



Media Contact:

Tim Gnatek

timgnatek@bluepractice.com

For St. Louis

Melanie Bernds

MBernds@danforthcenter.org

18 Transformative Early-Stage Companies from 4 Countries Selected to Present at the 2017 Ag Innovation Showcase

Los Angeles, CA – June 26, 2017 – Larta Institute, Donald Danforth Plant Science Center and Bio Research & Development Growth (BRDG) Park today announced the 18 early stage companies that will showcase their innovative work at the 9th annual Ag Innovation Showcase, September 11-13, 2017 at the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, in St. Louis, Missouri. Presenting companies will showcase their innovations in the areas of precision agriculture, robotics and big data, pathogen and disease control, biologics, processing technology and alternative food systems designed to address a range of challenges in global agriculture.

For the past eight years, Ag Innovation Showcase, the world's premier event focused on the convergence of agriculture and technology, has proven to be a valuable experience for startups in the agtech sector. Since inception, **150** industry technologies have been vetted and many have garnered the attention of investors. Since 2009, **\$510 million** in capital has been raised by presenting companies. In addition to a focus on early-stage innovators in food and agriculture, a total of 14 diverse prominent speakers in the field will take the stage, including an opening keynote address from Dr. Adrian Percy, Head of Research and Development of Bayer Crop Science.

A panel of judges selected the 18 companies from a competitive field of 63 applicants based on their ability to positively disrupt agriculture in six sectors: Ingredients & Markets, Decontamination & Disease Detection, Beneficials and Biologics, Genetics, Forecast & Visualization, and Recovery of Inputs.

“Each year, we seek to showcase innovations and innovators, foster conversations, and point to trends affecting agriculture and food. We have plotted the evolution of the Showcase from its earliest days pointing to precision agriculture, biologics, and the development of data as a driving force. And we've sought to highlight and encourage the growth of diversity in our community. This is innovation at ground zero,” said Rohit Shukla, founder and chief executive officer, Larta Institute.

Supporting this trend, four of the participating agtech companies were founded by women – SomaDetect, Amebagone, LLC, Visual Farms, LLC and Climate Forecast Applications Network, LLC – and will be represented by their CEO and founding teams at the Showcase.

“Much has changed in the national and international landscape since our launch in 2009,” said Sam Fiorello, chief operating officer, Danforth Center and president, BRDG Park, co-organizers with Larta Institute of the Showcase. “We are seeing more novel agtech innovations that are women-owned submissions providing relevant choices and opportunities to our community. We

are confident this trend will continue to grow and flourish as we encourage the convergence of diverse technology solutions for agriculture.”

2017 PRESENTING COMPANIES

Ingredients & Markets:

- **Bonumose Biochem, LLC** - *Produces sweet ingredients that lack the same negative health consequences of traditional sugar, while significantly reducing production costs.*
- **Aspire Food Group** - *Uses robotics, IoT and automation to farm insects that have a similar protein quality to meat and environmental footprint of plants. Fully-automated and modular technology can be scaled to any size in any geography.*
- **Bugeater Foods** - *Food products with improved nutrition value containing insect protein powders.*

Decontamination & Disease Detection:

- **SnapDNA** - *Develops low cost, rapid, high throughput, genetic analysis for seeds and pathogens. For food safety, SnapDNA can eliminate 3-day test/hold with projected 2-hour total time-to-result pathogen analysis, elevating supply chain transparency, providing quantitative, strain specific results for rapid identification, isolation, and eradication of pathogen contamination in food production.*
- **NanoGuard** - *A new non-thermal pasteurization technology for grain, fresh produce, spices and other food articles to reduce losses and improve the safety, wholesomeness and security of our food.*
- **SomaDetect** - *A precision-dairy company that is creating an in-line system for measuring the two most critical indicators of dairy-quality: somatic cells and fat content. It connects farmers with every cow and enables early diagnosis of problems than might arise.*

Beneficials and Biologics:

- **3Bar Biologics Inc.** - *Biologics microbial inoculant delivery system, Bio-Yield, stabilizes beneficial microbial preparations improving their efficacy on farm, shelf-life, and ease of application and also expanding the types of microbes available for commercialization.*
- **NovoBind Livestock Therapeutics, Inc.** - *Cost-effective feed additives that function as alternatives to antibiotics. Their products specifically target and neutralize specific pathogens like Salmonella, from livestock.*
- **Amebagone Inc.** - *Natural biocontrol agents of bacterial pathogens of plants to control invasive and destructive bacterial diseases naturally, without spraying antibiotics or copper, which have limited effectiveness and can be toxic to crops.*

- **Bee Vectoring Technologies-** *Turns bees into delivery agents for mixtures of biological inputs for crop pest management.*

Genetics:

- **Agribody Technologies, Inc.** - *Genetic modification (GM) or genome editing (GE) technology delays onset of plant senescence, while increasing resistance to diseases and sub lethal stresses such as drought, heat, cold, salt, low nutrients and crowding in many key crop plants.*
- **New West Genetics** - *Ensures stable genetics, optimizes desirable traits, and leads the industry as the first commercial organization to adapt cannabis for sustainable and large-scale production in the U.S.*
- **Accelerated Ag Technologies, LLC** - *PowerPollenSM enables hybrid crops through cross pollination. The novel pollen handling process decreases the need for multiple resource processes in seed production and increases yield and seed genetic integrity.*

Forecasts & Visualization:

- **Climate Forecast Applications Network, LLC** - *AgriCast, integrates meteorological forecast information, crop specific forecasts, yield/development models and web-based interactive decision tools. It has the potential to change the current dynamics of the agricultural sector through reducing yield loss and disaster payouts, reducing on-farm resource use, stabilizing food and input prices, making commodities trading more profitable and supporting long-term investment strategies.*
- **Visual Farms, LLC** - *Improves farm profitability and sustainability by providing independent machine learning systems to farms with algorithms that match optimal hybrids from virtually the entire available market to each farm's growing conditions and over time, become farms' Machine Learning system*
- **Wisran** - *Identifies operation logistic inefficiencies in real-time for growers to capture profits.*

Recovery of Inputs:

- **Renix Inc.** - *Delivering excellence in Ion Exchange, Renix provides innovative and integrated solutions for agricultural and industrial liquid purification and recovery of valuable solids*
- **Nutrient Recovery and Upcycling, LLC** - *Develops systems that recover and upcycle low-grade resources into high value products, such as high-quality fertilizer from water waste systems that helps prevent pollution, ensure food security, and lower the cost of waste water treatment.*

“Agriculture technologies are responding to shifting consumer demands and disrupting how farmers and the food industry grow and produce food under changing environmental conditions,” said Claire Kinlaw, Ag Program Director at Larta Institute.

For tickets and additional information, visit <http://www.agshowcase.com/home>

About the Event Established in 2009 by partners and co-founders, Larta Institute, Donald Danforth Plant Science Center and BRDG Park, the [Ag Innovation Showcase](#) is the world's premier event focusing on the convergence of agriculture and technology. It brings together those with a significant stake in agriculture and agricultural technology – innovators, researchers, government agencies, corporations, investors and others – to promote investment in cutting-edge technology and biotechnology to meet the world's growing food supply needs. Follow the event on Twitter: [@Agshowcase](#).

Event Organizers [Larta Institute](#) – Founded in Los Angeles in 1993, Larta Institute is an internationally-recognized technology accelerator that has helped more than 10,000 companies transform ideas into commercialized, socially-beneficial innovations in science and technology, particularly in agriculture and the life sciences. With a global network of entrepreneurs, mentors, investors, industry leaders, research institutions, government agencies and support organizations, Larta conducts commercialization assistance programs throughout the U.S. and in more than 20 countries. Follow us on Twitter [@LartaInstitute](#).

Founded in 1998, the [Donald Danforth Plant Science Center](#) is a not-for-profit research institute with a mission to improve the human condition through plant science. Research, education and outreach aim to have impact at the nexus of food security and the environment, and position the St. Louis region as a world center for plant science. The Center's work is funded through competitive grants from many sources, including the National Institutes of Health, U.S. Department of Energy, National Science Foundation, and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. To keep up to date with Danforth Center's current operations and areas of research, please visit, <http://www.danforthcenter.org/>, featuring information on Center [scientists](#), news, and the "[Roots & Shoots](#)" blog. Follow us on Twitter at [@DanforthCenter](#).

[Bio Research & Development Growth \(BRDG\) Park](#) at the Danforth Plant Science Center helps life science companies bridge research, resources and relationships to achieve commercial success. In addition to providing world-class wet laboratories, office space and a prominent incubator, BRDG Park's location on the Danforth Center's campus facilitates access to the intellectual capital of top scientists, as well as to greenhouses, growth chambers, microscopy and proteomics facilities and other vital resources. Located in suburban St. Louis County, Mo., BRDG Park is being developed by Wexford Science+Technology LLC, a development company led by a seasoned team of real estate, finance and engineering experts specializing in major university facilities and science research parks nationwide. Follow us on Twitter at [@BRDGPark](#).