



Protein 2.0: The end of industrial agriculture?

Prof Rob Burton & Prof Hugh Campbell

When: Tuesday 8 May, 2018, 12-1pm

Where: Centre for Sustainability Seminar Room, 563 Castle St

OPEN AND FREE TO ALL INTERESTED PARTIES

About the talk:

In 1931 Winston Churchill in “50 years hence” predicted the end of conventional meat production within half a century, with animal production replaced by laboratory cultured cells and microbial factories. While 1981 came and went, recent rapid advances in biotechnology have lead synthetic (in vitro) or cultured proteins (meat and milk) to the verge of commercial viability. If artificial proteins replace conventional animal proteins in agriculture, the implications for New Zealand’s economy are profound. In this presentation we analyse historical transitions in which artificial chemicals and compounds have “substituted” for their agriculturally produced counterparts to assess how a protein transition might progress in the coming decades. The discovery of artificial alizarin (red dye) in 1868 by chemists Graebe and Liebermann lead to the complete decimation of the once profitable madder industry within 20 years – but does New Zealand’s agriculture face a similar fate? How can we prepare for the inevitability of future foods?

About the Speakers:

Rob Burton is a research professor working at Ruralis: the Institute for Rural and Regional Research in Trondheim, Norway. Rob has been in agricultural research for over 20 years and is currently the leader of the project BIOSMART: Managing the Transition to a Smart Bioeconomy.



Professor Hugh Campbell is currently Chair of Sociology and Head of the Department of Sociology, Gender & Social Work at Otago and was the Director of the Centre for Sustainability from 2000 to 2010. Hugh’s areas of research expertise include sustainable agriculture, rural/agricultural sociology, sociology of food and food waste.

