

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES



BioTech2Agri


 Collaborazioni
 dell'Unione europea
 Sostegno alle
 imprese

BioTech2Agri - Call for 40 agri-food SMEs -
Theme: Adoption of biotech solutions in agri-
food production/processing. Eligibility: Agri-food
 SMEs in Veneto, Friuli Venezia Giulia, or Slovenia.
 Deadline: **9 January 2026**

[Details here](#)

AGRO-WELL Open Call - Theme: AI/robotics/AR for
 smart farming, worker safety, reduced drudgery,
 data-driven sustainable farm management.

Eligibility: Start-ups, SMEs, scale-ups, research
 institutes, NGOs, commercial farms in EU/Assoc.

[Details here](#)

 Deadline: **4 February 2026.**


From new funding calls and policy updates to key milestones for the AU-EU International Research Consortium on Food, Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture (IRC on FNSSA), this issue highlights what is next for Africa-Europe food systems collaboration. Discover where to engage, which opportunities are opening, how the IRC is advancing coordination, governance, and impact, and how global and regional networks can support collaboration and visibility—then participate and position your work within the evolving FNSSA agenda.

This issue positions CEA-FIRST and the International Research Consortium on FNSSA (Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agriculture) as strategic enablers of AU (African Union)-EU (European Union) coordination, connecting policy, funding, research, and innovation actors to accelerate impact on food and nutrition security.

With the winter festive season approaching, we wish all our readers well and look forward to continued collaboration in the coming year !



IRC on FNSSA developments

This quarter, AU and EU funders convened under the IRC Funders Group to align national and regional programmes with the revised FNSSA roadmap, establishing a shared basis for coordinated calls and co-funding in 2026. This illustrates how IRC governance is moving from setup to operational impact.

This section highlights how the IRC is moving from establishment to implementation, consolidating governance, mobilising funders, and anchoring research and innovation in AU-EU policy and investment processes.

Calls for IRC membership

The National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa launched calls for funders to join the IRC during the Joint GEH-FOSC Meeting on 28 May 2025 in Montpellier, France, the Sustainability Research and Innovation Africa Satellite Event held on 4-6 June 2025 in Nairobi, Kenya, and the High-Level Meeting of African Heads of Research Councils, held on 6 August 2025, in Sandton, South Africa.

However, all researchers, academics, advisers, innovators, funders, practitioners, extension specialists, NGO workers, policy makers, and representatives of youth or women's organizations are invited.



[Read Membership Terms here](#)

[Apply for membership here](#)

Contributing to AU-EU policy processes (AU-EU policy level)

At the AU-EU Senior Officials Meeting on Science, Technology and Innovation (21 October), the side event "The Role of EU-AU R&I Strategies in Contributing to Africa's Food Future" showcased insights from CEA-FIRST and AfriFOODlinks. Discussions informed the renewal of the AU-EU FNSA Roadmap (2027-2036), highlighting priorities on collaborative governance and living labs, leveraging the IRC to connect public research with private investment, and strengthening the research-policy interface to deliver concrete food security outcomes.



Strengthening IRC governance and strategic alignment

The 3rd IRC Signatories Meeting (23 September, online, convened by FARA) confirmed progress on IRC governance, structure, and membership. Signatories contributed to finalising the Strategy and Operational Plan under CEA-FIRST, reinforcing coordination, alignment, and collective ownership of the AU-EU FNSA agenda.

Unlocking private-sector access to research and innovation

The online event "Accessing Food Systems Innovation: Unlocking Opportunities for the Private Sector" (24 September) clarified practical pathways for farmer organisations, agri-entrepreneurs, incubators, and innovation enablers to engage with AU-EU research and innovation. Contributions from PAFO, the European Commission, and African and European actors highlighted how farmer-led and enterprise-driven innovation can scale through stronger research-industry collaboration. A targeted needs assessment identified key barriers to innovation and finance, while the IRC was positioned as a mechanism offering early access to innovation pipelines, co-funding opportunities, policy influence, and increased visibility.

Formal approval of IRC governance and work plan

The 2nd AU-EU IRC on FNSSA General Assembly (27 November, hosted by FARA) formally approved the IRC's governance and operating arrangements, ratified the Statutes and the Strategy and Operational Plan (including the visual identity), and endorsed the service offer and Year 3 work plan. The Assembly confirmed that governance structures, knowledge systems, and ethical and compliance processes are fully in place.

Stay tuned for further updates on IRC on FNSSA activities in the next newsletter!

Aligning AU-EU funders around the IRC (AU & EU national and regional funders)

The first IRC Funders Group meeting (20 October, Brussels; hosted by NRF and CIRAD) aligned European and African funders on the IRC's mission, structure, and strategic objectives. Funders confirmed the role of the Funders Working Group in shaping impactful AU-EU R&I agendas for FNSSA, with a shared focus on programme alignment, clustering analyses, stronger research-entrepreneurship links, and positioning the IRC as a core implementation mechanism for the revised FNSSA roadmap.



Embedding gender and youth across IRC activities

The launch of the Enabler Working Group on Gender and Youth (21 November) established a dedicated mechanism to mainstream gender equity and youth inclusion across IRC research, innovation, and policy work. Key priorities identified include mentorship, leadership development, inclusive finance, equitable land rights, and community engagement, reinforcing the role of women and youth as decision-makers in food systems transformation.

[Details here](#)

Some Funding Opportunities

HORIZON-CL6-2026-02-FARM2FORK-01 (Horizon Europe, Cluster 6) -

Theme: Innovative phytosanitary treatments for regulated plant pests to support safe international trade in plants/plant products. **Eligibility:** Standard Higher Education Institutions consortia (min. 3 entities from 3 EU or Associated countries).

**HORIZON
EUROPE**

Deadline:

14 April 2026 (opening 14 January 2026)

[Details here](#)

PRIMARY Open Call - Theme: New rural value chains using underutilised agricultural biomass (grass, greenhouse/cotton by-products, olive prunings) into food, feed, bio-materials, bioenergy, fertilisers; circular bioeconomy. **Eligibility:** Consortia with at least one technical partner + at least one public or private partner (primary producers, coops, start-ups, SMEs, NGOs).

**opencalls
.fund**

Deadline:

1 Jun 2026 (opening 2 March 2026).

[Details here](#)

Upcoming AGRI-FOOD EVENTS



EU Agri-food days , 15 -17 December 2025, Brussels, Belgium

[Details here](#)



Global Forum for Food and Agriculture (GFFA), 14-17 January 2026, Berlin, Germany

[Details here](#)



International Green Week , 16-25 January 2026, Berlin, Germany.

[Details here](#)

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Key reads informing global agri-food system



AGRA (2025)
The Africa Food Systems Report 2025.

[Access it here](#)

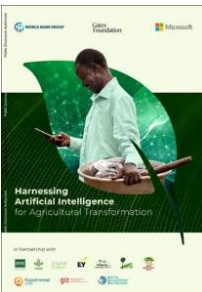


OECD-FAO Agricultural Outlook 2025-2034



OECD-FAO (July 2025)
Agricultural Outlook 2025-2034

[Access it here](#)



World Bank Group.
November (2025)
Harnessing Artificial Intelligence for Agricultural Transformation.

[Access it here](#)

Dive into this quarter's essential agri-food intelligence !



PanAfrican agriculture, 22 edition, October-December 2025

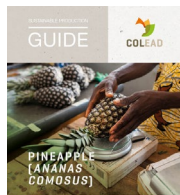
[Access it here](#)



United Nations Food Systems (2025) Global food systems transformation 2025

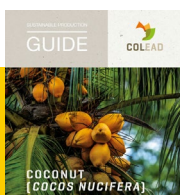
[Access it here](#)

COLEAD (2025) Sustainable production practical guides on Pineapple



[Access it here](#)

Coconut



[Access it here](#)



IFAD, Akademya, IFPRI, UNFS. (September 2025) External development financial flows to food systems. Africa report.

[Access it here](#)



World Food Programme (September 2025) Global Report on Food Crises 2025

[Access it here](#)

Ginger



[Access it here](#)

Cassava



[Access it here](#)



9th Africa Agri Expo 2026, 11-12 February 2026, Nairobi, Kenya.

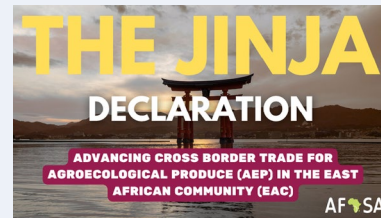
[Details here](#)



Argus Fertilizer Africa Conference, 10-11 February 2026, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

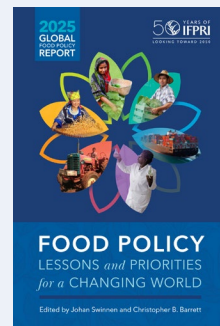
[Details here](#)

AFRICAN AND EUROPEAN POLICIES



Kirubel Tadele, 17 Nov 2025, "The Jinja Declaration on Advancing Cross Border Trade for Agroecological Produce (AEP) In the East African Community (EAC)".

[Access it here](#)

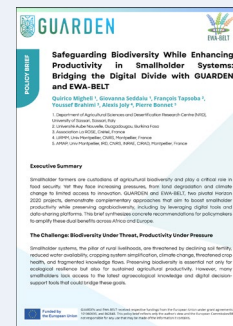


IFPRI. May 2025. Food Policy: Lessons and Priorities for a Changing World. 2025 Global Food Policy Report

[Access it here](#)

Johan Swinnen and Christopher B. Barrett. Food Policy: Lessons and Priorities for a Changing World 2025 Global Food Policy Report

[Access it here](#)



Migheli Q., Seddaiu G., Tapsoba F., Brahimi Y., Joly A., Bonnet P. July 2025, "Safeguarding Biodiversity While Enhancing Productivity in Smallholder Systems: Bridging the Digital Divide with GUARDEN and EWA-BELT" (policy brief)

[Access it here](#)



European Commission, 26 September 2025 "Revised waste framework directive".

[Access it here](#)

European Commission, 27 November 2025, "Bioeconomy strategy".

[Access it here](#)

European Commission, 26 September 2025 "2030 Consumer agenda".

[Access it here](#)

Join IRC community and live discussions

[Click here](#)

Funding Opportunities

FCI4Africa Open Call 1 (OC1) Theme: Strengthening trade, addressing Non Tariff Measures, improving market access; fair, climate-neutral and health-promoting food systems in Africa,

Eligibility: Single applicants (no consortia) - start-ups, SMEs, research organisations and other research/technology stakeholders working on African food systems



Deadline:
30 Jun 2026 (opening 1 April 2026)

[Details here](#)

FS4Africa Open Call 2 (OC2) - Innovation Hubs - Theme: Capacity building, acceleration and upscaling of food-safety and food-business innovations in African and European food systems, Eligibility:

Innovation hubs/accelerators providing mentoring and training to FS4Africa OC1 grantees and other food-business entrepreneurs (Africa and Europe).



Deadline:
31 Aug 2026 (opening 1 May 2026).

[Details here](#)

GLOBAL NETWORKS

The Africa-Europe Innovation Platform

[Connect](#)

FSNet Africa

[Connect](#)

Global Alliance for the Future of Food

[Connect](#)

FOODForce

[Connect](#)

Circular Bio-based Europe Joint Undertaking

[Connect](#)

Flanders' FOOD

[Connect](#)

EAT-LANCET

[Connect](#)

European network of organic advisors

[Connect](#)

UFM Regional Platform on Research and Innovation

[Connect](#)



DATABASES

Africa-Europe Innovation Platform (AEIP)

A vibrant "network of networks" connecting startups, researchers, investors, and policymakers across Africa and Europe. It fosters inclusive innovation ecosystems and supports the AU-EU Innovation Agenda through capacity building, funding access, and strategic partnerships.

[Access it here](#)

Sub-National Harmonized Food Insecurity Dataset (HFID)

An open-source dataset consolidating IPC, FEWS NET, WFP's FCS, and rCSI indicators. HFID enables predictive modeling and deep analysis of food insecurity trends at sub-national levels—crucial for humanitarian response and policy planning.

[Access it here](#)

EU Transition Pathways Platform

A stakeholder support platform guiding industrial ecosystems, including agri-food, toward greener, more digital, and resilient futures. It's a collaborative space for aligning with the EU Industrial Strategy and accelerating sustainable transformation.

[Access it here](#)

UN Food Systems Hub - Database of Practices

A global repository of good practices submitted by countries and coalitions. It showcases scalable solutions for transforming food systems, from school meal programs to climate-smart agriculture, empowering stakeholders to replicate and adapt successful models.

[Access it here](#)

Videos

The donor dialogue held on 25th June 2025 by the Strengthening Evidence-Based Policy Practice for Sustainable Food Systems (StEPPFoS) team spotlighted the urgent need to strengthen the science-policy interface (SPI) in Africa to build resilient, equitable, and nutrition-sensitive food systems.

[Watch it here](#)

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We would very much appreciate your insights about our newsletter, so we can tailor its content to better align with your interests. Kindly take a few minutes to fill in our short survey [here](#)



Funded by
the European Union

This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon Europe programme "Food, bioeconomy natural resources, agriculture and environment" under grant agreement n° 101136771. Views of the opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or of the European Research Executive Agency, as granting authority. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.