

Singapore firm uses plants to develop meat alternative

19 September 2017 | News

With a protein-rich offering derived from plants, but which tastes like chicken, a local start-up has set its sights on pleasing meat eaters while incurring a smaller environmental footprint. Mr Ricky Lin, 35, founder of food technology start-up Life3 Biotech, is looking to attract about S\$1.5 million in funding to set up a production facility for his plant-based protein.



Tentatively called Veego, it is possibly the closest made-in-Singapore product to clean meat, which has generated excitement abroad among high-profile investors.

With a protein-rich offering derived from plants, but which tastes like chicken, a local start-up has set its sights on pleasing meat eaters while incurring a smaller environmental footprint. Mr Ricky Lin, 35, founder of food technology start-up Life3 Biotech, is looking to attract about S\$1.5 million in funding to set up a production facility for his plant-based protein.

Tentatively called Veego, it is possibly the closest made-in-Singapore product to clean meat, which has generated excitement abroad among high-profile investors. Mr Lin has been working on Veego since June last year with a small team, zeroing in on the ingredients and processes that would deliver the taste, texture and nutritional content he wanted.

Working out of the food science and technology lab at the National University of Singapore (NUS) and advised by NUS senior lecturer Leong Lai Peng, Mr Lin believes he has a product that consumers will enjoy. Unlike tofu, which disintegrates more easily, Veego can be sliced like real meat. It can be braised, steamed, stir-fried, deep-fried, and cooked in curry or teriyaki-style.

Last November, Veego (then called Veyotein) won two awards — the first runner-up and Most Functional awards — at the Food Innovation Product Award, organised by the Singapore Food Manufacturers' Association and supported by various government agencies.

Veego has garnered interest from food and beverage firms as well as institutional caterers that supply to nursing homes and athletes, and Mr Lin is hopeful that investors will come on board by end of next month. He reckoned that with a 3,000 sq ft to 5,000 sq ft production facility, Life3 Biotech would be able to produce 25 tonnes a month for a start.