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2027 International FoodTec Award: Future Technologies in the Spotlight

Leading award in international food technology – Chair of the expert jury Prof Katharina Riehn on innovation trends, technological excellence and added value for award winners
– Registration deadline: 04 May 2026

Since 1994, the DLG's [International FoodTec Award](#) has recognised outstanding technological developments in the areas of innovation, sustainability and efficiency. Chaired by Prof Katharina Riehn, Vice-President of the DLG (German Agricultural Society), an international jury of experts awards gold and silver medals to the most advanced concepts every three years. The next awards ceremony will take place at Anuga FoodTec 2027. Prof Katharina Riehn explains the added value of the Innovation Award for the winners while at the same time providing an informed outlook on future trends and developments in the food industry. Applications for the International FoodTec Award can be submitted until 4 May 2026.

What is the significance of innovation awards in general and the International FoodTec Award in particular?

Prof Katharina Riehn: Trade fairs are much more than just industry gatherings – they are key innovation platforms where technological progress is presented in a compact, impressive and practical manner. The International FoodTec Award is specifically tailored to the key topics of Anuga FoodTec, the leading international trade fair for food and beverage technology (23 – 26 February 2027). Its goal is to make technical innovations and developments visible and understandable. The communication associated with this not only creates transparency within the industry and promotes targeted networking and new business contacts, it also acts as an important voice in society. This allows the industry to demonstrate its innovative strength as a whole and show how it is actively contributing to overcoming current challenges relating to sustainability and food security with advanced technologies and solutions.

The DLG recently introduced a new concept of progress into public discourse in the agricultural and food industry: Sustainable productivity growth. What does this mean, particularly with regard to the International FoodTec Award?

The agricultural and food industry faces major challenges: The vision of the European Green Deal is faltering in the face of geopolitical crises and economic turmoil. At the same time, it is becoming clear how essential yield improvements and stable value chains and supply chains are for our society. The pressure to act due to climate change and biodiversity loss remains high. More than ever, a progressive attitude and open discourse are needed to enable innovations for sustainable productivity growth. The International FoodTec Award makes an important contribution to this by promoting professional exchange and highlighting technological progress – for both B2B and B2C.

Which trends and developments in the food industry are particularly significant for the award this year?

Global trends are driving innovation in food and beverage technology – with increasing complexity and growing demands on the industry. The International FoodTec Award picks up on this dynamic and, like Anuga FoodTec, covers a broad range of topics. As the only trade fair worldwide that brings together all technological aspects of food and beverage production, it offers a platform for exchange and learning – from start-ups to global market leaders.

Under the guiding theme "Navigate Complexity. Smart. Safe. Sustainable." For the Innovation Award, we expect ground-breaking solutions for sustainable productivity gains. These range from new technologies such as precision fermentation and 3D printing to smart approaches such as digitalisation, automation, sensor technology and AI. Contributions on hygienic design, predictive maintenance, real-time monitoring and IT security are also welcome, as are systemic concepts relating to the circular economy, decarbonisation, water responsibility and upcycling.

What are the criteria for the International FoodTec Award 2027 and how are the winners selected?

Innovations from areas such as process technology, automation, robotics, packaging, software solutions, logistics, food safety, environmental technology and biotechnology are eligible. Technologies for processing alternative protein sources are currently in high demand. This is a dynamic field that is shaping both established companies and start-ups.

The international jury reviews and evaluates the submissions in several expert rounds and decides on the winners. Whether newly developed or significantly improved: Innovative food technologies make an important contribution to conserving resources, reducing food losses and

ensuring global food security. Advances in biotechnology are also opening up new diversity for different dietary styles.

How can companies prepare for the International FoodTec Award 2027, and what tips do you have for potential participants?

Interested companies can find all the information they need on our website to ensure that their application to the jury is technically focused and transparent. Another important aspect is that the International FoodTec Award is presented as gold and silver medals. A gold medal is awarded to products with a new conception, in which the function has been decisively changed and the use of which makes a new process possible or significantly improves a known process. Silver medals will go to products that have been further developed in such a way that a significant improvement in the function or the process is achieved as a result. Consequently, we not only address companies that have developed completely new technologies, but also those whose creative engineering teams have further developed existing technology in a practical manner. The closing date for application is 4 May 2026.

What advantages do the winners of the International FoodTec Award 2027 have and how can they utilise them?

The award ceremony on 23 February 2027 at Anuga FoodTec in Cologne, Germany offers the winners an international stage with high visibility among industry professionals. Exhibitors use the event specifically to showcase innovations and recognise the achievements of their teams. The award creates an ideal setting for exchange and networking – even across industry boundaries. For example with academia, start-ups and new business partners.

For additional information, go to: DLG e.V., Fachzentrum Landwirtschaft & Lebensmittel (Competence Center Agriculture and Food), Bianca Schneider-Häder, Eschborner Landstraße 122, 60489 Frankfurt am Main, Phone +49-(0)69-24788-360, IFTA@DLG.org and online at: www.foodtecaward.com

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DLG. Progress and sustainability in agriculture and the food industry

The DLG (Deutsche Landwirtschafts-Gesellschaft e.V. - German Agricultural Society), founded in 1885 by Max Eyth, stands for productivity and resource conservation in a sustainable and innovation-friendly agricultural and food value chain. The goal of the DLG is to promote progress through the transfer of knowledge, quality and technology. The DLG has more than 31,000 members, is a non-profit organisation, politically independent and internationally networked.

As one of the leading organisations in its industry, the DLG organises trade fairs and events in the fields of agriculture and food technology and tests food, agricultural machinery and farm inputs. With its Competence Center Agriculture and Food and the media of the DLG publishers, the DLG stands for independent know-how transfer. In addition, the DLG works in numerous national and international expert committees to develop solutions for the challenges facing the agricultural, agri-food and food industries.

www.dlg.org