
Is human cloning here? Chinese scientist ready to clone people at his 'replication factory'

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The giant cloning facility is set to open within the next seven months, and plans to be cloning 1 million cows a year by 2020. Other animals to be cloned include racehorses and police dogs.

"Everything in the supermarket looks good – it's almost all shiny, good-looking, and uniformly shaped. For animals, we weren't able to do that in the past. But with our cloning factory, we choose to do so now," CEO Xu Xiaochun told AFP.

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The Boyalife group, which is behind the factory, is collaborating with a company from South Korea, Sooam Biotech Research Foundation.

Sooam has already been developing the cloning of woolly mammoths, and is also recreating dead pets for their owners. The latter is quite a lucrative market, with some people reportedly prepared to pay up to \$100,000 for bringing a deceased pet back to life as a clone.

Boyalife is also working with Sooam Biotech Research Foundation and the Chinese Academy of Sciences to develop primate cloning.

And this would mean just one step further – from monkeys – to human cloning, Xu Xiaochun said.

"The technology is already there. If this is allowed, I don't think there are other companies better than Boyalife that make better technology," he said.

However, hampering the project are ethical issues: the company says it has to be "self-restrained" to avoid a possible public backlash.

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Xu is hopeful that people will change their views and let the research go ahead.

"Unfortunately, currently, the only way to have a child is to have it be half its mum, half its dad. Maybe in the future you have three choices instead of one. You either have fifty-fifty, or you have a choice of having the genetics 100 percent from Daddy or 100 percent from Mummy. This is only a choice," the 44-year-old chief executive said.

Xu also wants to lift the veil on cloning, and to dispel people's fears about it.

"We want the public to see that cloning is really not that crazy, that scientists aren't weird, dressed in lab coats, hiding behind a sealed door doing weird experiments."

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