

## Yield Lab has €100k for AgTech startups

### Yield Lab Europe, the region's leading AgTech accelerator programme, is calling startups for its 2018 programme.

[Yield Lab](#) says it will support "up to eight companies with an investment of €100,000" and an intensive mentoring and training programme to "help them turn their ideas into successful internationally scalable businesses".

Food sustainability and environment are critical business challenges for agriculture.

Many AgTech startups are involved in "vital innovation" that addresses the need to produce more food using fewer resources.

"The world does not produce enough food sustainably. After 50 years of unprecedented biodiversity loss, soil quality degradation, water pollution, deforestation and rising greenhouse gas emissions, the agri-food industry is under pressure as a major contributor to global warming," says Paul Finnerty, former CEO of ABP Food Group and now chairman of Yield Lab Europe.

"The quality of companies that we invested in last year is evidence of the huge entrepreneurial talent that exists in the European AgTech sector, and we hope to be the catalyst that will help startups take their business to another level," says Nicky Deasy, Head of Operations at Yield Lab Europe.

#### About Yield Lab

Yield Lab Europe set up its headquarters in Galway, Ireland and launched its first programme in 2017. It replicates the model of Yield Lab USA, which was founded in 2014 by a group of US agribusiness people and investors.

Businesses chosen for the 2018 Yield Lab Europe programme will receive:

- A €100,000 investment
- Access to the premiere AgTech accelerator program in Europe
- One-on-one mentoring and training from a network of agriculture industry experts
- Access to The Yield Lab global network, including strategic corporate partners, producers, investors, entrepreneurs, and more
- All expenses paid trips to key AgTech venture capital events in the US, UK and Ireland

[Applications for this year's programme are open until Friday, February 23 and can be found here.](#)

## Last year's European AgTech bright sparks

The four companies backed in The Yield Lab Europe's 2017 programme are:

**ApisProtect:** Beekeeping is facing a global crisis, with a variety of honey bee diseases and pests devastating beehives over the last 20 years. Many beekeepers report up to 50% of their honey bees dying each year. ApisProtect has developed a Platform as a Service (PaaS) solution to capture data on bees and provide beekeepers with an early warning system and actionable insights into the health of their beehives. The technology builds on the PhD research at University College Cork of CEO Dr Fiona Edwards Murphy. ApisProtect won the Bank of Ireland/Ignite Business of the Year award for 2017. [www.apisprotect.com](http://www.apisprotect.com).

**Hexafly:** Hexafly is bringing the world what it calls "an insect farming revolution" that uses Black Soldier Fly larvae to consume and convert low-value waste into environmentally-friendly protein and nutritional oil products which are used as a food source in the Aquafeed and Animal feed sector. With wild fish sources under threat from over-fishing and the supply of fish meal unable to meet the increasing demand from the fish farming sector, Hexafly's proprietary bio-conversion technology provides a sustainable solution. Hexafly is based in Kells, Ireland and Alvan Hunt is the chief executive. [www.hexafly.co](http://www.hexafly.co).

**MicroSynbiotix:** Fish farming is a \$200 billion industry globally, and each year an estimated \$10 billion worth of fish are lost due to disease outbreaks. MicroSynbiotix is developing an oral vaccine that can be used by the industry to avoid disease and to replace the costly handheld injections currently used to vaccinate individual fish. The company's microalgae-based solution can be incorporated into fish feed, protecting farmed fish and crustaceans against disease outbreaks in a cost-effective, user-friendly and sustainable way. MicroSynbiotix is an Irish based microalgae platform technology company with a subsidiary in the San Diego, California. [www.microsynbiotix.com](http://www.microsynbiotix.com).

**Rootwave:** Rootwave has developed electrical technology which electrocutes weeds while being safe to use for humans and animals. Its tagline 'Zaps weeds, zero chemicals' captures the benefits of what this technology offers. Pesticides and herbicides are coming under increasing scrutiny by regulators who have linked them to cancers and other diseases, as well as polluting groundwater, and many products that farmers have relied on to manage weeds are increasingly banned. The company is based near Stratford on Avon in England and is headed up by CEO Andrew Diprose. [www.rootwave.com](http://www.rootwave.com).

*Pictured above are: (l-r) Andrew Diprose, CEO of Rootwave; Simon Porphy, CEO of*

*Microsynbiotix; Paul Finnerty, chairman at The Yield Lab Europe; Brian Clevinger, general partner at The Yield Lab Europe, Nicky Deasy, head of operations at The Yield Lab Europe; Alvan Hunt, CEO of Hexafly, John Lynam; CTO of Hexafly; and Andrew Wood, chairman of Apis Protect.*