



COLOMBIAN STARTUP TACKLES FOOD WASTE WITH ADDITIVE FREE PRODUCTS

Grinsup

Colombia



Maria Isabel Vargas

From its production plant in Colombia, Grinsup designs, manufactures and distributes chemical-free powdered food products using freshly harvested fruits and vegetables. These are dehydrated into additive-free powders, locking in nutrients and minimising food waste. Grinsup has also invented new foodstuffs, including a vegan protein developed from sesame seeds.

Minimising harvest waste while producing nutritious and affordable food contributes towards the UN's ambition to achieve zero hunger by 2030.

Grinsup's innovative approach to marketing healthy foods also supports the UN goal targeting more sustainable consumption and production patterns. Grinsup's products are marketed to consumers, who can rehydrate them to produce soups and juices within minutes.

They're sold to businesses for industrial food production, while the company's Research and Development (R&D) activities include giving universities and researchers access to one of Colombia's biggest food dehydration machines. Grinsup currently employs four members of staff, and has created many more jobs indirectly, remaining entirely self-funded throughout.





With the UN projecting that more than 600 million people around the world will face hunger by 2030, there is a pressing need to address the issue of food insecurity, and develop sustainable food solutions which involve minimal waste.

Colombian PhD student Maria Isabel Vargas is using her powdered food product to demonstrate how these challenges can be met, tackling issues as diverse as harvest waste and the use of pesticides in farming.

Gaining commercial footing by selling her natural products at various local farmer's markets, Maria attributes the LIF programme with helping her to gain an international outlook. "It really helped me to grow as an entrepreneur in a holistic way. I absolutely adore my mentor, who has helped me so much and really inspired me. LIF changed my mind about what being an entrepreneur really is. It's brought so many connections into my life, and I made so many friends that I know that will be friends for life."

Maria's future plans include producing two tonnes of dehydrated food powder per month, servicing an established roster of B2B customers alongside domestic and international expansion. New partnerships and investors will be sought later this year, leveraging the LIF Technology Development Programme through its unique access to potential customers, distributors and investors. Maria's mentor is also assisting with the plans to market Grinsup's output as standalone products within the UK, potentially creating a dedicated business to handle the distribution and branding.

The Royal Academy of Engineering's Leaders in Innovation Fellowships (LIF) programme supports talented entrepreneurs from around the globe to turn their engineering innovations into impactful, sustainable businesses.

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