

UAE Provides \$1.5m Grant to Support Agricultural Innovation Across Asia and Pacific

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The International Affairs Office at the UAE Presidential Court has awarded a \$1.5 million grant to an agricultural innovation fund managed by the Asian Development Bank to support the rollout of evidence based farming technologies across Asia and the Pacific.

The funding was announced during ADB's 59th Annual Meeting in Samarkand and forms part of a wider cofinancing agreement aimed at scaling up proven agricultural technologies for farmers across the region.

The initiative is focused on helping farmers respond to rising input costs and growing pressures on food security through the use of data driven and AI enabled agricultural solutions.

Qingfeng Zhang, Senior Director of ADB's Agriculture, Food, Nature and Rural Development Sector Office, said many farmers are currently facing significant challenges linked to global fertiliser prices.

"Many farmers in the region are struggling with skyrocketing prices for imported fertilizers just as they make crucial decisions when to plant their crops," he said.

"This investment is part of broader efforts by ADB and its partners to ease the burden by reducing the amount and cost of fertilizer that farmers need through technology that shows exactly where and when it is needed."

The technical assistance programme will be delivered through the Agricultural Innovation Mechanism for Scale, known as AIM for Scale. The initiative is supported by the UAE and the Gates Foundation and forms part of Abu Dhabi's AI Ecosystem for Global Agricultural Development, launched in 2025 to expand access

to AI tools for farmers worldwide.

The programme also receives support from the Japan Fund for Prosperous and Resilient Asia and the Pacific.

AI and satellite technology at the centre of programme

The fund is designed to promote modern farming techniques including satellite monitoring and AI driven weather forecasting. These technologies aim to improve the precision of fertiliser and resource application, helping farmers reduce costs while improving productivity and sustainability.

ADB said the initiative will also support more efficient fertiliser use as farmers manage ongoing volatility in global commodity markets.

Alongside innovation programmes, ADB is continuing wider efforts to strengthen food security across the region. This includes emergency financing for fertiliser access, coordinated procurement ahead of planting seasons and expanded financial support for farmers and agribusinesses.

The organisation is also backing policy reforms designed to reduce export restrictions and strengthen regional food security systems such as the ASEAN Plus Three Emergency Rice Reserve.

Khalfan Al Matrooshi, Advisor at the International Affairs Office of the UAE Presidential Court, said international cooperation remains central to addressing global food security challenges.

“International cooperation continues to play a key role in strengthening global food security,” he said.

“Through Abu Dhabi’s AI Ecosystem for Global Agricultural Development, the UAE is convening the partners, expertise and financing to make that possible. Today’s partnership is a testament to what international cooperation can deliver when global partners come together with shared purpose.”

The International Affairs Office at the UAE Presidential Court was established to support strategic international projects focused on science, research and diplomacy.

Founded in 1966, the Asian Development Bank supports sustainable and inclusive growth across Asia and the Pacific and is owned by 69 member countries, including 50 from the region.