

Wanda Fish raises \$7M in seed funding for pilot production of cultivated bluefin tuna

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Israel-based FoodTech start-up Wanda Fish Technologies, Ltd., announces it has secured \$7 million in seed funding. The round was led by Netherlands-based global aquaculture investment fund Aqua-Spark, with additional funding from returning pre-seed investors The Kitchen Hub by the Strauss Group, Peregrine Ventures, LLC, PICO Venture Partners, MOREVC, and CPT Capital, LLP. Since its inception, Wanda Fish has raised USD 10 million in funding.

Founded in 2021 by The Kitchen Hub and Daphna Heffetz, a leading figure in biotechnology-based innovation, Wanda Fish develops premium quality, cultivated fish outside of the ocean. This new injection of capital will boost Wanda Fish's ability to accelerate the creation and increase the scale of a cultivated whole-cut filet of bluefin tuna.

These cuts replicate the texture, flavour, and nutritional value of wild-caught bluefin tuna as they comprise the fish's muscle and fat cells and contain the same native proteins and fatty acids, including omega-3 and other essential nutrients. As a cultivated filet, Wanda Fish's bluefin tuna has no common ocean pollutants, like mercury, and is produced under non-GMO standards.

"We are excited and feel incredibly fortunate to collaborate with Aqua-Spark in propelling our venture forward," says Daphna Heffetz, Ph.D., co-founder and CEO of Wanda Fish. "We are on a shared mission to improve the global food value chain, creating a tasty, more sustainable future for all. This financial backing by leading global venture funds gives us significant leverage to make sustainably cultivated, cruelty-free, and ocean-friendly bluefin tuna a reality."

Valued for its nutritional content, texture, and flavour, bluefin tuna is an expensive, sought-after species that is particularly popular with high-end sushi restaurants due to its perfect balance of fat and protein.

"In such a burgeoning and innovative sector, we are pleased to welcome Wanda Fish into our portfolio of companies based on the remarkable speed with which they've met significant milestones," asserts Lissy Smit, CEO of Aqua-Spark. "We firmly believe in a future where sustainably farmed and cultivated seafood will work in concert with one another to alleviate the burden of overfishing, especially species like bluefin tuna which are deemed unsustainable to farm."

"As the start-up's incubator, we've had the privilege of witnessing the immense progress Wanda Fish has made since their inception less than two years ago," enthuses Jonathan Berger, CEO of The Kitchen FoodTech Hub. "Wanda Fish is transforming visionary ideas into a tangible, cutting-edge product that is just steps away from reaching its prototype. This is credited to a skilled and ambitious multinational team led by Daphna Heffetz that is undoubtedly poised for a resounding success story in the thriving alternative protein space; this spells good news for an overburdened marine ecosystem."