

New method compares texture of meat and meat substitutes

The texture of meat substitutes is related to their mechanical structure. To test this structure, Sven Boots and his colleagues in the Physical Chemistry and Soft Matter group designed a measuring system. A probe with a ball-shaped tip measures the resistance to pressure, an indicator for the rigidity and consequently the mouthfeel. The spherical probe prods the product in steps of 0.5 mm. 'This results in a mechani-

cal map,' says Boots.

A quantitative analysis is then performed on the maps of meat and meat substitutes to compare them. Boots' colleagues will be investigating the effect of production variables such as temperature and protein content on the maps. That information could help food producers improve their products.

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