

# The other fake meat: Impossible Foods unveils pork, sausage

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A variety of Impossible Pork dishes from Impossible Foods, the California plant-based meat company, as the company unveils Impossible Pork and Impossible Sausage before the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 6, 2020, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

After a big year for its plant-based burger, Impossible Foods has

something new on its plate.

The California-based company unveiled Impossible Pork and Impossible Sausage on Monday evening at the CES gadget show in Las Vegas.

It's Impossible Food's first foray beyond fake beef. The Impossible Burger, which went on sale in 2016, has been a key player in the growing category of vegan meats. Like the [burger](#), Impossible Food's pork and sausage are made from soy but mimic the taste and texture of ground [meat](#).

Impossible Pork will be rolled out to restaurants first. The company isn't yet saying when it will come to groceries. Impossible Foods only recently began selling its burgers in grocery stores, although they're available at more than 17,000 restaurants in the U.S., Singapore, Hong Kong and Macau.

Burger King will give consumers their first taste of Impossible Sausage. Later this month, 139 Burger King restaurants in five U.S. cities will offer the Impossible Croissan'wich, made with plant-based sausage coupled with the traditional egg and cheese. Burger King did a similar test of the Impossible Whopper last year before expanding sales nationwide.



Impossible Foods, the California plant-based meat company, unveils Impossible Pork and Impossible Sausage, including this Impossible Pork Katsu dish before the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 6, 2020, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

The [pork products](#) and the Impossible Burger are made in a similar way. Impossible Foods gets heme—the protein that gives meat its flavor and texture—from soy leghemoglobin, which is found in the roots of soy plants. To make heme in high volume, it inserts the DNA from soy into yeast and ferments it. That mixture is then combined with other ingredients, like coconut oil.

The company tweaked the ingredients to mimic pork's springy texture and mild flavor. For the sausage it added spices.

Impossible Pork has 220 calories in a four-ounce serving. That's not much less than a serving of Smithfield 80% lean ground pork, which has 260 calories. Smithfield's animal-derived pork has more total fat, at 20 grams, than Impossible Pork, which has 13 grams. But Impossible Pork has far more sodium, at 420 milligrams. Smithfield has 70 milligrams.



J. Michael Melton, head of culinary for Impossible Foods, the California plant-based meat company, prepares some Impossible Pork dishes as the company unveils Impossible Pork and Impossible Sausage before the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 6, 2020, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

But health concerns are only part of the reason consumers are eating more plant-based meats. Animal welfare and environmental concerns are



also a factor. Nearly 1.5 billion pigs are killed for food each year, a number that has tripled in the last 50 years, according to the World Economic Forum. Raising those pigs depletes natural resources and increases greenhouse gas emissions.

"Everything that we're doing is trying to avert the biggest threat that the world is facing," Impossible Foods CEO Pat Brown told The Associated Press.

Brown said the company decided pork should be its next product because customers were frequently requesting it. Impossible Foods started working on the new products about 18 months ago and accelerated development in the second half of 2019.

Brown said ground pork is also critical to meeting the company's international expansion goals. While Americans eat more beef and chicken, pork is the most widely consumed meat worldwide, according to the National Pork Board. Chinese consumers eat more than 88 pounds (40 kilograms) of pork per year, compared to 65 pounds (30 kilograms) for Americans.



J. Michael Melton, head of culinary for Impossible Foods, the California plant-based meat company, prepares some Impossible Pork dishes as the company unveils Impossible Pork and Impossible Sausage before the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 6, 2020, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

Brown said he believes a product like Impossible Pork is critical in China, which has limited arable land and relies heavily on imported meat. Last year, Chinese [pork](#) prices surged after African swine fever wiped out millions of pigs.

Brown said Impossible Foods is talking to Chinese regulators and [potential partners](#) that could make Impossible Pork—as well as plant-based burgers—in China.

"This is a huge opportunity for China in terms of its food security," Brown said.

Impossible Foods is also waiting for approval from European regulators to sell its products there.

In the U.S., 2019 was a breakout year for plant-based meat. U.S. sales jumped 10% last year to nearly \$1 billion; traditional meat sales rose 2% to \$95 billion in that same time, according to Nielsen.

Impossible Foods rival Beyond Meat—which already sells plant-based sausage links—had a successful public stock offering in the spring. Impossible Foods ran short of burgers in the first half of the year thanks to the buzz from Burger King. After partnering with OSI Group, a [food](#) service company, Brown said Impossible Foods produced twice as much of its plant-based meat in the last quarter of 2019 as it sold in all of 2018.



A patron samples a new Impossible Pork dish from Impossible Foods, the California plant-based meat company, as the company unveils the Impossible Pork and Impossible Sausage before the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 6, 2020, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)





Goro Ui, of TV Tokyo in New York, does a live taste test of an Impossible Foods new Impossible Pork dish prior to a news conference where Impossible Foods unveiled the Impossible Pork and Impossible Sausage before the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 6, 2020, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)



Dr. Patrick Brown, founder and CEO of Impossible Foods, the California plant-based meat company, unveils Impossible Pork and Impossible Sausage during a news conference before the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 6, 2020, in Las Vegas. Dr. Brown is also a professor emeritus in Stanford University's Biochemistry Department at the School of Medicine. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)



Dr. Patrick Brown, founder and CEO of Impossible Foods, the California plant-based meat company, unveils Impossible Pork and Impossible Sausage as he is flanked by Burger King CMO Fernando Machado, left, and chef and restaurant owner Traci Des Jardins, right, during a news conference before the CES tech show Monday, Jan. 6, 2020, in Las Vegas. (AP Photo/Ross D. Franklin)

"We have to keep scaling up as fast as we possibly can," Brown said.

Brown said he welcomes new competitors in the space, including deep-pocketed rivals like Nestle and Tyson Foods. The meat industry is vast, he said, and plant-based meats are still only around 1% of sales.

His only concern is that plant-based products taste good enough to convince meat eaters to switch.

"A crappy product won't win over meat lovers," Brown said.

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