



## UN Announces nine Small Business Winners Providing “Good Food for All” in North and Latin America

*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** – Nine dynamic small- and medium-sized businesses from North and Latin America 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.

The social and economic wellbeing of local populations with care for the environment is the stimulus behind many SMEs in North and Latin America. Natural products created for modern life from family farms is the essence of Peruvian enterprise [Naturally Divine](#) in the belief that “a healthy Amazon forest can provide all that its inhabitants require to live in a just, balanced and prosperous way,” enthuses manager **Patricia Hurtado Marengo**. In an area severely affected by deforestation and poverty, regenerative agriculture and valuing the ancestral knowledge of indigenous people is key to the company’s ethos.

Impacting on rural poverty and hunger, food SMEs operate in the toughest markets, whilst ensuring resilience to shocks such as conflict, COVID-19 and climate change. For example, the inspiring social Bolivian [Mang’A Restaurante](#) celebrates national products and trains young chefs to value Bolivia’s food heritage and promote health eating. All profits generated through the restaurant are reinvested in its social support activities.

In Mexico, [SmartFish](#) is driving up supply and demand for sustainable seafood. The enterprise enables consumers to make purchases that support the sustainability of marine ecosystems and the welfare of Mexican artisanal fishermen by selling only certified seafood, encouraging fishing co-operatives to improve their practises and shortening the value chain to deal directly with the customer whilst maintaining competitive prices for fishers. As such, the enterprise



The future of food and global ecosystems requires new ways of doing business, which includes adopting a circular economy approach. [Lifepack](#) in Colombia uses agro-industrial waste, including fruit pulp, pineapple crowns and corn husks, for the production of sustainable paper plates and cardboard packaging. “Our biodegradable plates contain seeds which, when covered with thin layer of soil, germinate to produce new fruits, trees, shrubs or vegetables,” shares co-founder and manager **Claudia Barona**.

US-based [Yolele Foods](#) makes and sells African foods produced from traditional smallholder crops, including the ancient West African gluten-free grain fonio. Launched in 2017, the enterprise aims to create economic opportunity for smallholder farming communities; support biodiverse, regenerative, and resilient food systems; and to share Africa’s ingredients and cuisines with the world. “At Yolélé, we’re connecting smallholder farmers, mainly women, with local and global markets so they can support themselves from agriculture while increasing food sovereignty in the region,” emphasises co-founder and speciality food expert **Philip Teverow**.

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](mailto: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](https://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](https://www.un.org/sites/un2.un.org/files/unfss-small_business_agenda.pdf)

**Executive Summary language versions:** [English](#) | [Spanish](#)

### **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](https://www.un.org/foodsystemssummit)



**Additional North and Latin America winners' information and quotes:**

Brazilian food company [NUU](#) provides gluten-free food products and have built the first zero factory for frozen foods in Brazil. "We value our Brazilian habitat and we want to enlighten retailers and consumers of the importance of climate change and biodiversity in the global food system," emphasises CEO **Rafaela Gontijo**.

In Canada, regenerative and sustainable silvopasture management by integrating orchard trees, cover crops and livestock has been introduced by [Woolley's Lambs](#) on their sheep farm in Norfolk Country. The approach provides shade, shelter and space for the livestock to forage, whilst the grazing animals help improve soil health and carbon sequestration. "Our eco-friendly approach demonstrates how farmers can create additional uses for their land, whilst meeting Ontario's demand for local, grass-fed lamb, explains owner **Carrie Woolley**.

"At [Indiegrow](#), we connect two worlds that share the same passion: coffee. We are driven by the purpose of transforming people's lives by increasing women producers' income. We work hand-in-hand with women coffee producers from post-armed conflict territories in Colombia to bring them closer to consumers, making agriculture more attractive, profitable, and transparent. We track the positive impact that purchases have on women producers' lives to share with consumers. This is a new way of doing business in the coffee industry," enthuses co-founder and manager **Alejandro Vizcaino**.

[Agrojusto's](#) vision is to "use technology to generate a more just and efficient food market." The company has developed a software-as-a-service cloud platform that efficiently links, intelligently and fairly, all the players in the value chain for a more productive and sustainable agro-industry.

**List of regional winners (with country and video links):**

Agrojusto	Argentina	<a href="#">Link</a>
Indiegrow - Creating economic and social equality	Colombia	<a href="#">Link</a>
Manq'A Restaurante	Bolivia	<a href="#">Link</a>
Naturally Divine	Perú	<a href="#">Link</a>
NUU	Brazil	<a href="#">Link</a>
Plantpack by Lifepack	Colombia	<a href="#">Link</a>
SmartFish	México	N/A
Woolley's Lamb	Canada	<a href="#">Link</a>
Yolele Foods	United States of America	<a href="#">Link</a>