



# Food tech innovation: six questions behind successful scale-up

Article

These are exciting times for the food industry. The Farm to Fork strategy for a sustainable food value chain, together with innovations in food tech and food science, is ushering in a revolution reshaping every aspect from flavour to delivery.

Futuristic foods originating from plants - or even cell cultures - which look and taste like meat and dairy products are becoming a reality. In part, it is a necessary response to population growth and resource depletion: these plant-based and alternative protein sources, as well as cultivated meat, offer more sustainable approaches to food production. There is demand from consumers too. The result is a fast-growing market with huge potential. Investors are responding with an influx of capital.

The big challenge now is to successfully make the transition from R&D into feasible and financially viable industrial-scale production - and even international expansion. Royal HaskoningDHV is working with new and established companies innovating in food tech products and production facilities. We have identified six questions companies need to address as they look to scale up.





- 1 Is it possible to develop a robust strategy while uncertainties remain?**  
Yes, but it relies on identifying the uncertainties – from a choice of business model to costs, market size to regulatory approval, consumer acceptance to production feasibility, and more. By identifying the uncertainties early in the business case, realistic assumptions can be made, avoiding bottlenecks, delays and unexpected changes at a later stage. Simulations can help too by enabling you to see the outcome of various choices to make more informed decisions.
- 2 How to identify the right location?**  
Use a multi-criteria analysis to build resilience into your operation. Factors include resilient supply chain, customer locations, availability of grants and/or funding, availability of appropriately skilled labour, utilities, and more.
- 3 What's the secret to reliable cost estimates?**  
Bring together financial modelling, market investigations and technical insight for more accurate Capex and Opex forecasts.
- 4 How to ensure production feasibility?**  
At every stage of the project, choose your partners with care. Expertise and experience count – particularly with innovative food manufacturing processes.
- 5 Are stringent deadlines required by our investors realistic?**  
Tight deadlines require flexibility and careful scheduling. Workflows can be scheduled concurrently and iterative processes are used to adjust plans as the information changes. As general guidance, we can complete a business case analysis within 6-12 weeks. In one brownfield project, we are currently working to a six-month deadline from design to production start-up.
- 6 How to maintain sustainability ambitions through the production process?**  
Make sustainability an integral part of your business case. For example, ensure it identifies where resources can be reduced or reused, and implement processes that minimise energy and water.

# How can we help?

We are currently addressing the questions discussed in this article with companies in the food tech sector. Our involvement goes well beyond scale up, providing support when demand outstrips production in fast-changing markets, standardising production to increase efficiency and more.

To discover how we are helping companies respond to challenges and opportunities at every stage, get in touch.

Would you like to discover how we can support you in your challenges?

Get in touch with Steven Tsirakos.



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