



UAE Government Opens Registration for Global FoodTech

Challenge today

- *Awards amount to USD one million, with winners to be announced in April 2020*
- *Mariam Almheiri: We will deliver on the directives of H.H. the Vice President to achieve comprehensive development by attracting bright minds and innovators to help shape the future of sustainable food systems.*

Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 23 September 2019: The UAE Government today opened registration for the FoodTech Challenge today – an innovation-based food production contest launched recently by H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of UAE and Ruler of Dubai. Organized by the Food Security Office, in partnership with Tamkeen, applications to the competition can be submitted through www.foodtechchallenge.com.

With awards valued at USD one million, the challenge aims to motivate creative minds in the UAE and the world to innovate new initiatives in the agriculture and food security fields. It also aims to develop the UAE's production capacity by utilising the latest technological solutions and enhancing research and development (R&D) capacity to achieve the National Food Security Strategy targets.

H.E. Mariam bint Mohammed Saeed Hareb Almheiri, Minister of State for Food Security, said: "The UAE Government is following a comprehensive plan to enhance food security, in line with the directives of H.H. the Vice President to pursue sustainable development. The FoodTech Challenge today works towards this goal by attracting bright minds and encouraging innovators to take part in shaping the future of sustainable food systems to support the objectives of the National Food Security Strategy."

Her Excellency added: "The FoodTech Challenge today aims to transform relevant challenges into leading opportunities and projects that help drive the national economy, provide a conducive climate for innovation, and formulate pragmatic solutions for challenges that face this vital sector. This will help achieve technology-backed food security in the UAE and provide healthier, more secure foods with higher nutritional value to the community."

The Minister continued: "With numerous challenges slowing down food production in the UAE, the competition seeks to achieve sustainability by drawing on new and creative ideas and cutting-edge technology to implement sustainable green solutions for securing food and water through an agri-food value chain. This will ensure more resource-efficient food production by formulating practical mechanisms that enhance local capacity – mechanisms that can then be introduced to the world. This challenge works to enable the community to supply a portion of its food requirements using smart solutions, in line with community food security practices."



Her Excellency continued by stating that the challenge reflects the Food Security Office's commitment to strengthening local and international partnerships to position the UAE at the top of the Global Food Security Index by 2051, especially as the challenge serves as a foundation to establish the UAE as an international knowledge resource that will transform the country into a leading global hub for innovation-driven food security.

Speaking at the launch of the competition in Dubai, Rima Al Mokarrab Al Muhairi, Chairman of Tamkeen, said: "Seeking solutions to the nation's greatest challenges through innovation and technology defines the UAE's forward-looking approach to development and diversification. The FoodTech Challenge is a call to innovators from around the world to develop urban farming business cases for the UAE – one that addresses challenges in any aspect of the food value chain. Tamkeen is delighted to have partnered with the UAE's Food Security Office to deliver this competition, and to launch this global search for cutting edge agtech solutions."

Launching Pioneering Food Production Projects in the UAE

The FoodTech Challenge provides individuals, researchers, companies, scientific institutions and universities the opportunity to contribute to finding feasible scientific solutions and launching pioneering food production projects using effective technological and economic solutions.

The challenge's judging panel comprises prominent international technology and economics experts who will evaluate the submitted ideas and choose the best ones to be implemented. Plans to put these ideas into working practice will then be developed for each project. By the end of the challenge in April 2020, four winning teams will be announced across two categories: 'Household Farming and 'Community Farming.'

The rules and conditions of the challenge include sending a comprehensive proposal that includes a detailed written outline of a solution that address a specific challenge that they have identified in the UAE's agricultural sector, as well as a one-minute video that introduces team members and explains the idea and how it can be implemented.

Raising Community Awareness on Food Security

Taking place over the course of seven months, the challenge will include a variety of community events aimed at raising awareness on the importance of food security by focusing on nutrition and food waste and identifying the latest sustainable solutions, which individuals can use to benefit themselves and the community as a whole.

H.H. Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum launched. The FoodTech Challenge to attract and encourage companies, individuals and scientific and research institutions from around the world to initiate innovative ideas to improve food production in the UAE. The competitions aims to highlight the importance of utilising cutting-edge technologies in developing solutions for the challenges facing the local agriculture and food production sectors.

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