

# Fortnightly - April 24, 2013



Fortnightly Report BY SETH J. VOGELMAN

A Review of Israeli & Regional Business, Developments & News

## 8: ISRAEL LIFE SCIENCE NEWS

### 8.1 MiRobot May Be the Next Revolution In Dairy Farms

Agritech start-up MiRobot's innovation is a robot that will completely automate milk production, at a far lower cost than anything else available. Automated milking systems that are on the market are not really appropriate for large dairy farms. That's why the idea of a robot for large farms — one that can handle hundreds of cows quickly and efficiently. The MiRobot system enables farmers to make sure their cows are "covered" any time of day or not — automatically, without the need for human workers to prepare the cow for milking. MiRobot's system is a lot cheaper (it is set to cost only \$12,000); on a cost per milking basis for the 8-10 years the system can be expected to last, the system will save farmers significant amounts of money. The system sacrifices exacting accuracy, with parts and algorithms approximating the areas that the robot arms have to target in order to get the work done. But that's fine for a milking station. The cow's teat — and the cow itself — is large enough that if the cup is positioned a few millimeters to the left or right, the milking process will be able to continue without a problem."

Instead of working on precise actions, MiRobot's main technology boost is in its patented imaging system, which directs the robot to the right area that it needs to target. Thus, when a cow walks into the milking stall, the robot, which is stationary, will sort of wrap its arms around the teat, attaching an already cleaned cup and proceeding with the milking operation (the cow is meanwhile busy eating, so it doesn't mind that it's being manipulated). If the cow does get upset, though, it won't be able to do too much damage to the robot, as it is made of flexible plastics, rubber, and other material that will bounce right back if a cow (they're usually pretty hefty) steps on it or kicks it.

miRobot ( <http://www.mirobot.co.il>) is an early stage firm, a part of the Mofet Venture Accelerator, where it is working on getting funding to complete its prototype. The company will be traveling to the US at the end of the month to raise money from investors, as part of a roadshow sponsored by Trendlines. The company has already raised about a half million dollars, and is seeking several million more to go into full production. (No Camels 09.04)