



FoodTech Innovation Awards 2024 winner solutions: AI to boost food flavor, a platform to make farming more profitable and a solution that saves up to 90% of water

Agricolus, Genbioma, Urtech Water, Pack2Earth, Alcheme Bio, Keepcool and Covap were the winners of the fourth edition of the awards

The awards, held as part of Food 4 Future 2024, recognized companies that drive innovation and digitalization in the food industry

Bilbao, 22 April 2024 - The new edition of Food 4 Future was the setting for the **Foodtech Innovation Awards 2024**, the annual awards that recognize the leadership of those companies that are increasing their reputation with the most innovative initiatives in terms of technology, sustainability, circular packaging and smart logistics in the food industry. The awards ceremony brought together leading companies in the sector, associations, and public administrations to reward the most innovative solutions in the foodtech field.

The first winner of the Foodtech Innovation Awards 2024, which had more than 150 nominations, was **Agricolus**, which received the **Tecnia Award for the Most Innovative Solution in Digitalization for the Food and Beverage Industry**, for its digital platform that uses precision agriculture, with real-time data, to get the most out of crops. The finalists in this category were Hyperplan, for its solution that provides reliable and instantly available information on agricultural production; and Brainr, for its AI-based cloud platform for the food industry, which allows it to optimize its processes and manage factory operations in real-time.

The **Maser Grup Award for the best healthy food project** went to **Genbioma**, which has developed its first product that focuses on glucose control as a complementary approach to medication by balancing the intestinal microbiota. As finalists were Ninja Foods, for the edible and healthy 'glue paste' they have developed based on the Japanese food konnyaku, to bring together ingredients to create healthy snacks; and Nucaps, for the microencapsulated probiotic bacteria they have pioneered that improve digestive wellbeing and human health.

The **AER Automation Award for the best automation and robotics solution for the food value chain** went to **Urtech Water**, which has designed a unique technology based on photoelectrochemistry that saves up to 90% of water in the food industry. Beckhoff, with the decentralized MX-System that automates machines and installations, and Kisuitech, with the Adam autonomous work robot for orchard environments, were the finalists in this category.

The **Basque Food Cluster Award for the innovation project for the packaging industry** went to **Pack2Earth** and its first bio-based materials that are composted at room temperature to make packaging for dry to liquid products with a long shelf life, such as trays, bags, lids and cups. Vidrala, with its glass bottle that incorporates an ergonomic and aerodynamic design that allows better handling, and more efficient throughout the supply chain; and Bio2Coat, with its edible packaging with probiotics added in the formula, have become the runners-up of this award.

The **CNTA Award for most innovative startup** went to **Alcheme Bio**, pioneering 'cellular flavoring', which influences food to express its own flavors through a patented process using AI and machine learning that mimics the environments in which organisms grow in nature. The



finalists were AOTECH, for applying the science of light (photonics) as a bridge to the digitalization of the food industry, leading to a more efficient and sustainable sector; and Urtech Water, for its technology that regenerates water *in situ* in industrial processes without the use of chemicals.

The **ICEX Award for the Spanish startup with the greatest international projection** went to **Keepcool**, which has innovated with technological solutions aimed at extending the shelf life of perishable products, avoiding more than 3.5 million kg of monthly waste, and potentially feeding 250,000 people a year. The finalists were Innomy, for fungal tissue cultures that have worked to create structures that replicate the fibrous and tender consistency of meat; and Pack2Earth, for food-grade compostable packaging designed for long-life dry and semi-liquid products.

Finally, the **Agrobank Award for the best sustainability project** highlighted the work of the Covap (Cooperativa Ganadera del Valle de los Pedroches), for the Environmental Policy it has promoted, based on decarbonization, energy efficiency and the circularity of resources. The finalists for this award were Coca-Cola Europacific Partners, for the strategic plan to reduce the use of water in production processes and to protect water sources; and CuonCrop, for the My-Eco-Ruler service, which enables ecological indicators of food products or initiatives led by companies and communities to be measured, analyzed and communicated.

About [Food 4 Future – Expo Foodtech](#): F4F - Expo Foodtech (April 16-18, 2024, Bilbao, Spain) is the innovation event for professionals of the entire food industry value chain. For three days, F4F - Expo Foodtech will bring together, at the Bilbao Exhibition Centre (BEC), more than 8,000 food industry professionals and 250 exhibiting firms to present the latest solutions in foodtech, robotics and automation, processing and packaging machinery for the different segments of the food industry, as well as food safety and food science. In addition, it will host the Food 4 Future World Summit, the largest European congress in which to discover the latest trends, success stories and tools to transform the food and beverage industry from the hand of more than 450 international experts. F4F - Expo Foodtech is organized by NEBEXT and AZTI. This year, F4F - Expo Foodtech 2024 will be held simultaneously with Pick&Pack for Food Industry, the only event in Spain specializing in packaging and logistics solutions for the food industry.