المركز الدولي للزراعة الملحية
INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR BIOSALINE AGRICULTURE

Dr. Tarifa Alzaabi, Director General of ICBA, receives "Leader of Innovative Ideas" honorary badge in Uzbekistan

- For the first time, the badge is awarded to a recipient from outside Uzbekistan.

Dubai, United Arab Emirates, 7 November 2026 – Dr. Tarifa Alzaabi, Director General of the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA), received the "Leader of Innovative Ideas" honorary badge during InnoWeek 2026 in Tashkent. Awarded by the Agency for Innovative Development and the Central Council of the Youth Union of Uzbekistan, the badge recognises contributions to the development and practical application of innovative ideas and technologies. It was established by a resolution of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The recognition comes amid ICBA's work with its partners to translate agricultural research into practical solutions in Uzbekistan. These efforts include the "Farmers' and Agro-Entrepreneurs Accelerator", implemented by ICBA with support from Abu Dhabi Fund for Development (ADFD), in partnership with the Agency for Innovative Development under the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

The programme forms part of the ADFD-funded project "Development of Sustainable Agricultural Production Systems in Degraded Areas of Karakalpakstan", which combines research and field application to develop crops and products suited to local conditions.

Dr. Tarifa Alzaabi, Director General of ICBA, said: "I am proud to receive this recognition and deeply appreciate the efforts of the ICBA team and our partners in Uzbekistan, as well as the support of Abu Dhabi Fund for Development in connecting scientific solutions with local development priorities. ICBA's responsibility extends from developing crops and production systems suited to arid and saline environments to equipping farmers with the knowledge and skills needed to sustain production and improve livelihoods."

She added: "The accelerator programme brings together development finance, research expertise and local knowledge. Participants are transforming crops into products that meet market needs,

expanding income opportunities and strengthening the participation of women and young people in the agricultural economy."

The recognition also reflects the role of Emirati women in leading research institutions and advancing international scientific cooperation. Dr. Alzaabi noted that the opportunities the UAE has provided in education, professional development and leadership have strengthened this role, enabling Emirati women to apply their expertise in serving communities and addressing development challenges.

The programme's graduating cohort comprised 207 farmers and agro-entrepreneurs, including 122 women, representing approximately 59 per cent of graduates. Delivered over four weeks, the programme included 16 training modules covering agricultural processing, product quality, packaging, business planning and market access.

During the graduation ceremony at Nukus Youth Technopark, participants presented 25 innovative concepts, including food and feed products and soil amendments developed using crops introduced by ICBA. The creators of ten outstanding concepts were recognised, providing a foundation for local enterprises that draw on climate-resilient crops.

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About the International Center for Biosaline Agriculture (ICBA)

The International Center for Biosaline Agriculture is an international, non-profit centre for applied research for development, established through the leadership of the Government of the United Arab Emirates and the Islamic Development Bank. ICBA combines scientific expertise, partnerships and knowledge exchange to develop solutions that support livelihoods and food security in arid and saline environments. Its research on soil, water, crops and climate addresses salinity, the management of affected land and the restoration of agricultural systems. Through this work, ICBA helps farming communities adapt to changing conditions and sustain their livelihoods.



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