



AI-driven water optimization, plant-based proteins, and industrial robotics, among the winners of the Foodtech Innovation Awards 2026

Laminar, Uraphex, Noiet Foods, Proton Europe, Bioplastics4health, The consumer.ai and Sporalys were recognized in the sixth edition of the awards, held as part of Expo Foodtech and Pick&Pack 2026

The awards recognize the work and efforts of companies driving innovation, digitalization and sustainability in the food industry

Madrid, June 1, 2026 – [Expo Foodtech 2026](#) and [Pick&Pack for Food Industry](#), the leading technology trade fair for the food industry held in Bilbao on 27 and 28 May, hosted a new edition of the **Foodtech Innovation Awards 2026**. These awards recognize the most innovative initiatives aimed at transforming the food and beverage industry into a more technological, efficient, and sustainable sector. This year, seven companies were selected from more than 200 applications, in a ceremony that brought together the entire food value chain.

The Foodtech Innovation Awards 2026 recognized **Laminar** with the **Siemens Award for the most innovative digitalization solution for the food and beverage industry**, for its sustainable solution using AI sensors that help reduce water waste in factories through real-time measurements inside pipes that indicate exactly when water flow should be stopped, eliminating the need for timers or estimates. The finalists in this category were Incarlopsa, for its solution combining artificial intelligence and blockchain to accurately predict the quality of incoming livestock, including weight and fat levels, while immutably recording each batch throughout the entire process up to the final product; and Arquea, for its platform combining biotechnology and AI for real-time traceability and food safety.

The **AgroBank Award for the best sustainability project** went to **Uraphex**, for its chemical-free technology that disinfects and enables the reuse of industrial water in food industry production processes. Mahou San Miguel with Beer Burger, which transforms brewers' spent grain into a new food ingredient; and Incarlopsa, with a comprehensive and pioneering "waste-to-resource" strategy to reduce food waste and maximize the value of by-products throughout its meat production chain, were the finalists in this category.

Noiet Foods won the **AZTI Award for the best healthy food project** for its NOIFERM protein, developed to replace synthetic preservatives and antioxidants in food products, using oat and rice by-products from the production of plant-based beverages. The other two finalists were Rich'in, for developing 100% plant-based pasta high in protein, and Fruselva, for its range of functional products for infants aimed at strengthening their immune system.

The **Tecnalia Award for the best automation and robotics solution** went to **Proton Europe** for its technology that synchronizes cold-air freezing with controlled electromagnetic fields, enabling precise control of water nucleation and turning freezing into a consistent, scalable industrial process. MiFood, thanks to its autonomous robotics and AI for precision weeding and soil health monitoring; and VinWizard, for automating temperature-critical operations in



wineries and breweries by properly managing fermentation through sensors, controllers and wireless connectivity, were named finalists.

In the field of packaging, the **Ecoembes Award for the most disruptive solution in the packaging industry** went to **Bioplastics4health**, for helping drive the transition to a circular and sustainable economy through the industrial production of PHBV, a fully compostable and bio-based biopolymer. The finalists were Enplater Group, for a new generation of flexible monomaterial packaging designed to replace traditional multilayer plastics; and General Servei, for developing the Pick & Mix machine with technology that automates order preparation, ensures traceability and enables mass customization through a poka-yoke system with industrial efficiency.

The startup **The consumer.ai** received the **La Vega Innova Award for the most innovative startup** for its AI-powered SaaS platform, enabling companies to validate product concepts, packaging, and claims in minutes rather than weeks. The finalists were Polysense, for offering AI-driven quality inspections to help food producers reduce waste and increase profits; and Rawga, for developing the world's first plant-based collagen, 100% organic, ultra-low molecular weight and derived from hibiscus.

Finally, the **ICEX Award for the Spanish startup with the greatest international potential** recognized **Sporalys**, which turns solid-state fermentation into industrial infrastructure for the food system. The finalists in this category were Gimme Sabor, for building clean-label, allergen-free plant-based flavor formats with proven traction in 7 countries and 3 continents; and Uraphex, for offering a sustainable and cost-effective alternative to excessive industrial water consumption.

[About Expo FoodTech \(May 27 and 28, 2026, BEC-Bilbao\)](#): this is the leading innovation event for professionals across the entire value chain of the food and beverage sector. Over two days, F4F – Expo Foodtech will bring together food industry professionals at the Bilbao Exhibition Centre (BEC) to learn about the latest solutions in foodtech, robotics and automation, processing and packaging machinery for different segments of the food industry, as well as food safety and science. It will also host the Food 4 Future World Summit, the largest European congress where you can discover the latest trends, success stories, and tools to transform the food and beverage industry. F4F - Expo Foodtech, organized by NEBEXT and AZTI, 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.

[About NEBEXT](#): Next Business Exhibitions (NEBEXT) is Spain's largest private organizer of professional events specializing in technology, innovation, and sustainability for various industries.

[About AZTI](#): AZTI is a science and technology center that develops high-impact transformation projects and businesses with organizations aligned with the 2030 SDGs. Specializing in the marine environment and food, it provides cutting-edge, value-added products and technologies based on solid science and research.