



Media Release

## **Blue Horizon announces Seed investment in NuCicer in a round led by Leaps by Bayer**

**Zurich, Switzerland, 3 November 2022 – Blue Horizon, a next generation impact investor accelerating the transition to a new Sustainable Food System, today announced a Seed investment in NuCicer.**

Blue Horizon today announced a Seed investment in NuCicer, an agri-food technology company pioneering ultra-high protein, non-GM chickpeas by harnessing the rich biodiversity of wild chickpea. The funding, is led by Leaps by Bayer, the impact investing arm of Bayer AG – the largest global seed company, with participation from Blue Horizon, Lever VC, and Trellis Road. The latest funding will allow NuCicer to scale production of its first-generation chickpea varieties with 75% higher protein content, targeting to reduce chickpea protein ingredient costs by 50%, and expand existing work with downstream partners and customers to bring affordable, sustainable plant proteins to end-consumers in 2023.

NuCicer’s machine learning and genome-guided breeding platform works to revolutionize the plant protein industry by increasing the protein content of chickpeas, a high-demand yet high-cost protein source, to reduce production costs and fulfil consumer demand. The technology is rooted in decades-long scientific research led by Professor Douglas Cook at UC Davis, the world’s preeminent expert on chickpea genetics and NuCicer’s co-founder and Chief Scientific Officer. With 40x more genetic diversity than commercial varieties, the Company’s vast germplasm library integrates wild chickpea genetics with elite cultivars through cross breeding, creating desirable traits that support major opportunities at every stage of the food system.

Long-term, the stability of the global food system relies on improving the climate resilience of crops. Chickpeas naturally possess several climate resilient traits, including high water-use efficiency and nitrogen fixation capabilities that contribute to soil regeneration. NuCicer’s genomic-guided breeding platform enables the discovery of genetic controls for key traits that further enhance climate resilience such as tolerance to heat, drought, acidic soils, and disease.

Nate Crosser, Principal at Blue Horizon, said: “Chickpea is one of the most exciting crops that can be re-optimized for human nutrition and natural resilience. NuCicer is clearly poised to lead this movement and to deliver a new generation of affordable, sustainable, delicious, healthy plant proteins. I’d encourage all food formulators to reach out to NuCicer to learn how ultra-high protein chickpeas can transform their product offering.”

To date, Blue Horizon has raised funds of over \$850 million and invested in 75+ companies with a focus on protein alternatives and food tech. Some of the firm’s investments include [Tropic Biosciences](#), a pioneering agricultural biotechnology company focused on a crop portfolio of bananas, coffee and rice, [Planted](#), one of the emerging leaders of plant-based meat alternatives and [Mosa Meat](#), which is developing tissue engineering technologies to mass produce affordable, cultured meat and dairy formulation.



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**About Blue Horizon**

Blue Horizon is accelerating the transition to a Sustainable Food System that delivers outstanding returns for investors and the planet. The company is a global pioneer of the Future of Food. As a pure play impact investor, Blue Horizon has shaped the growth of the alternative protein and food tech market. The company invests at the intersection of biology, agriculture and technology with the aim to transform the global food industry. Blue Horizon was founded in 2016 and is headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland. To date, the company has invested in more than 75 companies. Its business model offers an attractive opportunity to invest in the evolution of the global food system while contributing to a healthy and sustainable world. [www.bluehorizon.com](http://www.bluehorizon.com)

**About NuCicer**

NuCicer is an agri-food technology company pioneering ultra-high protein chickpea varieties that enable scalable, sustainable ingredients spanning whole beans, gluten-free flours, and protein ingredients. It partners with growers who are attracted to chickpea's capacity for nitrogen fixation and interested in NuCicer's potential to increase the crop's environmental resilience. NuCicer also partners with top ingredient manufacturers and food and beverage companies who recognize the potential of chickpea as a sustainable, functional ingredient. NuCicer combines an industry-leading chickpea germplasm library with cutting-edge genomics-guided speed breeding technologies to create its all-natural, non-GM chickpea varieties. [www.nucicer.com](http://www.nucicer.com)