



UN Announces 13 Small Business Winners Providing “Good Food for All” in Africa and the Middle East

The US\$100,000 global competition, held in conjunction with the UN Food Systems Summit, showcases innovative solutions in improving access to healthy, sustainable food

Tuesday, July 27, ROME – Thirteen small- and medium-sized businesses from Africa and the Middle East have been announced as winners of the “Good Food for All” competition, held in conjunction with the UN Food Systems Summit.

Selected from nearly 2,000 applications from 135 countries, these winners all showcase inspiring, diverse, and impactful solutions in improving access to healthy, sustainable food. They form part of a global set of 50 winners – half of whom are youth-led and nearly half are women-led – who will all share US\$100,000 in cash prizes.

“Small businesses are the hidden heroes of our food systems, managing at least half of our food economies and keeping food on our plates throughout the COVID-19 pandemic,” said **Dr Agnes Kalibata**, Special Envoy of the UN Secretary-General for the 2021 Food Systems Summit. “We must understand the challenges they face and work together to ensure they remain at the heart of efforts to improve the future of food.”

Each winner was selected for how their business contributes to healthier, more sustainable and equitable food for the communities they serve; the strength of their vision for the future; and how well they communicate the current and future impacts of their business.

“Through our work, we seek to create a sustainable food system that supports health and environmental protection,” states **Blayne Tesfaye**, co-founder and CEO of [TruLuv](#), a women-led, women-managed, majority woman-employee granola company in Ethiopia which was amongst the winners.

Food SMEs operate in the toughest markets, having a real impact on rural poverty and hunger, whilst ensuring resilience to shocks like COVID-19 and climate change. Local production by Burkinabé company [InnoFaso](#) aims to substitute for imports. In Madagascar, [Massova](#) works with smallholders to sustainably grow and process high quality products like coconut oil and black pepper. “We put our skills and experiences at the service of local development to have lasting impacts on the lives of rural communities, while preserving our natural environment,” emphasizes owner **Marina Ny Aina**.

Many enterprises are innovating and scaling solutions for nutrition and sustainability. [Flamingoo Foods Company Ltd](#) in Tanzania uses weather and satellite technology to improve food distribution amidst natural disasters and other shocks. In Nigeria, [Coldhubs](#) provides solar-powered cold storage used by smallholders, retailers and wholesalers to extend the shelf-life of perishable food from two to 21 days.

The future of food and global ecosystems requires new ways of doing business. In Saudi Arabia, saltwater-based agriculture products, systems and services are applied by [Red Sea Farms](#) in an



innovative approach to support the nutritional needs of water-scarce populations. “Combined experience in plant science and agricultural engineering enables us to provide fresh, organic, tasty and accessible products in places where it was not previously possible,” says founder and CEO, **Ryan Lefers**.

In Kenya, care for the environment and a need to protect valuable coastal and marine biodiversity is the focus for [Kuruwitu Conservation Welfare](#), which works to protect a 30 ha locally-managed marine area (LMMA) known as Tengefu and share benefits from enhanced fish catches and eco-tourism with local communities.

The competition winners were announced alongside a new [report](#), based on a global survey of these businesses’ ambition and needs. The report outlines three critical pathways for supporting small businesses in realising their full promise: creating more conducive business environments, offering more positive incentives, and empowering small business leaders to have greater influence in sector planning.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

For all media enquiries and interview requests, **contact:** FSScommunications@un.org

Find out more about the 50 winners on the [Food Systems Summit Community Page](#)

View the announcement ceremony via the livestream: www.facebook.com/UNFoodSystems

Download the full accompanying report “**A Small Business Agenda for the UN Food Systems Summit**” (PDF): www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/unfss-small_business_agenda.pdf

Executive Summary language versions: [Arabic](#) | [English](#) | [French](#) |

About the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit

The UN Food Systems Summit was announced by the UN Secretary-General, António Guterres, on World Food Day last October as a part of the Decade of Action for delivery on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. The aim of the Summit is to deliver progress on all 17 of the SDGs through a food systems approach, leveraging the interconnectedness of food systems to global challenges such as hunger, climate change, poverty and inequality. More information about the 2021 UN Food Systems Summit and a list of Advisory Committee and Scientific Group members can be found online: www.un.org/foodsystemssummit

Additional African and Middle East winners’ information and quotes:

[Sara’s Organic Food](#) delivers organic fruit and vegetables to customers, retailers and hotels across Egypt sourced from the company’s own farm, as well as from small farmers across the country that adhere to the company’s guidelines for responsible and sustainable growing.

In Kenya, the [Toothpick Company Ltd](#) works with rural women to locally produce a fungus-based herbicide to fight the pernicious witchweed, Striga. This toothpick solution is easily distributed to



farmers, is safe, effective and affordable, and increases yields of staple crops such as maize by 42-56%.

West African food manufacturer [Sierra Agri Foods](#) has developed a fully integrated approach to grow, process, package, distribute and sell high-quality nutritious bread and baby food made from orange-fleshed sweet potato at affordable prices.

[Innovopro](#) is an Israeli company producing non-allergenic plant protein powder made from chickpea in an environmentally-friendly, zero waste process.

An inclusive and efficient commodities market is provided by a digital platform developed by [AFEX](#) Commodities Exchange in Nigeria, which is helping facilitate trade across the region. “We plan to facilitate trade with Africa worth over US\$500 million in the next five years,” reveals **Nathaniel Etim**, AFEX’s Head of Strategy and Finance.

In South Africa, [Integrated Aerial Systems](#) has developed drone-based crop spraying combined with intelligent data analytics to provide farmers with a complete end-to-end precision agriculture service.

List of regional winners with video links:

Sub-Saharan Africa regional winners	
AFEX Commodities Exchange Limited	Nigeria
ColdHubs	Nigeria
Flamingoo Foods Company Ltd	United Republic of Tanzania
InnoFaso	Burkina Faso
Integrated Aerial Systems	South Africa
Kuruwitu Conservation Welfare CBO	Kenya
Massova	Madagascar
Sierra Agri Foods	Sierra Leone
Toothpick Company Ltd., Kenya (Toothpick Project)	Kenya
TruLuv Granola	Ethiopia
Middle East and North Africa regional winners	
Innovopro	Israel



Red Sea Farms	Saudi Arabia
Sara's Organic Food	Egypt