

CERES Awards by EIT Food South

We are looking for startups/entrepreneurs, and farmers (see annex 1), which have achieved remarkable milestones in their career journey, resulting in a market introduction, growth path or adoption of regenerative agriculture practices linked in part of, or in full, as a result of the engagement with EIT Food South.

We will grant 6 awards of €3,000 for the most successful startups and innovators and 3 awards of €10,000, €7,000 and €3,000 for the best agricultural project.

Applications are now open for startups and farmers who have participated in EIT Food South programmes in the period 2018-2024. Apply before: 5th of May

Background

EIT Food South community invests in entrepreneurship and innovation, supporting startups to test solutions, reach market, and grow. We want to reward the success of our community and recognise the impact of the startups supported by EIT Food South projects and programmes have had, through a special award. That's why we have created the CERES Awards by EIT Food South.

Why CERES? Now, you might be wondering why we chose the name "Ceres" for these prestigious awards. Allow us to shed some light on the rationale behind this decision.

In ancient Roman mythology (known as Demeter in Greek mythology), Ceres was revered as the goddess of fields and harvests. The Roman culture exerted a profound influence on Europe, particularly in the southern region, and bestowed upon us numerous scientific advancements across various fields, including the agrifood industry.

Considering these factors, we believe that "Ceres" is the ideal choice for our awards. It not only aligns with our focus on the southern region but also resonates with the cultural significance of our regions. By embracing the name "Ceres", we pay homage to the rich historical heritage of the region while emphasizing our commitment to promoting excellence and innovation in the agrifood industry.

Requirements to participate: Who can apply

The award is open to all individuals/startups and SMEs who have participated in EIT Food South programmes from 2018-2024 and who have made relevant achievements in the categories below, marking a significant milestone in their entrepreneurial journey following their involvement with EIT Food South.

Likewise, legal entities established in accordance with European laws, and whose main activity has been developed thanks to EIT Food South programmes, may also participate, such as EWA, Innovation Awards, TeamUp, TestFarms, Challenge Labs, Sales Booster, Straight 2 Market, Seedbed, Supernovas, FAN or Rising Food Stars programmes in a hub of the south of Europe (Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece, Malta, Cyprus, Israel or Turkey).

Participation will be free and in accordance with the provisions set forth in these terms.

You may have achieved success in several categories and even in more than one product or service. You can submit multiple entries for the award, each will be evaluated independently.

The award for a successful category is awarded to the individual or company submitting the entry.

Categories

This award will be granted to impactful startups/individuals in the following categories:

1. Best Marketed Innovation Award

We are seeking outstanding products or services that have been developed, either partially or fully, as a result of your involvement with EIT Food South. These innovations should demonstrate commercial success, either by entering the market directly during a project or by utilising the knowledge gained from the project to develop successful products post-project completion.

Application link: <https://eitfoodsouth.typeform.com/to/LMoQa0w9>

2. Excellence in Growth Awards

This category acknowledges the exceptional progress made by startups that have participated in an EIT Food South programmes. It highlights two distinct awards that celebrate their outstanding achievements:

2.1. Employment Creator Award: For startups which have significantly expanded their workforce since their involvement in an EIT Food South programme. This award recognises their notable contribution to job creation within the startup ecosystem.

Application link: <https://eitfoodsouth.typeform.com/to/fl6qpEKH>

2.2. Revenue Generator Award: Granted to startups whose revenue has exhibited remarkable growth and a higher multiple since their participation in an EIT Food South programme. This award acknowledges their ability to generate substantial financial success and value.

Application link: <https://eitfoodsouth.typeform.com/to/SeO0NOUV>

3. Fundraising Startup Award

This category recognises the most successful startup in attracting funds, either from public and/or private sources. Achievements in fundraising will be measured by a combination of the total amount raised from public or private sources, the number of investors involved in the deal and the participation of cross-border investors.

Application link: <https://eitfoodsouth.typeform.com/to/n18ThurE>

4. Women in Agrifood Award

We proposed a specific award to showcase successful stories by female entrepreneurs in the sector. The award is open to entrepreneurs (individuals) or female-founded startups which have been through an EIT Food South programme. In this case the applicant should be a woman founder or cofounder of the startup and should have been beneficated from an EIT Food activity/ programme. Two categories are within this Award:

4.1. Innovations Introduced on the Market; during the programme or after: Innovations include new or significantly improved products (goods or services) sold.

Application link: <https://eitfoodsouth.typeform.com/to/WM18vw4o>

4.2. Female Founder Award: startup established partially or fully, as a result of your involvement with EIT Food South and with a financial transaction of at least 10K € for services/products sold to customers. (eligible startup legal forms with a registration date between the date of access to the EIT Food South programme and the following 3 years)

Application link: <https://eitfoodsouth.typeform.com/to/lkmGt62v>

5. Growth Awards for regenerative farmers – For the details of this award, please refer to Annex 1.

Application link: <https://eitfoodsouth.typeform.com/to/YWSvg2zy>

Eligibility criteria

1. The applicant must have participated and provided a link to a valid EIT Food South programme, between the 1st of January 2018 and the 31st of December 2024.
2. All individuals or companies that have been through one of our support programmes, as well as startups, created as a result, fully or partially, of completing one of our programmes.
3. Applications from participants established in Russia or Belorussia, are not eligible to participate in the Award.

Rules for submission of applications

1. All individuals who meet the eligibility criteria are invited to submit their candidatures for consideration.
2. Interested parties should complete the application form and provide all the required information and supporting documents.
3. The deadline for submitting applications is 17:00 CET on May the 5th 2025. Late submissions will not be accepted.
4. Applications can be submitted electronically via the designated online platform for each award.
5. It is the responsibility of the applicants to ensure the accuracy and completeness of their submissions.
6. All submitted applications will be reviewed and evaluated by the selection committee.
7. The selection committee reserves the right to request additional information or documentation from the applicants if necessary.
8. The selection process will be conducted in a fair and impartial manner.
9. Applicants will be notified of the results of their candidatures within a specified timeframe.
10. The decision of the selection committee is final and cannot be appealed.

Confidentiality of the submitted information will be maintained throughout the selection process.

For any inquiries or clarifications regarding the application process, please contact: clcsouth@eitfood.eu

How to submit

To submit your entry, please refer to the specific application form for each award in “Categories”.

Judging criteria

- Marketed innovation (product or service) will be assessed by:
 - a) the level of innovation within the product / service,
 - b) impact generated by the innovation and,
 - c) volume of sales achieved (requested above 10.000 euros).
- Revenue growth will be assessed by the increase in sales accomplished by the startup in all products and services lines since its participation in the programme, by a combination of:
 - a) growth multiples,
 - b) total sales volume and,
 - c) presence in different geographic markets.

- Employment growth, the increase in employment achieved by the startup since its participation in the programme will be assessed by:
 - a) growth multiples,
 - b) total employment figures and,
 - c) geographic distribution of employment.
- Most successful startup in fundraising, achievements in fundraising will be measured by a combination of:
 - a) the total amount raised from public or private sources,
 - b) the number of investors involved in the deal and,
 - c) the participation of cross-border investors.
- Women in agrifood- Innovation to Market award (product or service) will be assessed by:
 - a) the level of innovation within the product / service,
 - b) impact generated by the innovation and,
 - c) volume of sales achieved (requested above 10.000 euros).
- Women in agrifood- Female founder award will be assessed by:
 - a) startup registration date and reference number (eligible startup legal forms with a registration date between the date of access to the EIT Food South programme and the following 3 years)
 - b) impact generated and relation with the EIT Food programme,
 - c) volume of sales achieved (requested above 10.000 euros).

The Jury

1. The Jury of the Awards will be composed of an expert evaluation panel of a minimum of 3 members. EIT Food South will ensure the absence of conflict of interest of the members of the evaluation panel ensuring a fair, transparent evaluation and equal treatment of all entries and participants.
2. Entries will be evaluated based on (compliance with) the *judging criteria* (as specified above), and on the impact achieved.
3. The Jury will have full authority to determine whether the nominations comply with the guidelines or not. It will also have full freedom to make decisions regarding the Awards and to appreciate the circumstances and merits of the candidates.

4. The decisions of the Jury will be adopted by a simple majority of the votes of the attending members in the session.
5. The decisions of the Jury are final and cannot be appealed. In the event of a tie in the Jury's decisions, the President will have the casting vote.
6. The Jury will endeavor, as far as possible, to award the prizes referred to in these guidelines. However, the Awards may be declared void if the Jury deems it appropriate due to the nominations not meeting the required criteria; or if any of the causes established in these guidelines occur.

The Awards

The winner of each category will be presented with an award of €3,000 as a result of their participation in EIT Food South.

The Jury may award second and third prizes or honorable mentions if it considers, at its discretion, that in addition to the winner, there are other participants whose nominations are worthy of recognition.

Cash prizes will be subject to the applicable withholdings according to the current regulations at any given time.

The Award winners will be notified by EIT Food South. The Award winners shall receive the Award amount awarded through a bank transfer and subject to the signature of an Award Agreement between the respective Award winner and EIT Food South.

Additional benefits for the winners:

1. Networking: Winners will have the chance to network with industry professionals, experts, and potential collaborators within the EIT Food South community.
2. Visibility: Winners will gain visibility and exposure for their work through promotional activities and media coverage organised by EIT Food South, including but not restricted to:
 1. Media coverage as winner of the award.
 2. Advertising on EIT Food channels.
 3. Opportunity to present your initiative at a webinar organised by EIT Food, e-breakfast or other formats.
 4. Development of a video on your initiative and your path through EIT Food.
3. Support in fundraising: Winners will have access to EIT Food workshops on investing aimed at enhancing their skills and knowledge.

4. Recognition: Winning the competition will serve as a prestigious recognition of their achievements and may open doors for future career opportunities.

Award winners' obligations

The Award winners will have two days, after the communication of their acceptance, to sign (each team member) and send electronically the "AWARD AGREEMENT" with EIT Food South.

Signature of the Award Agreement is required to receive the Award. The Award can only be granted as a full package, and not divided into different parties or amounts.

The Award winners must attend the Awards Ceremony on the 19th of June 2025, in Bilbao (Spain).

If the Award Agreement mentioned in this section has been successfully completed and the winner has attended the Award Ceremony, the corresponding award shall be issued within 30 days to the bank account specified in the entry.

The Award winners shall be responsible for all possible taxes, wire transfer costs and other possible costs related to the payment of award amounts.

Terms and conditions

1. Participation in the Awards implies full acceptance of the terms and conditions.

2. In accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 April 2016 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Directive 95/46/EC [GDPR], and Organic Law 3/2018 of 5 December on the Protection of Personal Data and guarantee of digital rights [LOPDGDD], EIT Food South and/or the data controller hereby informs you of the processing of your data by this entity as the data controller, and the security measures, technical and organizational, implemented in accordance with current regulations.

The data controller for your data is EIT Food South (hereinafter referred to as "EIT"), with address at Serrano Anguita 13, 28004 – Madrid.

In accordance with the provisions set forth in the rules of the CERES Awards by EIT Food South (hereinafter referred to as "the Awards"), EIT may process personal data of participants for the following purposes and legal bases. To manage your participation in the Awards in accordance with its regulations, and to contact you via the means deemed appropriate by EIT for processing and monitoring your participation. Such data will be processed based on the legal basis of contract performance or the establishment of pre-contractual measures.

In the event that the participant is a legal entity, EIT will process the personal data of individuals that are necessary for the pre-contractual or contractual relationship between the parties, treating only the minimum data required for professional contact purposes and solely for the purpose of maintaining the

relationship with respect to the legal relationship with the legal entity in which the data subject is an employee or provides services.

Furthermore, EIT may process your data for the purpose of promoting the Awards and publicising your participation. If you become a finalist or winner, your data may be used for your participation in the related event. Images of the participants may be taken during the Awards event. These images, as personal data, will be processed by EIT for the purpose of promoting the Awards through various means, including the internet, owned by EIT or third parties. In any case, the processing of your image will be based on your express consent, which you must provide in due time and in accordance with the provisions of Organic Law 1/1982 of 5 May on the Protection of the Right to Honor, Personal and Family Privacy, and the Protection of Personal Image.

Likewise, EIT will process your identifying data for the publication of the Award winners, which may be published on its website.

Your data will be processed by EIT, based on the purposes described above, with all the guarantees of confidentiality, integrity, and legality.

EIT will not disclose your data to third parties, except those that are directly consented to by the interested parties for the purpose of promoting the awards and those that may be required by legal obligation. If there is a possibility of disclosing your data for other circumstances, EIT will request your explicit consent or another legal basis for legitimacy. However, in cases where your data is processed by third-party companies contracted by EIT for the development of the Awards, a corresponding data processing agreement will be signed with them, ensuring, at all times, the maximum guarantees for the data subject's protection of personal data.

Your data will be retained by EIT as long as it is necessary for the purpose and legal basis for which it was collected, unless you revoke your consent if it is the legal basis for processing. Once it is no longer necessary for that purpose, it will be blocked and/or deleted in accordance with our data retention policy. In accordance with industry standards, EIT informs you that it maintains technical and organizational measures to prevent accidental or unlawful destruction, accidental loss or alteration, unauthorised disclosure or access, and other illegal forms or procedures. It will also inform anyone who has access to your data about their security obligations, confidentiality, and duty of secrecy.

Finally, EIT informs you of your right to exercise your rights of access, rectification, erasure, restriction, objection, and data portability regarding your personal data held by EIT. You can exercise these rights by sending an email to CLCSouth@eitfood.eu, attaching a photocopy of your ID card or equivalent identification document. Furthermore, you have the right to file a complaint with the Spanish Data Protection Agency.

3. By submitting your entry, you grant EIT Food South the right to share your information with the EIT, and to publicise your success story and impact summary. Note, evidence of your application / success will not be made public but would be provided to EIT through the confidential reporting process.

4. You may submit and have multiple entries related to the same project or startup.

5. By submitting the requested information, participants represent and warrant that they have all rights, title and/or interest in it; that it is accurate and complete; and that by submitting their entry to the CERES Award by EIT Food South, they are not and will not be likely to be violating any contract or third-party rights, including any patents, copyright, trade secret, proprietary or confidential information, trademark, publicity or privacy right.

Rules and regulations

By submitting an entry to the CERES Awards by EIT Food South, you agree to be bound by the following legal terms (“Rules and regulations”) governing the Awards managed by EIT Food South.

Under all and any circumstances, EIT Food South have the right to change the set-up of the Awards or to extent or terminate the Award before the end of the term of the Award. Furthermore, EIT Food South in all and any circumstances has the right to change any provisions of these *rules and regulations*, and any other terms, policy or guideline governing your use of the website, at any time in its sole discretion. Such changes will be effective upon posting such revisions on the website, and you waive any right to receive specific notice of such changes. You should frequently review these *rules and regulations* and any other applicable rules, policies, or guidelines on the Award webpage.

You agree that these terms and the relationship between you and EIT Food South shall be governed by the laws of Spain and that any disputes arising out of your participation in the Award shall be submitted to the jurisdiction of the Court of Madrid.

ANNEX 1: Growth Awards for regenerative farmers

The award is open to all farmers who have participated in EIT Food South programmes from 2020-2024 and who have made relevant achievements in the category below, marking a significant milestone in their pathway towards Regenerative Agriculture with EIT Food South.

Participation will be free and in accordance with the provisions set forth in these terms.

Category

1. Excellence in environmental impact awards

This category recognises the most successful project based on carbon footprint result, the complementarity of the different activities that are being developed within the farm and the implementation of technologies to improve farm management.

3 prizes will be delivered in this category. The first prize of this category will be presented with an award of €10,000 as a result of their participation in EIT Food South. The second prize will be presented with an award of €7,000 and the third prize will be €3,000.

The Award winners will be notified by EIT Food South. The Award winners shall receive the Award amount awarded through a bank transfer and subject to the signature of an Award Agreement between the respective Award winner and EIT Food South.

Eligibility criteria

1. The applicant must have participated and provided a link to a valid EIT Food South programme, between the 1st of January 2020 and the 31st of December 2024.
2. All individuals or companies that have been through one of our support programmes, as well as startups created as a result, fully or partially, of completing one of our programmes.
3. Applications from participants established in Russia or Belorussia, are not eligible to participate in the Award.

Judging criteria

- Excellence in environmental impact awards will be assessed by:
 - a) the scoring obtained in the carbon footprint calculation,
 - b) technology implemented in the farm, and
 - c) level of diversification and circularity based on the different activities implemented in the farm.