Abu Dhabi University inaugurates its first on campus AirFarm in collaboration with Midbar and RBK

As part of Abu Dhabi University's (ADU) Innovate Strategy (ADUi) efforts focused on accelerating sustainable and innovative agricultural solutions, ADU inaugurated its first on-campus AirFarm, an inflatable and portable farm, in collaboration with Midbar, a smart ag-tech South Korean company and H.E. Rashed Bin Khalfan Al Mutawa Al Dhaheri Holding company (RBK). This inauguration is a result of a recent Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between ADU, Midbar, and RBK, to establish a business framework for delivering supply and Research and Development (R&D) solutions to the UAE market across several sectors. These sectors include but are not limited to agriculture, Internet of Things (IoT) and Artificial Intelligence (AI), health, and water desalination.

Through this facility, ADU aims to maximize its innovation efforts to provide students, faculty and the wider UAE community with sustainable and inclusive solutions to overcome challenges and foster innovative thinking. The space will enable students and faculty with the opportunity to positively impact the UAE community by providing practical learning opportunities, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, promoting innovation, and contributing to sustainable solutions in agriculture, which reflects with the UAE's commitment to a sustainable and innovative future.

The project integrates various technologies, including the IoT and AI, in addition to more than 15 cutting-edge solutions, to create a sustainable environment for food security and agriculture.

A wide group of ADU's senior management attended the inauguration, including Professor Ghassan Aouad, ADU Chancellor, Saeed Bin Rashed Khalfan Aldhaheri Vice Chairman, RBK and Mr. Moses Seo, Midbar CEO, in the presence of representatives from RBK, Gracia Group, Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency, American Chamber of Commerce Abu Dhabi, Modus Capital and Elite Agro Projects.

During the inauguration, attendees had the opportunity to tour and explore the Airfarm in addition to witnessing the inaugural harvest of fresh produce. They have also experienced firsthand delicious and nutritious produce grown on the Airfarm, underscoring its potential for promoting food security and sustainable farming practices globally. Advanced smart farming solutions support the community by increasing crop yields by up to 30% and reducing labor costs by up to 80%, as well as the need for inputs such as water and fertilizer.

Professor Ghassan Aouad, Chancellor of Abu Dhabi University (ADU), said: "We are honored to collaborate with Midbar to establish an AirFarm on campus, a facility that yields sustainable solutions to our community. Through this facility, we aim to provide our students and faculty with the tools and resources to explore new ideas that will enable them to become influential leaders. At ADU, we are dedicated to nurturing an environment that not only encourages innovation and critical thinking but also empowers our students to develop groundbreaking ideas that will shape a more sustainable future for generations to come.

ADUi is focused on three main pillars including innovation, research and incubation which will serve as the engine for the advancement of innovation and entrepreneurship education in the UAE. The Strategy provides a "safe zone" for discovery, testing and controlled risk-

taking that will afford optimum opportunities for the success of creative minds. In addition, it builds on the university-based research to empower both aspiring as well as seasoned innovators to pursue new ways to conceptualize, manifest and deliver product-value for a more sustainable and inclusive world.

Midbar is an innovative smart Ag-tech, enabling farmers in distressed areas around the world to grow food sustainably, effectively, and affordably. Midbar's end-to-end smart farm solution is based on self-developed, innovative patent technologies comprising hardware made of advanced materials, IoT, and automated control systems.