



NEW CROP
CAPITAL

 plant
futures™

New Crop Capital

Plant Futures Challenge Lab

Case Study

plantfuturesinitiative.org



Challenge Description

When entrepreneurs launch and scale up startups, they face an array of strategic decisions. Often the sheer volume of such decisions is overwhelming and entrepreneurs face the challenge of making these decisions with limited time, resources, and prior experience. Therefore, any resources that can help startups make strategic decisions more effectively and efficiently are much appreciated. One of the key sets of decisions facing plant-based startups revolves around how to label and brand their products. In particular, companies need to figure out what terminology to use to make the product as appealing as possible and to maximize sales. There are many competing terms in use, such as “vegan,” “plant-based,” “meatless,” etc. This decision has become more challenging as there have been regulatory efforts around the world to restrict what terms plant-based companies can use to describe their products. The New Crop Capital project focused on making this decision easier for plant-based startups.



Deliverables & Evaluation

- The main deliverable was the development of a tool to help plant-based companies make labeling decisions.
- The format was up to the discretion of the students, but one example was a decision tree that took into account various factors, such as target demographics, geography, type of product, etc. and made recommendations about how to label the product.
- The tool was accompanied by an appendix that summarized the research that supported the recommendations of the tool.
- The research quality for the tool and comprehensiveness of the tool were evaluated, as well as the clarity of the final presentation

About the Plant Futures Challenge Lab



Our program welcomes undergraduate to PhD students from diverse disciplines who work collaboratively with selected partners from various for-profit and nonprofit companies. Students are paired with organizations based on their skills, passions, and experiences and work to address the real-time needs of these organizations while gaining invaluable real-world experience.

Through a careful application process, working closely with recommendation from faculty advisors and student ambassadors, Plant Futures invites the most talented and motivated cohort of students with a variety of skill sets, experiences, expertise, and the passion to work with our partners. Both students and Challenge Lab mentors consistently reported the interdisciplinary design of the course to be one of the most valuable components of their Challenge Lab experience.

The Plant Futures Challenge Lab is a unique university course that equips students with applied learning experiences in the plant-based food and agriculture sectors.

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