

# Food Business News

## Connecticut food entrepreneurs selected for area pitch competition

NEW HAVEN, CONN. – Five startups are slated to participate at the Entrepreneur Innovation Awards – The Food Edition, a pitch competition co-hosted by CT Food Launchpad, CTNext and the Yale Center for Business and Environment. The event, to be held Nov. 10 at Yale University, will gather leaders from across Connecticut's food entrepreneurship ecosystem to highlight and support emerging, wholesale-ready businesses.

The five finalists were selected from a broader group of applications during September and October and will compete for a total of more than \$25,000 in funds, including a \$10,000 grand prize, \$8,000 for second place, \$5,000 for third place and \$2,000 for audience choice award. Judges include Jordan Lue, investment analyst, CT Innovations; Rache Brand, partner, Star Strong Capital; and John Lawson, senior local forager, Whole Foods Market.

Pitch competition participants are:

**Fire Ox Foods**, a producer of prepared plant-based meals inspired by global cuisines.

**Breakfast Belle**, a brand of Southern-style food products, including seasoned breadings and hot sauce.

**Real Cookies Co.**, a maker of grain-free, plant-based cookies formulated with almond and coconut flours.

**Bare Life**, a maker of allergen-friendly organic hot cocoa mixes.

**Oh Shito!**, a line of Ghanaian pepper sauces blending scotch bonnet peppers, garlic, ginger and spices.

CTNext develops programs to fund, advise, connect and inspire new and early-stage companies in Connecticut. CT Food Launchpad, founded by the leadership team at Chabaso Bakery and Atticus New Haven, hosts events connecting Connecticut's emerging food brands with regional wholesale buyers and offers co-production services and distribution consulting.

Entrepreneur Innovation Awards – The Food Edition also will feature regional food entrepreneurship support programs located throughout the state, including Cityseed Incubates in New Haven, reSET Food Incubator in Hartford, Food'NBev Connect in Danbury, and the Connecticut Center for Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Storrs.

Free tickets are available at [bit.ly/foodeia2022](https://bit.ly/foodeia2022).