

MEET THE FINALISTS IN

# Water Challenge

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## Challenging innovators in Skåne to create sustainable water solutions

Fresh water is a limited resource and, in many parts of the world, a scarcity. Skåne, in southern Sweden, already experiences water shortages during parts of the year, and is especially vulnerable because important industries such as agriculture and food production are dependent on access to large amounts of fresh water. Skåne is the origin of 50 percent of all food produced in Sweden and 70 percent of all the fruits and vegetables, making this region particularly sensitive to water shortages. Smart use of water, with the help of new technology and circular solutions, will become an increasingly important issue in the future.

Recently, [Innovation Skåne](#), [Venture Cup](#), and [WIN Water](#), together with [Microsoft](#), launched an innovation challenge to promote smart water solutions for more sustainable food production. The goal of this challenge is to find innovative solutions to the real societal challenge of lacking fresh water. Any solution that can lead to the efficient use of freshwater resources and that directly or indirectly benefits food production is welcome in the challenge, says Marie Greco, project manager at Venture Cup.

All startups and innovators whose annual sales do not exceed SEK 3,000,000 were eligible to participate and submit their scalable and innovative solutions for how to reduce or streamline water consumption in food production. Ten participants have been selected to present their ideas in front of a jury made up of representatives from the food industry, Microsoft, [Lund University](#), WIN Water, and Innovation Skåne. On May 6, 2021, three winners will be selected to each receive a prize of SEK 100,000. In addition to the chance of winning the prize, all participating startups will receive valuable feedback for further development of their solution and the opportunity to create new contacts.

The 10 finalists are:

[Avsalt](#) Avsalt has developed a new desalination method based on multi-channel capacitive deionization (mc-CDI).

[Containing Greens](#) Containing Greens wants to make it possible to enjoy fresh greens produced locally in hydroponic systems all year round by using waste heat from local datacenters or industries.

[DiaPure](#) DiaPure developed an ultra-reactive filter to remove phosphorus from wastewater.

[Helios Innovations](#) Helios Innovations has developed a new desalination method that can clean saltwater using industrial waste heat.

[IO-dit](#) IO-dit is saving water with the implementation of an IoT-based systems that allows farmers to better manage water resources and improve crop yield.

[Norbite](#) Norbite transforms plastic waste into sustainable goods using an insect-based biorefinery.

[Nära & Naturlig](#)Nära & Naturlig is solving global sustainability problems related to land-based fish farming with a new farming technology.

[Sanitation360](#)Sanitation360 concentrates the nutrients in urine to produce a dry fertilizer while recapturing the evaporated water.

[Spec-Imaging](#)Spec-Imaging develops spectrophotometers capable of measuring concentrations, color and turbidity of dense liquids enabling the users to shorten the processing time, decrease the operating costs and produce more reliable results.

### **Vertisà**

Vertisà develops efficient irrigation systems for vertical farming.

“Microsoft is pleased to partner with Innovation Skåne, Venture Cup, and WIN Water and to support the innovation challenge for more sustainable food production,” said Holly Beale, Community Environmental Sustainability Senior Program Manager. “The Microsoft Community Environmental Sustainability initiative is an important way for Microsoft to extend our company’s commitments and help inspire new solutions for environmental sustainability into the communities in which we operate datacenters.”

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Venture Cup är tävlingen för morgondagens entreprenörer som kopplar ihop experter från näringslivet med framtidens entreprenörer och erbjuder en process för alla som bär på en idé. Venture Cup erbjuder inspiration, utbildning, handledning samt möjligheten till att skapa sig ett gediget nätverk. Venture Cup grundades 1998 på initiativ av McKinsey & Company i samarbete med Chalmers Universitet, Göteborgs Universitet och Innovationsbron. Venture Cup stöds av Sveriges alla stora universitet och drivs i partnerskap med den privata och offentliga sektorn. Sedan starten 1998 har mer än 15 000 affärsidéer tävlat och cirka 30 procent av idéerna har blivit affärer. Läs mer på [www.venturecup.se](http://www.venturecup.se)

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