



Talash Huijbers

Founder of InsectiPro

Talash Huijbers is raising insects to serve two purposes – producing black soldier fly for animal feed and crickets for human nutrition. The young innovator set up an insect farm in Kenya in 2018. Her business strategy has demonstrated the opportunity to merge profitability and sustainability into a practical production model.

The model for raising black soldier fly delivers remarkable efficiency as the process creates ingredients for animal feed and also makes an excellent fertilizer. As the flies feed on locally-sourced waste, they quickly grow into safe ingredients that can be used in animal feed. At the same time, the flies' waste can be used as an excellent fertilizer, bringing a high degree of circularity to processes on the farm.

InsectiPro's, cricket products are integrated into snack foods and a powder used in human nutrition products. Huijbers has developed a circular production model that is not only sustainable, but profitable.

While the global pandemic disrupted many parts of the feed-to-food chain, the scarcity of "traditional" products such as fishmeal and soya drove a surge in demand for Black Soldier Fly as a replacement ingredient.

The increased demand resulted in Huijbers' team broadening its waste sourcing from three locations to 17 sites. Today, the farm processes 60 tons of organic waste per day.

The sustainability aspects of InsectiPro's business are complemented by economic benefits as jobs and income streams are created. Through March 2022, InsectiPro employed nearly 80 people. The tested model continues to be rolled out to smallholder farmers as Huijbers and her team train farmers on black soldier fly production.

Culture and diversity are integral to InsectiPro's business model. In a region and industry largely led by males, Huijbers' team is demonstrating the power of youth and female leadership. Raised on a farm in Kenya, the 27-year-old studied International Food and Agribusiness at HAS University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands.