

Global Press Release

## Global FoodTech Challenge Announces Winners of \$2 Million Prize

- *Four winners of the 2022 FoodTech Challenge were announced at an awards ceremony at Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week*
- *Aquagrain, Orbisk, Revoltech, and Sustainable Planet will receive a combined prize of up to US \$2 million to scale-up their business models in the UAE*

**Abu Dhabi – UAE: 17 January 2023** – The second edition of the global FoodTech Challenge, which seeks to find the next wave of technology innovations on the cusp of transforming traditional agriculture practices, efficiently and sustainably, announced the competition's four winners at an awards ceremony today at Abu Dhabi Sustainability Week (ADSW) 2023.

The winners, Aquagrain, Orbisk, Revoltech, and Sustainable Planet, were selected from a pool of 12 finalists chosen from an initial 667 submissions from 79 countries.

The finalists, who showcased their high-tech concepts at ADSW, represented a diverse demographic – with 33% led by young CXOs between the ages of 22-35 years old, highlighting the role of the next generation in developing sustainable solutions to food security.

With a pooled prize of up to US \$2 million, the four winners will be invited to scale-up their business models within the UAE and will be supported with a cash award plus R&D, start-up acceleration, commercial incentives, and mentorship from an extensive range of partners, including ASPIRE, Silal, ADQ, Emirates Foundation, Hub71, Ma'an, The Catalyst, ADGM, ADRO, the Competitive Office of Abu Dhabi, and Khalifa Fund.

While the other finalists may not have taken home the prize, they all represent promising solutions that can be scaled.

### **Winner Profiles** [listed alphabetically]

#### **Aquagrain: Upcycling Food Waste to Grow Food in Sandy Soil (United Kingdom)**

Aquagrain is a pioneering cleantech soil improver made from organic waste that can absorb up to 30 times its mass in water to provide valuable nutrients to plants. It also cuts the need for inorganic fertilizers.

#### **Orbisk: Leveraging AI-enabled Cameras to Reduce Restaurant Food Waste by up to 70% (Netherlands)**

With a focus on food loss and waste, Orbisk leverages AI image recognition technology and automation to quantify and predict food waste in professional kitchens, reducing food waste and improving profitability. The technology helps reduce food waste by 50-70% in the first year of use.

#### **Revoltech: Your Burger, Preserved for 50 years (United Arab Emirates)**

Revoltech uses a unique freezing technology that utilizes electromagnetic fields to reduce the damage caused to food during the cooling process. The technology not only helps freeze food twice as fast as usual, it can also preserve food for up to 50 years.

**Sustainable Planet: Growing Plant-based Protein without Water (United Kingdom)**

**Fresh**

Sustainable Planet has revolutionized the growth of water lentils, a plant-based protein that can be grown on non-arable land and in saline water, using up to 20 times less water than required for protein isolates such as soy. The start-up aims to dramatically reduce protein imports.

**Commenting on the winners, Her Excellency Mariam Almheiri, Minister of Climate Change and Environment, and Co-Chair of the FoodTech Challenge, said:** “Congratulations to the four incredibly talented winners that are set to reshape the agri-tech landscape of the UAE and wider world. The FoodTech Challenge taps into global talent and provides a critical path to innovation across cutting-edge technologies, while supporting the UAE’s National Food Security Strategy and a path towards a more sustainable global food system.”

**Rima Al Mokarrab, Chair of Tamkeen and Co-Chair of the FoodTech Challenge added:** “The FoodTech Challenge has selected four winners from around the world with transformative agri-tech innovations. The real work for them starts now, as they mobilize and leverage the expertise of the competition’s multi-sector partners to deliver and scale food security solutions for the UAE and markets beyond.”

This year’s FoodTech Challenge was organized by the UAE Ministry of Climate Change and Environment and Tamkeen, with ASPIRE as the lead partner. The competition was also supported by local champions ADQ, Silal, and Emirates Foundation.

To learn more about the FoodTech Challenge and winners, please visit: [foodtechchallenge.com](http://foodtechchallenge.com).

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