

Russian Plant-Based Startup Takes Aim at Beyond Meat

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“We derived a unique high-fiber product that mimics meat. We’re the only ones to produce that in Russia,” said one of the entrepreneurs behind the startup. **Bernadette Wurzinger / Pixabay**

A Russian startup backed by an international food awareness organization plans to surpass Beyond Meat and conquer Europe’s plant-based meat market, the Meduza news website [reported](#) Tuesday.

The Berlin-based Proveg International investor [singles out](#) Russia’s Greenwise startup for selling its plant-based strips and jerky in 2,000 stores across Russia. Forbes [named](#) Greenwise among the incubator’s five promising meat alternative startups.

Related article: [Russia Produces Its First Lab-Grown Meat Sample](#)

Greenwise [boasts](#) on its website that the green technology used to process vegetable proteins at its production plant southwest of Moscow “gives our meat alternatives [the] chewiness and texture of real meat.”

“We derived a unique high-fiber product that mimics meat. We’re the only ones to produce that in Russia,” Georgy Zhelezny, one of three young entrepreneurs behind the startup, told Meduza.

Its jerky and strips are sold in Hungary, Estonia, Lithuania, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan, according to Meduza. The startup’s website currently only lists store locations in Russia and Kazakhstan.

Greenwise plans to overtake Beyond Meat, which appeared on Russian shelves and restaurants last fall, with burger patties that are both cheaper and made with half the ingredients, Meduza reported.

The startup also plans to expand its product line, with burger patties and soy- and gluten-free cold cuts marked as coming “soon” on its website. Meduza reports that Greenwise is expected to add plant-based ham and meatballs to its roster this year.

Its European expansion plans begin with entering talks with four major German retailers this March, followed by outreach into Austria and Switzerland, Meduza reported.

Greenwise estimates its 2019 earnings at a modest 8 million rubles (\$128,000) with delivery contracts signed with Russia’s [top food retailer](#) X5 Retail Group. It forecasts its 2020 earnings to reach 60 million rubles (\$969,000).

Greenwise’s plans to become a mainstay in Russia’s predominantly meat-eating culture come as the country produced its [first artificial piece of meat](#) grown last fall. The lab that produced it estimates that domestic cultured meat could appear on Russian shelves as soon as 2023, depending on when it is legalized.

“There was no hype surrounding plant-based meat a year ago, but the market will be filled with competitors next year,” Zhelezny said.

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