# Alimentary Systems wins US$125,000 in global awards

*Oli Lewis, Carbon News*
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***Alimentary Systems co-founder and chief operating officer Matthew Jackson in Barcelona***

A New Zealand cleantech company pioneering a waste-to-value plant for wastewater sludge treatment has won a prestigious international award.

Alimentary Systems won the 2026 Resilience Solution of the Year in the QBE AcceliCITY Resilience Challenge, which was awarded at the Smart City Expo World Congress held in Barcelona last week.

The award, run by Boston non-profit Leading Cities, comes with US$100,000 and the opportunity for the winner to pilot their technology with a community involved in the Leading Cities network.

The Christchurch-based company, which has developed a six-stage bioenergy recovery plant modelled on bovine digestion, also took out the 2026 People's Choice Award, which comes with US$25,000.

Alimentary Systems founder and chief executive Harmaan Madon said winning the awards showed there was demand for the technology.

"Transforming waste and wastewater management from a cost centre to a revenue-generating asset is what the world needs, especially in developing economies," he said.

"Non-dilutive funding and a city ready to host a pilot closes exactly this gap; our job now is operational proof – a plant running on a community's own sludge and food waste, with the numbers independently audited – so that the next 300 councils are buying something proven rather than something promised."

Alimentary Systems beat out 965 other applicants across 77 countries to win the Resilience Solution of the Year Award.

## A Barcelona surprise

Alimentary co-founder and chief operating officer Matthew Jackson was in Barcelona for the awards and found out on the day that his company had won the People's Choice Award.

Speaking with *Carbon News*, he said the six-month AcceliCITY Resilience Challenge had been an incredible opportunity to showcase New Zealand innovation.

"I can't even begin to explain to you what it's doing for our global expansion," Jackson said, referring to a potential opportunity that Alimentary had identified in Miami-Dade County as a result of the challenge.

As for the US$125,000 in funding, he described it as a major catalyst.

Alimentary had already raised an additional $200,000 on the back of the process, Jackson said, allowing it to move forward with its first commercial-scale plant in Nelson.

"That's how much of a big deal it is," he said.

"It will move us forward, because now we've got the funds for milestone one – so it's really exciting."

## Additional raise underway

The company has consents and commercial arrangements in place for the Nelson facility, near the existing wastewater treatment plant on Bell Island.

The patented technology takes sludge and organic waste that may otherwise go to landfill and uses anaerobic co-digestion to process it

into biogas, fertiliser and avoided emissions, which can be monetised via voluntary carbon markets.

As Jackson said, wastewater treatment operators incur large costs transporting and disposing of treated biosolids in landfills, or incinerating them, which destroys the nutrient potential of the wastestream.

Wastewater treatment ponds also emit methane and require a lot of land.

Alimentary Systems aims to deliver a more compact, sustainable and economical alternative by allowing operators to reuse and monetise their wastestreams.

“We stand the technology up by competing with the landfill,” Jackson said.

“We don’t have to pay the waste minimisation fee, we don’t have to pay the emissions liability – so, we’ve already got a competitive advantage, which is a 2.6 multiplier based on the current price of a landfill gate fee.”

Alimentary Systems, which has a reference plant in India and Indian manufacturers to build the plant, is in the process of raising more capital.

“We do have an open raise, so we’re in due diligence with some larger impact-focused family offices in NZ, Japan and Singapore, so that will be completed by probably December,” Jackson said.

Once this was done, Jackson thought the Nelson plant – which will be capable of processing an initial 10 tonnes of organic waste and sludge a day – could be stood up within 12 months.

“We actually have three other pretty viable commercial options in play at the moment that are waiting on the outputs of that plant, so it’s pretty consequential to get that one live,” he said.

As well as wastewater sludge, the plant will take industrial organic waste that would otherwise go to landfill, including fish waste, grape marc and dairy effluent.

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