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REVIEW

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Robotics in Food Processing Advances, Applications, Challenges and Future Perspectives

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Abstract

Robotics is transforming the food processing industry by enabling safer, faster and more consistent operations across the supply chain. Driven by advances in machine vision, artificial intelligence, collaborative robotics and soft robotics, modern systems address tasks ranging from sorting and grading to delicate picking and complex cutting. This review synthesizes recent developments (2018–2025), describes technologies and sector-specific applications, discusses hygiene and regulatory requirements, analyzes economic and sustainability impacts and highlights technical challenges and future research directions. Emphasis is placed on handling variability of food products, hygienic design and integration with digital technologies for traceability and predictive maintenance.

Keywords: Robotics; Automation; Machine vision; Food safety; Cobots; Hygienic design; Soft robotics

Introduction

Global food systems face unprecedented pressure from population growth, changing dietary preferences, stricter food-safety expectations and a shrinking labor force in many producing regions. According to the FAO (2022), the global population is projected to reach nearly 9.7 billion by 2050, requiring a 50–60 % increase in food production while ensuring safety and sustainability. Simultaneously, aging workforces and chronic labor shortages, especially in high-income countries have intensified the need for automation across harvesting, processing and packaging stages (Lipson and Sukkarieh, 2023). Automation and robotics are key enablers for meeting these demands: they increase throughput, improve precision and repeatability, reduce human exposure to hazardous conditions such as high-temperature processing or heavy lifting and enable digital traceability of raw materials and finished products (Lalita and Kumar, 2022; Dzedzickis et al., 2024). Over the last decade, the food industry has moved beyond simple conveyor-based mechanization toward complex cyber–physical systems that integrate robotics, machine vision, real-time sensors and cloud-based analytics. Recent advances include AI-powered robotic manipulators capable of delicate product handling, collaborative robots for mixed human-robot workflows and autonomous mobile robots for flexible intralogistics (Liu et al., 2023; Avenues for Non-conventional Robotics Technology Applications..., 2023). These technologies not only address labor shortages but also enhance food safety and hygiene, allowing consistent sanitation and minimizing contamination risk through sealed robotic actuators and food-grade materials (FAO, 2022; Dzedzickis et al., 2024). This review focuses on robotics in food processing (post-harvest and manufacturing operations), highlighting progress over the last 5–7 years in application domains, enabling technologies, hygiene and regulatory considerations, economics, barriers to adoption and future research avenues.

Taxonomy of Robots Used in Food Processing

Robotic hardware in food processing can be grouped into several broad categories: articulated (multi-axis) arms, delta (parallel kinematic) robots, SCARA and Cartesian gantry systems, mobile robots (AGVs/AMRs) and collaborative robots (cobots). Each type offers distinct advantages depending on the application. Articulated arms provide high dexterity, wide reach and the ability to handle complex motions, making them suitable for tasks such as deboning, packaging and palletizing (Liu et al., 2022). Delta robots excel in high-speed pick-and-place operations for lightweight items like bakery goods, confectionery, or fresh produce due to their low moving mass and parallel kinematics (Hao, Wang and Zhang, 2021). SCARA robots are widely used for horizontal assembly and sorting of packaged products where speed and repeatability are critical (Zhou et al., 2020). Cartesian gantry systems are favored for heavy-duty or linear movements such as tray loading, large bakery handling, or automated cutting, providing high precision and scalability (Shukla and Kiran, 2023). Mobile robots, including Automated Guided Vehicles (AGVs) and Autonomous Mobile Robots (AMRs), facilitate intralogistics by autonomously transporting raw materials and finished goods within processing plants (Fernández et al., 2020). Collaborative robots (cobots) enable safe human–robot interaction in shared workspaces, assisting with tasks such as flexible packaging, inspection and small-batch processing without the need for extensive safety guarding (He et al., 2021).

End-effectors and grippers are equally critical in food robotics. Traditional vacuum suction and two-finger grippers have been augmented by advanced designs such as soft pneumatic grippers, adaptive underactuated hands and modular end-effectors that combine vacuum and mechanical grasping for greater flexibility (Zhao et al., 2019). Soft robotic grippers made from elastomeric materials can conform to irregularly shaped, fragile products like fruits, pastries, or seafood, significantly reducing product damage (Shintake et al., 2018). The integration of food-grade materials (e.g., stainless steel, FDA-compliant polymers) and sealed hygienic designs is critical to ensure compliance with sanitation and safety regulations (Bogue, 2021). Recent innovations also include intelligent grippers equipped with force sensors and vision systems for real-time adjustment of grasping force, enabling reliable handling of variable-size products (Liu et al., 2022).

Furthermore, emerging trends highlight the use of AI-powered vision systems and machine learning algorithms to improve object recognition, quality inspection and adaptive control of robotic manipulators in unstructured food environments (Hao, Wang and Zhang, 2021). Integration with Industry 4.0 technologies, such as IoT-enabled robots and digital twins, is driving fully automated, data-driven food processing facilities capable of predictive maintenance and optimized production planning (Fernández et al., 2020).

Enabling Technologies

The rapid adoption of robotics in food processing is driven by a convergence of mechanical, electronic and digital innovations that enable safe, precise and adaptive operation in demanding food environments. Machine vision and imaging systems have become indispensable for product detection, orientation and quality inspection. High-speed RGB, hyperspectral, and 3-D cameras coupled with deep-learning algorithms now allow real-time recognition of irregular food items, contaminant detection and automated grading at line speeds exceeding 200 picks per minute (Liu et al., 2023; Avenues for Non-conventional Robotics Technology Applications..., 2023).

Advanced sensing technologies provide critical feedback for robotic control. Force/torque sensors, capacitive tactile arrays and soft pressure sensors enable gentle grasping of fragile products such as berries or pastries without bruising (Dzedzickis et al., 2024). Integration of food-grade temperature, humidity and gas sensors supports in-process monitoring for hygiene and quality assurance (FAO, 2022). Artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning further enhance these systems by enabling adaptive grasp planning, anomaly detection and predictive maintenance of robotic cells (Lipson and Sukkarieh, 2023).

On the hardware side, innovations in soft robotics and compliant actuation have transformed end-effector design. Pneumatic networks, shape-memory alloys and elastomeric materials allow soft grippers to conform to irregular shapes and self-adapt their gripping force, ensuring secure yet damage-free handling (Dzedzickis et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2023). Food-grade materials and hygienic design principles—including stainless steel frames, FDA-approved polymers, and sealed IP69K joints—permit high-pressure wash-down and chemical sanitation, meeting stringent regulatory standards (Lalita and Kumar, 2022).

Connectivity and automation software are equally important. Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) platforms enable cloud-based data acquisition, digital twin modeling and remote diagnostics, reducing downtime and improving traceability (Avenue et al., 2023). Collaborative safety systems such as real-time proximity sensors, vision-based human detection and ISO-compliant force-limiting controls have facilitated the deployment of collaborative robots (cobots) in shared workspaces (Lipson and Sukkarieh, 2023). Together, these enabling technologies create cyber–physical production systems that are not only faster and more flexible but also smarter and safer for the food industry of the future.

Sector-Wise Applications

a. Meat and Poultry

Robots perform trimming, portioning, deboning, and packaging of carcasses and primal cuts. Advanced systems integrate 3-D imaging, CAD/CAM-style path planning and force–torque feedback to trace bone contours and maximize meat yield (Lalita and Kumar, 2022; Liu et al., 2023). Vision-guided cutting ensures consistent portion weights and reduces operator exposure to sharp tools and biological hazards such as Salmonella or Listeria (FAO, 2022). Recent commercial lines achieve throughput of 35–40 birds per minute while maintaining high sanitary standards through IP69K-rated actuators and automated blade sterilization (Avenue et al., 2023).

b. Seafood

Seafood processing demands the handling of slippery, highly deformable tissues and operation in cold, wet environments. Robotic filleting, deheading, pin-boning and grading systems use specialized compliant end-effectors, soft grippers and force/torque sensors to accommodate fragile fish muscle without tearing (Dzedzickis et al., 2024). AI-assisted vision systems detect fish orientation and internal bone structures for precision cuts, reducing cross-contamination and improving yield by up to 10 % compared with manual operations (Lipson and Sukkarieh, 2023).

c. Dairy

Robots are used for cheese cutting, palletizing, yogurt cup handling and automated cleaning-in-place (CIP) operations. Automated milking systems—although part of primary production—illustrate the sector's strong automation trend. Because dairy processing demands strict hygiene, robotic cells employ sealed stainless steel enclosures, food-grade lubricants and CIP-compatible components to withstand caustic wash cycles (FAO, 2022; Lalita and Kumar, 2022). High-precision cutting robots maintain uniform slice thickness, reducing product waste and standard deviation in retail packs (Avenue et al., 2023).

d. Fruits and Vegetables

Grading and sorting are among the most mature applications. Vision-based classification systems inspect for size, color, bruises and surface defects at rates exceeding 10 fruits per second (Liu et al., 2023). Robotic harvesting of delicate crops such as strawberries, tomatoes and raspberries has advanced rapidly with the introduction of soft robotic grippers and learning-based grasp planning, allowing selective picking with minimal damage (Dzedzickis et al., 2024). Field robots equipped with multispectral cameras and GPS guidance now operate continuously for more than 18 hours per day, addressing labor shortages during peak harvest periods (Lipson and Sukkarieh, 2023).

e. Bakery and Confectionery

Robots handle dough shaping, depositing, glazing and decoration with millimeter-level precision. High repeatability ensures consistent product weights and allows complex decorative patterns in chocolate or icing (Lalita and Kumar, 2022). Specialized end-effectors with non-stick food-grade coatings, temperature-controlled nozzles and quick-change tools can manage sticky or highly deformable doughs while maintaining hygiene (Avenue et al., 2023). Collaborative robots are increasingly used for cake decoration where frequent recipe changes require flexible programming (Liu et al., 2023).

f. Beverage and Packaging

Robots are employed for bottle filling, capping, labeling, packing and palletizing in beverage plants. Vision systems verify cap placement, label integrity and fill levels in real time, while robotic tool changers switch between packing formats without manual intervention (Dzedzickis et al., 2024). Autonomous Mobile Robots (AMRs) transport full pallets to warehouses and interface with Warehouse Management Systems (WMS) for dynamic routing and inventory tracking (Lipson and Sukkarieh, 2023). Integration with Industrial Internet of Things (IIoT) platforms enables predictive maintenance and real-time production analytics (FAO, 2022).5. Hygienic Design, Safety and

Regulatory Compliance. Food-grade construction and cleanability are mandatory. Hygienic robot design follows principles such as smooth surfaces, minimal crevices, resistant materials and sealed motors where required. CIP-compatible components and quick-disconnect fittings speed sanitation procedures. Standards and guidelines from regulatory bodies (e.g., FDA, EU food hygiene regulations, ISO 22000, HACCP frameworks) inform equipment design and validation. Safety in mixed human-robot environments is governed by ISO 10218 and ISO/TS 15066 for cobots. Risk assessment, protective measures and safe-speed monitoring are necessary when humans and robots share workplaces. Traceability: integration of robotic systems with traceability platforms (barcodes, RFID, blockchain solutions) supports end-to-end product safety investigations and recall management.

Economic and Sustainability Considerations

The integration of robotics into food processing presents a complex balance of capital cost, operational efficiency and long-term sustainability. Initial investment in robotic systems can be significant-ranging from USD 100,000 for a single pick-and-place unit to multi-million-dollar automated processing lines-yet life-cycle cost analyses consistently show payback periods of 2–5 years through labor savings, yield improvement and reduced downtime (FAO, 2022; Lalita and Kumar, 2022). Robots enable continuous operation with minimal overtime penalties and can maintain consistent throughput during labor shortages, mitigating the economic impact of seasonal workforce fluctuations (Lipson and Sukkarieh, 2023). Productivity gains also translate into higher resource efficiency. Vision-guided cutting and portioning reduce product waste by achieving more accurate yields, while automated sorting minimizes rejection of edible material (Avenues…, 2023). Energy consumption per unit output often declines because optimized robotic motion profiles and predictive maintenance reduce idle times and equipment start-stop cycles (Liu et al., 2023). These efficiencies contribute directly to lower greenhouse gas emissions per kilogram of food produced, supporting corporate sustainability targets and national climate commitments (FAO, 2022).

From a social sustainability perspective, robotics can reduce worker exposure to hazardous conditions—such as sharp cutting tools, repetitive motions or cold, wet environments—thereby lowering occupational injuries and associated healthcare costs (Dzedzickis et al., 2024). At the same time, widespread automation necessitates workforce reskilling in robot programming, maintenance and data analytics. Several studies report that plants adopting collaborative robots often redeploy operators to higher-value tasks rather than eliminate jobs entirely, creating demand for technical training programs (Lipson and Sukkarieh, 2023). Economically, robotics supports supply-chain resilience. Automated facilities can maintain production during pandemics, strikes or labor migration crises, safeguarding food security and stabilizing market prices (FAO, 2022). Companies adopting advanced robotics often gain marketing advantages by demonstrating traceable, hygienic production, which aligns with consumer preferences for safe and sustainably produced foods (Avenues…, 2023).

Technical Challenges and Research Gaps

Despite remarkable progress, the deployment of robotics in food processing still faces significant technical, regulatory and operational hurdles that constrain wider adoption.

a. Product Variability and Deformability

Foods such as fruits, seafood and baked goods exhibit high heterogeneity in size, shape, texture and surface reflectance, which complicates object recognition and grasp planning (FAO, 2022; Liu et al., 2023). Vision systems often struggle with glossy, wet, or translucent surfaces, while soft and deformable products require end-effectors with adaptive compliance to prevent bruising or structural damage (Dzedzickis et al., 2024). Current machine-learning models demand large, high-quality datasets to achieve robustness, yet collecting such datasets across diverse food categories remains resource-intensive (Avenues…, 2023).

b. Hygiene and Sanitation Constraints

Robots operating in food-contact environments must meet stringent wash-down and clean-in-place (CIP) standards, demanding corrosion-resistant materials, sealed joints, and food-grade lubricants (Lalita and Kumar, 2022). Maintaining IP69K or equivalent hygienic ratings increases design complexity and cost, while frequent sanitation cycles accelerate wear and reduce actuator life.

c. Integration with Legacy Systems

Many food plants rely on heterogeneous, decades-old equipment with limited digital interfaces. Integrating new robotic cells with legacy conveyors, sensors and enterprise resource planning (ERP) software requires custom middleware and can lead to interoperability issues and unexpected downtime (Lipson and Sukkarieh, 2023).

d. Real-Time Sensing and Control

Tasks such as high-speed cutting or deboning demand **sub-millimeter accuracy under dynamic loads**. Force-torque feedback, tactile sensing and closed-loop control are still evolving to achieve human-like dexterity at industrial speeds (Liu et al., 2023). Soft robotic grippers improve adaptability but introduce nonlinear dynamics that complicate control modeling (Dzedzickis et al., 2024).

e. Workforce and Safety Challenges

While collaborative robots reduce the need for physical barriers, ensuring **safe human–robot interaction in wet, slippery environments** remains difficult. Advanced safety certifications and adaptive motion planning are required to meet global standards (ISO 10218, ISO/TS 15066), which can prolong deployment timelines (FAO, 2022).

Research Gaps

Key areas needing further investigation include:

- **Soft robotics materials** that combine food-grade hygiene with durability under harsh cleaning chemicals.
- **Self-learning grasp algorithms** capable of handling unpredictable product deformations with minimal training data.
- **Edge AI and low-latency vision systems** for real-time decision making without dependence on cloud computing.
- **Energy-efficient actuators** and predictive maintenance models to lower lifecycle costs and carbon footprint.
- **Standardized benchmarking protocols** to evaluate robotic performance across food categories and environments (Avenues…, 2023).

Bridging these gaps will require multi-disciplinary collaboration among mechanical engineers, material scientists, computer vision researchers and food technologists. Public–private partnerships and open datasets can accelerate progress while reducing duplication of effort.

Future Directions

The next decade of food processing robotics is expected to be shaped by synergistic advances in soft robotics, artificial intelligence (AI), sustainable design and human–robot collaboration. These developments aim not only to improve productivity but also to address food safety, sustainability and workforce well-being.

a. AI-Driven Perception and Learning

Deep learning, edge AI and self-supervised vision systems will enable robots to recognize irregular, deformable and semi-transparent food products with minimal training data (Liu et al., 2023; Lipson and Sukkarieh, 2023). Transfer learning and synthetic datasets are likely to accelerate deployment in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) by reducing the cost of dataset collection.

b. Next-Generation Soft Robotics

Future grippers will combine bio-inspired designs (octopus arms, gecko pads) with FDA-approved, chemically resistant materials to achieve high dexterity while maintaining cleanability (Dzedzickis et al., 2024). Self-healing elastomers and embedded sensing networks could allow grippers to adaptively modulate stiffness and provide real-time feedback on product integrity.

c. Modular and Reconfigurable Systems

Factories of the future will require plug-and-play robotic cells that can be rapidly reprogrammed for different product lines or seasonal demand. Advances in digital twins and model-based simulation will allow predictive planning, reducing downtime during product changeovers (FAO, 2022).

d. Collaborative and Mobile Robotics

Cobots and autonomous mobile robots (AMRs) will increasingly work alongside humans in hybrid production lines, handling heavy lifting, palletizing, or repetitive quality checks while operators perform high-value tasks. Safety-certified adaptive motion planning will enable robots to dynamically adjust speed and force depending on human proximity (Lalita and Kumar, 2022).

e. Sustainable and Energy-Efficient Design
Low-power actuators, regenerative braking and closed-loop material recycling for robot components will align with global sustainability goals (Avenues…, 2023). Energy-aware scheduling and predictive maintenance algorithms will reduce carbon footprints and extend equipment lifespans.

f. Integration with Digital Food Ecosystems
Robots will form part of cyber-physical production networks, linking with blockchain traceability, Internet of Things (IoT) sensors and AI-driven supply chain analytics to ensure transparency and real-time quality monitoring (FAO, 2022). Such integration will also facilitate rapid responses to food safety incidents and recalls.

g. Human-Centric Design and Workforce Upskilling
As automation expands, attention will shift to human–robot collaboration frameworks that prioritize ergonomics, safety and worker training. New curricula and vocational programs will prepare technicians for roles in robotic programming, maintenance and data analytics (Lipson and Sukkarieh, 2023).

h. Policy and Regulatory Frameworks
Future adoption will also depend on globally harmonized hygiene and safety standards for robotic components, including soft grippers and autonomous mobile platforms. Cross-border regulatory alignment will be crucial for global food trade and technology diffusion (FAO, 2022).
Together, these trends point toward a future where food processing plants function as smart, sustainable and resilient ecosystems, capable of adapting to changing consumer demands while ensuring safety and quality.

Socio-Economic Impacts and Workforce Considerations
The integration of robotics into food processing brings far-reaching socio-economic implications that extend beyond technical efficiency, influencing labor markets, worker welfare, rural economies and the global food supply chain.

a. Labor Displacement vs. Job Transformation
One of the most debated impacts of automation is the potential displacement of low-skilled workers in repetitive and physically demanding tasks such as cutting, packaging, and palletizing (FAO, 2022). While some routine jobs may decline, evidence from early adopter countries shows that new roles emerge in robot programming, maintenance, quality control and data analytics, leading to a net transformation rather than simple job loss (Lipson and Sukkarieh, 2023). In many high-income regions, robotics helps offset chronic labor shortages in meat and seafood processing, where work is strenuous and has high turnover (Avenues…, 2023).

b. Workforce Upskilling and Training Needs
The shift from manual labor to automated operations requires continuous workforce upskilling. Technicians must acquire knowledge in mechatronics, AI, sensor calibration, and hygienic design to maintain and optimize robotic systems (Lalita and Kumar, 2022). Collaborative robots (cobots) lower the barrier for small and medium enterprises (SMEs) by enabling intuitive programming and safe human–robot interaction, but structured training programs remain essential to ensure safety and productivity (ISO/TS 15066; FAO, 2022).

c. Regional and Rural Development
Robotics can strengthen regional food security and rural economies by improving processing efficiency near production sites, reducing post-harvest losses and enabling higher-value product diversification (FAO, 2022). However, unequal access to capital and digital infrastructure risks widening the gap between large agribusinesses and smallholder processors. Targeted subsidies, low-interest loans and public–private partnerships are critical to democratize technology adoption.

d. Health, Safety and Worker Well-Being
Replacing hazardous tasks-such as high-speed cutting, exposure to extreme cold, or repetitive heavy lifting with robotic systems improves worker health and reduces injury-related costs (Dzedzickis et al., 2024). Human–robot collaboration frameworks must prioritize ergonomic design and real-time safety monitoring to prevent accidents in mixed-production environments.

e. Gender and Inclusion Considerations

Automation offers an opportunity to expand workforce participation among women and underrepresented groups by reducing the need for heavy manual labor and providing more technical supervisory roles (FAO, 2022). However, access to training and equitable hiring policies will determine whether these benefits are realized.

f. Policy and Social Dialogue

Governments and industry associations are increasingly called to develop proactive labor policies, including retraining programs, tax incentives for SMEs and social safety nets for displaced workers (Lipson and Sukkarieh, 2023). Stakeholder dialogue among workers, unions and employers is essential to balance productivity gains with social equity.

Overall, the socio-economic impacts of food robotics are not predetermined. Their trajectory will depend on policy interventions, inclusive training initiatives and equitable technology diffusion, ensuring that automation enhances rather than undermines livelihoods.

Discussion

Robotics in food processing shows clear benefits—safety, quality, productivity—but adoption is heterogeneous across sectors and geographies. Large processors with standardized products (bottling, canned goods) have embraced robotics earlier than sectors with high variability (fresh produce, artisanal bakery). Interdisciplinary collaboration between mechanical designers, food technologists and AI experts is critical. Regulatory frameworks must evolve to address robot-specific hygiene and traceability concerns while training programs must focus on multidisciplinary skills.

Future Perspectives

a. Soft Robotics and Bio-Inspired Grippers

Next-generation food robots will rely heavily on soft, compliant grippers that can safely manipulate fragile items such as berries, leafy vegetables and pastries. Bio-inspired designs using pneumatic actuators or tendon-driven mechanisms will mimic the adaptability of human fingers, while self-healing and food-grade materials will withstand frequent washdowns and harsh cleaning chemicals.

b. Artificial Intelligence and Adaptive Learning

Advanced machine learning algorithms will enable robots to recognize and adapt to natural variations in food size, shape and texture. Few-shot and transfer learning will reduce the need for large training datasets, allowing faster deployment, while predictive models will detect spoilage or contamination before it becomes visible.

c. Edge Computing and Digital Twins

Edge-AI devices will process vision and sensor data locally for low-latency decision-making, critical in cold or high-humidity environments where cloud connectivity may be limited. Digital twin technology will allow processors to simulate entire robotic lines before installation, reducing commissioning time and optimizing production efficiency.

d. Collaborative and Human-Centric Robots

Affordable collaborative robots (cobots) will become increasingly common in small and medium enterprises. Equipped with safe motion controls, force sensors, and intuitive programming interfaces such as gesture control or programming-by-demonstration, these robots will enable human–robot teamwork without the need for complex coding skills.

e. Hygienic and Sustainable Design Innovations

Future robots will incorporate sealed actuators, antimicrobial coatings and smooth surfaces to meet strict hygiene standards. Energy-efficient motors, lightweight materials and recyclable components will align robotic systems with global sustainability and carbon-reduction goals.

f. Integration with Industry 4.0 and Traceability

Robots will operate as intelligent nodes within digitally connected factories, linked through IoT networks and blockchain platforms for real-time tracking of raw materials, processing conditions and finished products. Such integration will strengthen food safety, recall management and supply-chain transparency.

g. Robotics-as-a-Service (RaaS) Models

Subscription-based robotic solutions will lower the financial barrier for smaller processors by including installation, maintenance and software updates in a service package. This model will allow rapid scaling and regular access to the latest technological upgrades without heavy capital investment.

h. Multi-Model Sensing Capabilities

Next-generation robots will combine visual, tactile, acoustic and even chemical sensors to evaluate freshness, detect contamination and perform precision sorting beyond human capability. This multi-sensor fusion will enhance decision-making and quality control in real time.

i. Socio-Economic and Workforce Development

The expansion of robotics will shift job requirements from manual labor toward technical roles in programming, maintenance and data analysis. Governments, industry and educational institutions will need to provide training and reskilling programs to ensure a smooth transition and equitable distribution of automation benefits.

Conclusion

Robotics is a transformative force in food processing. Advances in perception, AI, gripper design and hygienic engineering have extended possible applications. To realize the full potential, research must continue on robust manipulation of deformable objects, domain-robust perception and cost-effective hygienic designs. Equally important are workforce development, standardization and policies that enable inclusive adoption across supply chains.

Recommendations

For practitioners: start with pilot projects addressing high-value loss points (grading, trimming, packaging); focus on modular systems and ensure hygienic design. For policymakers: provide incentives for SME adoption, fund training programs and support standardization efforts. For researchers: prioritize interdisciplinary projects on soft gripping, tactile sensing and domain adaptation for vision systems.

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