

Test Farms 2026 - Terms and conditions

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1. General information about the programme

Test Farms is a programme offered by EIT Food (hereinafter: **Test Farms**). It aims to support startups in testing their innovative solutions that make agri- (including livestock) and aquaculture more efficient, sustainable and environmentally beneficial. Testing an innovative solutions (TRL 6-9) with farmers aims to obtain feedback on the usefulness, functionality and quality of the offered products or services and by improving it – increase the chances of commercialising the ideas.

Participation in the Test Farms for entities from the above-mentioned countries shall be free of charge. Financial subgrant to support testing needs will be available under specific conditions.

2. Important dates

Stage	Date
Call Open Date	11th of December 2025
Call Deadline	26th of January 2025
Evaluation	26-01-2025 to 06-02-2026
Invitation to interviews, panels	09 February 2026
Interviews/Panels with pre-selected startups	10 – 17 February 2026
Communication to selected participants	18 February 2026
Standstill period, Onboarding, Validation and Contracting	19-02-2026 to 19-03-2026
Indicative start of project implementation	March 2026 – November 2026

Some dates may change, the organisers will inform accordingly on the project website: <https://www.eitfood.eu/projects/test-farms>

3. Commitment

Entities chosen to participate in the Test Farms commit to the following actions:

1. **Application** – Interested entities are invited to apply for the Test Farms via <https://myeitfood.eu/>
2. **Match-making event** - Shortlisted entities will be invited to join one of match-making events. At these events, entities will meet with farmers, evaluate the possibility of testing their innovative solutions on the farms and create a plan to test their solutions together with the selected farmers.
3. **Subgranting agreement** – Entities must sign an agreement stipulating the commitments and terms for receiving the grant.
4. **Registration** - Participating entities must register at <https://pitchbook.com/> or <https://dealroom.co/>
5. **Test phase** – Entities will test their solutions on the test fields according to the plan they developed after the match-making event.
6. **Reporting** – Entities will report their progress throughout the testing phase to the Test Farms managers.
7. **Final report** – Participating entities must submit a final report on their involvement in the Test Farms project.

4. Eligibility criteria for applicants

This call is open to eligible legally incorporated entities, startups, SME, following eligibility criteria:

Organisation Eligibility	Each implementing participant must:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be a legally incorporated entity registered in or after 2016 in one of Horizon Europe eligible countries. Provide a PIC Number: https://www.eitfood.eu/files/PIC-Guidance.pdf • Have developed an innovative solution* in aquaculture and/or agriculture/animal husbandry, having a product with TRL 6-9 ready to be tested in a real environment. • Have not participated in previous editions of the Test Farms.
Application Eligibility	Each application must:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be complete, with all mandatory application documents uploaded. Please, note that the pitch deck is required to be uploaded. • Be submitted on time via our submission template. • Be fully written in English.

Equal opportunity: The call is open to all applicants, including those without an existing partnership agreement with EIT Food. All members of the KIC Partnership (as defined in the Partnership Agreement) shall have equal opportunity to participate in this funding opportunity.

* Appendix 1 below provides detailed scope of solutions Test Farms is looking for.

5. Selection criteria

Eligible applicants will be scored based on their answers to the questions on the application form (<https://myeitfood.eu/s/login/SelfRegister>) according to the following selection criteria:

Scoring criteria – Test Farms	Scoring
1. Proposed product/service addresses relevant problem in agriculture/aquaculture.	(1-5)
2. Proposed solution is innovative and distinguished from current offerings; it addresses a relevant need in the market.	(1-5)
3. Proposed solution is at the stage which allows it to be tested/validated during the Test Farms.	(1-5)
4. Required testing phase makes sense in the development of the product/service.	(1-5)
5. An entity is experienced and motivated enough to execute the test phase.	(1-5)
6. Requested resources for the pilot can be accommodated by the EIT Food and project partners.	(1-5)
NB. Though EIT Food makes every effort to match entities with farmers and test land, occasionally we are unable to find a suitable match. In this instance, entities will be encouraged to apply to future rounds of the Test Farms when we have a wider farmers network. We thank you in advance for your understanding.	

Scoring: 1- not meeting the criteria, 5 – meeting all relevant aspects of the criteria.

The applications with the highest scores will be invited to the match-making events (up to a maximum of **20 entities**).

6. Financial support

Entities can apply for financial assistance of up to 4000 EUR to offset their programme costs.

The subgrant can be used for:

- Travel costs for entities to attend the matchmaking event and visiting the test site.
- Rental of other devices necessary to perform the test.
- Costs to make necessary adjustments at the testing field to perform the test.
- Entities should reserve part of the subgrant to reimburse the farmer if (s)he suffers damage caused because of the testing. These potential costs should be estimated and set aside up front.

The subgrant cannot be used for:

- Salaries for company employees.
- Product development, production and improvement (e.g. product elements and materials, research)
- Costs are not directly related to the testing of the product/service.

7. Ownership and Intellectual property

- Test Farms applies a flexible, success-based financial sustainability mechanism. Participating startups may choose between a revenue-sharing model (i.e., 2% of sales generated from the validated product for three years) or a success-based fee linked to their next investment round (0.5–1%). This approach ensures a fair, performance-driven

contribution that supports the long-term sustainability of the programme while remaining founder-friendly.

- Tested products or services have to be freely available for the pilot project – entities cannot charge the farmer for their use during the pilot project.
- Ownership of the product or service stays with the entity and all equipment needs to be returned to the entity by the farmer after the pilot project has finished.
 - If the farmer wants to keep using the solution after the pilot project (s)he must pay for the product or service.
- Intellectual property related to the product or service belongs to the entity which bears sole responsibility for its protection. The entity can ask farmer to sign NDA, if appropriate.

8. Personal data processing

- EIT Food CLC South S.L. with its registered seat in Madrid are the data controllers for the purposes of the Test Farms.
- Full Test Farms GDPR information clause can be found at: <https://bit.ly/3pTrbwh>.
- At EIT Food we aim to help develop your solution and provide you visibility and access to the potential network of stakeholders. To do it, in the application form you will find a section to tick whether you give us your consent to showcase your product/service during agricultural & startups conferences & 1:1 meetings with potential clients, investors, research centers and agricultural companies for the next 3 years from your application date. It is an optional service, beside testing itself, and your consent is not mandatory.

9. Contact details

In case of any questions or inquiries please contact the Test Farms manager:

Oksana Hrynevych – oksana.hrynevych@eitfood.eu - inquiries from all applicants.

Appendix 1. Focus themes in Test Farms 2026

Agriculture:

- i. Achieving carbon positive farming & regenerative agriculture
 - a. Soil measurements
 - b. Biodiversity
 - c. Biofertilizers
 - d. Reduction of nitrate leaching, NPK Management.
 - e. Pesticides (biobased solutions, organic pesticides)
 - f. Water gels
 - g. Seeds
 - h. Alternative inputs
 - i. Water gels
 - j. Genomics on seeds
 - k. Carbon farming schemes
 - l. Bioestimulants
 - m. Animal Health (feed and monitoring)
 - n. Precision livestock farming (data applications, big data & AI)
 - o. Animal disease prevention + detection
 - p. Sustainable ingredients for feed
 - q. Crop resiliency (drought and pest)
 - r. No tillage sowing

- ii. Accelerating the tech revolution in agriculture
 - a. New revenue streams for farmers
 - b. Automation & Robotics
 - c. Smart farming
 - d. Satellite/AI measurements
 - e. Irrigation tech
 - f. Remote sensors
 - g. Intelligent plant protection
 - h. Soil health and carbon monitoring
 - i. Pest and disease detection
 - j. Weed Control
 - k. Efficient use of resources (water, nitrogen)
 - l. Digital Farming

- iii. Food industry decarbonisation
 - a. Novel CO₂ reduction / decarbonisations technologies and solutions for primary food production

- iv. Circular agrifood systems:
 - a. Biomass upcycling
 - b. Sidestream valorization
 - c. Upcycling of agricultural side-streams into higher value, functional or health food ingredients
 - d. CO₂ conversion technologies & solutions

- v. Primary food processing
 - a. Solution decreasing crops and food waste & loss
 - b. Solutions optimising cost of primary food processing

Aquaculture:

i. Achieving carbon-positive and regenerative aquaculture

Solutions reducing environmental impact, enhancing biodiversity, and improving ecosystem services.

- a. Water quality & microbiome monitoring
(Real-time sensors, microbial profiling, harmful algal bloom detection)
- b. Biodiversity enhancement in aquaculture ecosystems
(Integrated multi-trophic aquaculture, habitat restoration tools)
- c. Biofertilizers and microbial solutions for ponds & hatcheries
(Improving nutrient cycling, stabilizing microbiomes, reducing chemical inputs)
- d. Reduction of nutrient leakage & effluent management
(N–P removal technologies, biofilters, precision feeding)
- e. Biobased disease prevention & organic therapeutics
(Phage solutions, probiotics, natural antiparasitics)
- f. Water retention, gel-based carriers & controlled-release systems
(Encapsulation for probiotics, feed additives, vaccines)
- g. Improved breeding & hatchery seed quality
(Genomic selection, early life-stage survival tools)
- h. Alternative, sustainable inputs for hatcheries & grow-out systems
(Algal blends, microbial replacements, natural immune boosters)
- i. Genomics & molecular diagnostics on fry, spat, or larvae
(Pathogen resistance, growth rate optimisation)
- j. Blue carbon & regenerative aquaculture schemes
(Seagrass, kelp, and shellfish carbon sequestration models)
- k. Bio-stimulants for aquatic species
(Immune modulation, stress resistance, growth improvement)
- l. Fish & shellfish health management
(Feed optimisation, behaviour monitoring, metabolic profiling)
- m. Precision aquaculture monitoring (AI, sensors, computer vision)
(Automated stock estimation, welfare tracking, feeding optimisation)
- n. Disease prevention, early detection & response
(Viral/bacterial sensors, AI-diagnostics, rapid test kits)
- o. Sustainable ingredients for aquafeed
(Insect protein, microbial protein, seaweed, fermentation-based oils)
- p. Farm resiliency under climate stress
(Heat resistance, low-oxygen management, salinity fluctuation mitigation)
- q. Low-impact seeding and stocking technologies
(Robotics for seeding, smart release strategies)

ii. Accelerating the tech revolution in aquaculture

Digitalisation, automation, data-driven decision tools, and robotics.

- a. New revenue streams for aquaculture farms
(eDNA services, algae co-cultivation, ecosystem credits)
- b. Automation & robotics in cages, ponds, and tanks
(Auto-net cleaning, autonomous feeding, biomass robots)
- c. Smart aquaculture platforms
(Digital twins, predictive modelling, integrated dashboards)
- d. Satellite, drone & AI-enabled water quality measurements
(Remote biomass estimation, surface bloom detection)
- e. Smart aeration, oxygenation & irrigation-equivalent systems
(Energy-efficient oxygen control, dynamic aeration)
- f. Underwater & remote sensing technologies

- (Acoustics, sonar, machine vision for stock assessment)
 - g. Intelligent stock protection technologies
(Seal-deterrent systems, predator detection, anti-fouling innovation)
 - h. Health, welfare & carbon monitoring tools
(Automated emissions calculators, welfare scoring)
 - i. Disease & parasite detection systems
(Sea lice detection, Vibrio monitoring, fungal pathogen early warning)
 - j. Invasive species & weed control solutions for freshwater systems
(Algae control, smart biofilters, biosensors)
 - k. Efficient use of water, energy & nutrients
(Closed-loop systems, RAS optimisation, waste heat recovery)
 - l. Digital aquaculture management & traceability
(Blockchain, IoT traceability, farm-to-fork monitoring)
- iii. Decarbonisation of the aquaculture value chain
Reducing greenhouse gases and increasing energy efficiency.
- a. Novel decarbonisation technologies for aquaculture systems
(Emissions-free oxygenation, low-carbon aeration, geothermal integration)
 - b. CO₂ capture and utilisation in hatcheries & feed production
(Algal CO₂ recycling, microbial protein from CO₂)
 - c. Life-cycle emission reduction tools for farms
(Automated emissions tracking, low-carbon audits for aquaculture)
- iv. Circular blue bioeconomy systems
Valorising waste streams, circular feed ingredients, and bio-conversion.
- a. Biomass upcycling (sludge, mortalities, shell waste)
(Fertiliser, chitin extraction, methane capture)
 - b. Sidestream valorisation from RAS and processing facilities
(Nutrient recovery, biochar, biopolymer extraction)
 - c. Upcycling aquaculture side-streams into new ingredients
(Proteins, omega-3 replacements, functional health additives)
 - d. CO₂ conversion systems for blue biomass production
(Algal bioreactors, microbial fermentation systems)
- v. Primary aquatic food processing
Improving efficiency, reducing losses, and productivity in early processing stages.
- a. Solutions reducing fish/shellfish waste and loss
(Preservation tech, chilling optimisation, rapid handling tools)
 - b. Technologies reducing processing costs
(Auto-grading, fillet yield optimisation, energy-efficient chilling)
 - c. Smart logistics & cold-chain optimisation
(IoT temperature tracking, predictive freshness modelling)