



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Mars Launches Purpose-Driven, Food-Focused SEEDS of CHANGE™ Accelerator**

*Participants will take part in four-month mentorship program with industry experts, receive grants of up to \$50,000*

**CHICAGO, March 5, 2019** – Today, at Natural Products Expo West 2019, family-owned Mars, Incorporated announced the launch of its **SEEDS of CHANGE™** Accelerator to help early stage food-focused companies fast-track growth and live their purpose to build a healthier and more sustainable future.

The **SEEDS of CHANGE™** Accelerator, named after the Mars Food organic seed and food brand, will select six U.S. and four Australian participants in the following areas: start-up food brands, innovative experiential offerings, new business models, and emerging technology. The search will focus on companies that share the Mars Food values of World Flavors, Plant-Based Eating, Easy-Meal Solutions, Responsible Food and Creating with Care.

“We’re committed to nurturing the next generation of food innovators who are dedicated to creating and delivering healthier and tastier food solutions for more people,” said Fiona Dawson, global president of Mars Food, Multisales and Global Customers and sponsor of the program. “The accelerator is one of the many ways Mars Food is working to bring our Purpose – Better Food Today. A Better World Tomorrow. – to life.”

In addition to a grant of up to \$50,000 (U.S.), each start-up will undertake a tailored four-month program to scale its operations. The program, led by Gary Arora, global lead of open innovation at Launchpad for Mars, will give the start-ups access to a panel of industry expert mentors. These include Stephen Badger, Chairman of the Board for Mars, Incorporated; Rohan Oza, an iconic brand builder and recent “guest shark” on Shark Tank; and JKR, a design-led creative agency credited with launching notable start-ups.

“The **SEEDS of CHANGE™** brand is a prime example of the power of starting small and growing strong,” said Arora. “**SEEDS of CHANGE™** was founded nearly 30 years ago to preserve the biodiversity of seeds and to make these organically grown seeds more readily available to gardens and farmers. By helping start-ups tackle practical business challenges, such as scaling a product and brand storytelling, and giving them access to our extended network of mentors and advisors, we’re nurturing the next generation of fresh ideas that will shape and enhance the meals of tomorrow.”

Purpose-driven food-focused start-ups are encouraged to visit [www.socaccelerator.com](http://www.socaccelerator.com) from March 5 to May 31 to apply to join the **SEEDS of CHANGE™** Accelerator’s first cohort. To learn more about the **SEEDS of CHANGE™** seed and food products, visit [www.seedsofchange.com](http://www.seedsofchange.com). #BeASeedOfChange

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# MARS

## **About Mars, Incorporated**

Mars is a family-owned business with more than a century of history making diverse products and offering services for people and the pets people love. With over \$35 billion in sales, the company is a global business that produces some of the world's best-loved brands: M&M's®, SNICKERS®, TWIX®, MILKY WAY®, DOVE®, PEDIGREE®, ROYAL CANIN®, WHISKAS®, EXTRA®, ORBIT®, 5™, SKITTLES®, UNCLE BEN'S® and COCOAVIA®. Mars also provides veterinary health services that include BANFIELD® Pet Hospitals, Blue Pearl®, VCA® and Pet Partners™. Headquartered in McLean, VA, Mars operates in more than 80 countries. The Mars Five Principles – Quality, Responsibility, Mutuality, Efficiency and Freedom – inspire its more than 115,000 Associates to create value for all its partners and deliver growth they are proud of every day.

For more information about Mars, please visit [www.mars.com](http://www.mars.com). Join on us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#).

## **About Mars Food**

Mars Food is a fast-growing dinnertime food business, making tastier, healthier, easier meals that bring the world to the dinner table. Headquartered in London, Mars Food's portfolio of leading brands includes: UNCLE BEN'S®, DOLMIO®, SEEDS OF CHANGE™, MASTERFOODS®, MIRACOLI®, TASTY BITE®, SUZI WAN®, EBLY®, ROYCO®, KAN TONG®, ABU SIOUF®, RARIS®, and PAMESELLO®. Our purpose – Better Food Today. A Better World Tomorrow. – drives our business to be a leader in health & wellbeing and sustainability. Mars Food is a segment of Mars, Incorporated.

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