



## Alternative protein project receives funding from EU

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The Smart Protein project has been awarded €8.2 million funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 programme to develop new alternative proteins, resulting in a total of €9.6 million. The project is set to launch in January 2020 and will run for four years.

Smart Protein's primary aim is to help build a future-proof protein supply by creating sustainable and nutritious alternative proteins. These include foods made from plants, fungi, products and residues, with a strong focus on improving their structure, taste and flavour.

The programme is based on key findings from a previous Horizon 2020 project, Protein2Food, which also addresses the similar challenge of producing high-quality protein sustainably. Both have been established since the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which installed legal obligations to rethink food systems for member states of the United Nations.

Smart Protein will be led by the School of Food and Nutritional Sciences at University College Cork in Ireland, with a team of 33 partners in industry, research, and academia from around the world. Major collaborators include: Fraunhofer, the University of Copenhagen, ProVeg International, Barilla, Thai Union and AB InBev.

Emanuele Zannini, senior research officer at the University of Cork and the lead coordinator of Smart Protein, said: "With the Smart Protein project, we are reconsidering the entire protein value chain from production to consumption in terms of both productive and environmental performance.

"We are also targeting soil-health restoration through organic regenerative agriculture practices that are able to shift from carbon-source to carbon-sink agriculture, which is more resilient to the effects of climate change and helps farmers' long-term financial futures."

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