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HEALTHY MASS-MARKET CHIPS MADE OF INSECTS COULD SOLVE A WORLD FOOD CRISIS

 FOOD & DRINK

Six Foods has created a brand of chips made from crickets that could make insect meat palatable for the western world.

The meat industry contributes almost one-fifth of all greenhouse gases, takes up vast quantities of land, resources and energy, and relies on techniques that contribute to animal cruelty. Not only this, but demand for meat is set to increase with global population rises and higher incomes in developing countries, which could create problems for world food security. The recent unveiling of the world's first lab-grown beefburger is testament to the efforts scientists are taking to ween consumers off of farmed animal produce, and now Six Foods has created a brand of chips made from crickets that could make insect meat palatable for the western world.

The brainchild of three Harvard graduates — Laura D'Asaro, Rose Wang and Meryl Natow — the startup's first product is Chirps, a gluten-free, natural, low fat chip. Instead of the usual potato or corn, Chirps are created from a mix of ground beans, rice and cricket powder that's baked rather than fried. The result is a bag of chips that contains 7g of protein — more than an egg. This comes from the fact that 200 calories of cricket meat provides 31g of protein, compared to 22g in beef. Additionally, it requires 1/2000th of the amount of water to farm, and 100 times less greenhouse gas is emitted.

Insects are for the most part absent from western diets, but around 2 billion of the rest of the world population enjoy them as a delicacy. By packaging them as chips in three flavors — Sea Salt, Hickory BBQ and Aged Cheddar — Six Foods could help replace their meat consumption with a more efficient and environmentally-friendly method to get their protein. The company is currently taking

pre-orders for its first batch, priced at USD 15.99 for three 5oz bags. Are there other ways to give sustainable insect meat a bigger part in the western diet?

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