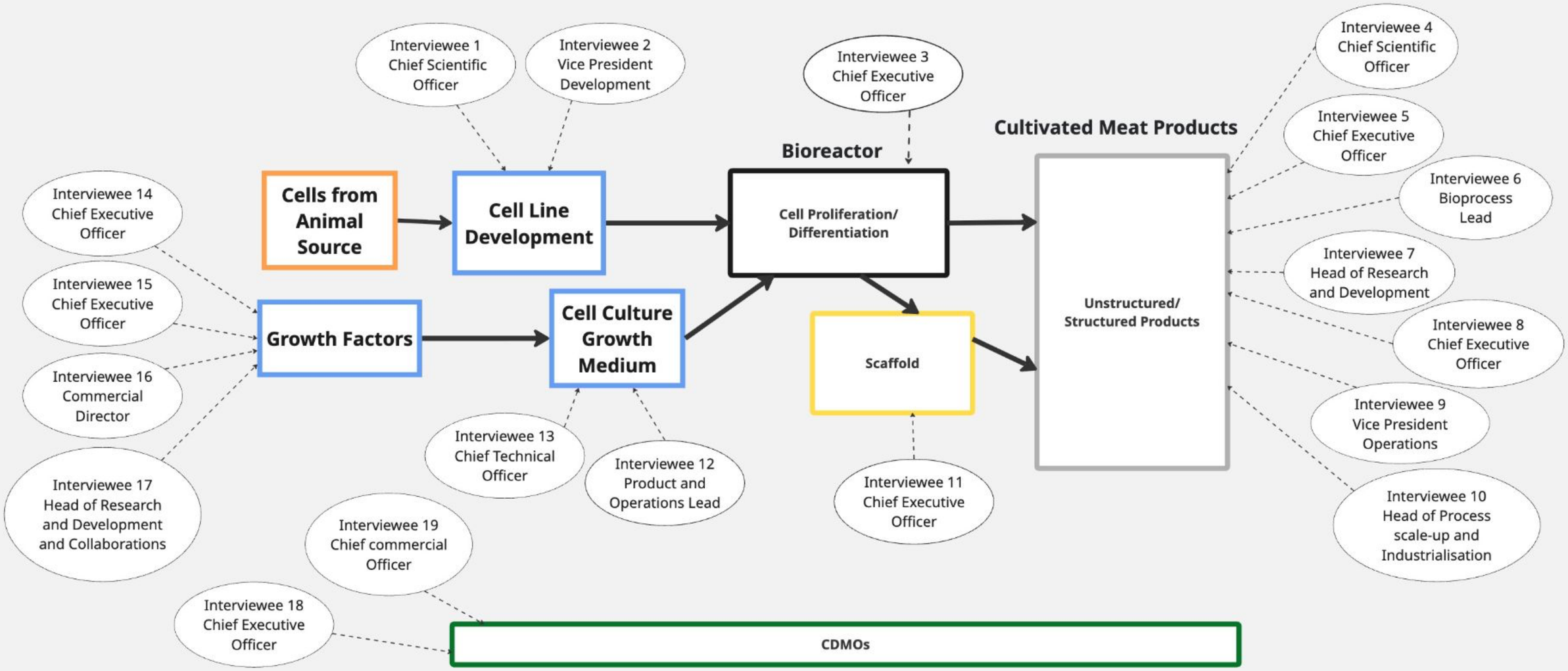
Agenda

- Data collection map
- Barriers & enablers to scaling within the emerging cultivated meat supply chain
- Barriers & enablers to scaling within the incumbent food supply chain
- Next steps: possible models for exploration

Data collection map



Themes within the cultivated meat supply chain

Theme 1: Supply Chain Infrastructure

"…the supply chain is going to be critical If we don't have that in place… as we start to ramp up in scale that could be a bottleneck…"

Theme 2: Supply Coordination

"…everyone wants to look like they are doing better than the other… CEOs don't want to tell the world that they are struggling - that's going to scare the investors "

Theme 3: Economics/Supply Chain Efficiency

"…without the proper lower cost than ideally lower than the traditional meat, the impact that we all would like to see is not going to be delivered…"

Theme 4: Investment

"…there is a major lack of growth stage venture capital. Which makes it very difficult to fund raise. Basically, everything from Series A upwards in the UK is a pretty barren landscape."

Theme 5: Regulation

"…If we don't have any regulatory approval in the next two years, investors are not going to be very happy to give us more money…"

Theme 6: Sustainability

"…Until we've got real processes that we can measure, sustainability is all pretty theoretical…"

Themes within the incumbent food supply chain

Theme 1: Regulation and Safety

"The first hurdle is legality and food safety. Strong evidence is needed to prove it is safe and healthy, otherwise both retailers and customers will hesitate. Without that assurance, it won't even reach shelves."

Theme 2: Demand Uncertainties

"There is a big question mark over how customers will perceive it. Will they see it as appetising, or lump it in with ultra-processed foods? "

Theme 3: Retail Economics

"Every spot on the shelf has to perform. If cultivated meat doesn't sell, or offers lower margins than alternatives, retailers will swap it out. Cannibalising higher-margin meat would be a real risk."

Theme 4: Uncertain Supply

"Retail requires consistent, large-scale supply — going from zero to full shelf presence is very hard for a start-up. Without reliable, retail-ready volumes, the product won't last."

What Future Lies Ahead for Cultivated Meat?

Centralised

Efficient but fragile

- Few mega-factories
- Lowest costs
- Long, vulnerable supply chains

Decentralised

Balanced and adaptable

- Regional facilities
- Moderate costs
- Greater resilience

Distributed

Resilient but costly

- Household/community production
- Hyper-local and sustainable
- High costs, uneven access

The question is not which future will emerge, but which future we want to build.

Questions

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