David Walters
River Capital
Investment Director

Charles Veys
Fotenix CEO

Martin Sutton
River Capital
Venture Partner

Fotenix

Case study

Background

Fotenix is an agri-tech innovator based in Manchester, UK, specialising in multispectral imaging and AI-driven solutions for crop monitoring.

Founded as a University of Manchester spinout, Fotenix's technology supports growers with precision tools to reduce their reliance on chemical inputs, such as fertilisers and pesticides, contributing to improved sustainability. By making data-driven decisions, farmers can also improve water and energy efficiency, critical for maintaining profitability.

"Farmers are at the core of everything we do. We understand the immense pressure they face to deliver high-quality produce while dealing with rising costs and environmental challenges." - Charles Veys, CEO of Fotenix

Accelerating
Agri-Tech

UKRI Innovate UK

Innovation story

Fotenix's innovation story is centred on transforming the agricultural industry through cutting-edge technology, particularly in the field of crop monitoring. The company leverages advanced imaging systems and machine learning to provide glasshouse growers with precise, actionable insights into the health and productivity of their crops.

Fotenix was founded to address significant challenges in modern agriculture. With the availability of skilled labour for manual crop monitoring becoming increasingly scarce, and sustainability pressures mounting, producers cannot rely on traditional crop monitoring methods that are prone to human error.

Drawing from advancements in multispectral imaging and AI, Fotenix has developed a non-destructive technology that captures highly detailed spectral images of crops. With a data driven approach, this innovation enables early diagnosis of issues such as nutrient deficiencies, diseases, and stress. Their scalable platform enables growers to detect problems that the naked eye cannot see, allowing for precise recommendations to optimise interventions rather than reactive management.

"The UK Agri-Tech Centre's support has empowered us to navigate the unique challenges of the AgTech sector, helping us scale our innovations and establish a stronger foothold in the domestic market."

Charles Veys, CEO of Fotenix

Collaboration and support

Fotenix has collaborated with the UK Agri-Tech Centre and partners across many active and complete projects:

- **SprayBot - Three-year feasibility study funded by Innovate UK that investigated combining early disease detection techniques such as imaging and spore sensors with robotic machinery.**

- **SLIMERS - Strategies Leading to Improved Management and Enhanced Resilience Against Slugs (SLIMERS) is research project funded by Defra's Farming Innovation Programme and delivered by Innovate UK.**

- **ACDC - The Advanced Crop Dynamic Control project aims to develop highly energy efficient & sustainable indoor farming systems through image-based analysis, AI & software.**

Transitioning from research prototypes to reliable tools that integrate seamlessly with growers' workflows, Fotenix recently raised £2 million, demonstrating investor confidence in its ability to scale and disrupt the crop monitoring industry, doubling its team size to accelerate growth and meet market demand.

Dr Alex McCormack, Innovation Lead - Agronomy at the UK Agri-Tech Centre said:
"It's been great to support Fotenix in developing their range of products and services, from early stage development at a laboratory scale through to deployment and demonstration within CEA and on-farm situations. For me, what marks them out is their ability to see how their innovations fit into the bigger picture and can synergize with other existing and innovative technologies; a prime example being the collaborative projects highlighted here."

Charles Veys, CEO of Fotenix said:
"Joining the UK Agri-Tech Centre has been a game-changer for Fotenix as an SME in the UK AgTech industry. The access to industry insights, expert guidance, and a strong network of like-minded professionals has been instrumental in our growth."

Find out more and get in touch
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