

RapidAIM wins \$100,000 Future Food Asia award

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The Future Food Asia conference was hosted on June 3-4 in Singapore. The conference recognizes up and coming talents and rewards entrepreneurs from the Asia Pacific region who are building disruptive and sustainable innovations to tackle the inefficiencies and scarcities in our agri-food value chain. More than a hundred of contenders coming from 13 different countries from Asia Pacific applied to the Future Food Asia Award.



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The finalists pitched their original proposition to improve food & agriculture sustainability in front of a live audience of over 300 industry leaders, professionals and investors. The jury named RapidAIM from Australia as the winner for its real-time detection and monitoring solution that leverages on a network of sensors to provide updates to end users on the presence of pests starting with fruit flies. They have combined their knowledge of insect behaviour with proprietary hardware and software to create an instrumented grid of smart traps that detect the presence of an insect, communicate the information to the cloud, then to an end user via a mobile app. The novel low-power sensor is similar to a “behavioural fingerprint” of an insect, detects, discriminates, and communicates the information using radio technology.

Nancy Schellhorn the Founder & CEO of RapidAIM said, “The RapidAIM team is thrilled and honoured to win the Future Food Asia start up award! It was an honor to be amongst the distinguished group of startup finalists from across Asia Pacific, all of whom presented fascinating solutions for the food production challenge. This is a very special win and a terrific opportunity to work with ID Capital to better connect RapidAIM to the Asia Pacific for protective pest surveillance and management.”

“As A.I. becomes a marker of Asian innovation, we are proud to celebrate agripreneurs unleashing the power of data to build a better food future. From a diverse pool of exceptional propositions, RapidAIM emerged as a deep tech platform bound to revolutionise its sector, taking the guesswork out of pest management,” said Isabelle Decitre, Founder and CEO of ID Capital.

ADB Ventures, in collaboration with the FFA judging panel, selected two India based startups Jai Kisan and SatSure to receive market expansion pilot funding. The ADB Ventures Award was earmarked for a startup for startups with high-impact sustainable agriculture solutions.

“Asia is blessed with a multitude of AgriTech solutions that increase the supply of safe and nutritious food, reduce negative environmental impacts from farming, and speed up climate change adaptation. ADB Ventures is proud to align with the Future Food Asia Conference in order to bring awareness to these innovations and help them scale throughout Asia and the Pacific,” said Dominic Mellor, Senior Investment Specialist and ADB Ventures Lead.

The three finalists of the Alibaba Cloud and Bühler AI Challenge on Food Safety were also unveiled during the conference. Co-organized by Bühler, ID Capital and Alibaba Cloud, over 600 teams competed in the inaugural challenge hosted on Tianchi, Alibaba Cloud's global big data crowd intelligence platform with more than 270,000 developers and scientists from 93 countries and regions, to develop solutions to food-safety related events such as product recalls, foodborne outbreaks or fraudulent activity. Contestants were required to create algorithms that can generate automated summaries of discovered food safety incidents at both high relevancy and great precision. Their models had to analyze large sets of data provided by Bühler which have been aggregated from dozens of sources.

SHEN Linghao, GAO Yichen, ZHANG Xinyuan, WANG Jingwere of Team Lavidia were adjudged the winner of the challenge and received US\$ 10,000 from Bühler. Team Enlightenment who come second and third place Team Dut were also awarded US\$2,500 and offered internship opportunities at Bühler in recognition of their achievement.

Ian Roberts, CTO of Bühler Group, present at the event declared “I would like to thank the 621 teams who took part in the competition and congratulate our three winners. Those proved incredibly efficient at identifying and categorizing food threats among vast amount of data. We are confident this was an insightful dive into the fascinating world of food safety. We hope such initiatives will bring more scientists and students to think about food value chain challenges and invite them to collaborate with us to create the future innovations needed to sustainably feed 9 billion people by 2050.”

“We are heartened by the overwhelming response to this challenge, which is Alibaba Cloud's first Tianchi competition in Asia outside China, and our very first agrifood-related contest in the world. We have successfully demonstrated how technology can be used to solve real-world problems on a global scale, and the quality of talent available right here in Asia to do so,” said Dr. Derek Wang, General Manager, Singapore, Alibaba Cloud Intelligence.

Future Food Asia has benefited from the continued support from one of the world's largest agricultural processor and food ingredient provider Archer Daniels Midland Company, Singapore's lead public research agency A*STAR (Agency for Science, Technology and Research), enterprise development agency Enterprise Singapore and the Singapore Economic Development Board. They are joined this year by four new partners: Bühler Group, the leading global technology supplier to the food processing and advanced material manufacturing industry, Alibaba Cloud, the data intelligence backbone of Alibaba Group, Corteva AgriscienceTM, previously the agriculture division of DowDuPont and now an independent public company committed to enriching the lives of those who produce and those who consume, and ADB Ventures, an Asian Development Bank (ADB) technical assistance program targeting sustainable development impact through technology solutions that enable climate impact, inclusive finance, health, and gender equality.

As in the past two editions, the Future Food Asia Award jury for the selection of the 10 finalists consists of: Gérard Jacquin, former Director of Partnerships, Transfer and Innovation at INRA, Europe's leading agricultural research institute; Dr. Ralph Graichen, Director of Food & Consumer at A*STAR's Biomedical Research Council; Victoria de la Hueraga, Vice President of ADM Ventures, Archer Daniels Midland Company; and Isabelle Decitre, Founder and CEO of ID Capital.