



Gondola Capital Announces Engagement with Lever VC

Early Beyond Meat Investors and Gondola Capital Join Forces

VAIL, CO, Jan 13, 2020 – Gondola Capital, a provider of carefully curated non-traditional private investments for RIAs, Family Offices, and Institutions, today announced it has formed a strategic relationship with Lever VC, an investment management firm that backs talented entrepreneurs in established alternative protein markets like the U.S. and Europe, the rapidly growing market in China, and beyond.

Gondola Capital believes the alternative protein market offers a serious value proposition for its investor clients. For one thing, they are more efficient: they have dramatically lower land and water costs and generate fewer greenhouse gas emissions. They have a healthier nutrition profile, and much higher levels of food safety. And they have a shelf life and customizability far beyond that of conventional protein. They are also squarely in line with consumer trends toward health, food safety and sustainability.

“Our mission at Gondola is simple, and that is to provide our investor base with exposure to world-class managers that focus on niche strategies in rapidly growing markets. The alternative protein space is being born. With its depth of knowledge, rich investment experience, and unique deal access, Lever VC is perfectly positioned to take advantage of this opportunity. Nick Cooney and the Lever VC team are recognized as global leaders in the alternative protein space and we are thrilled to be aligned with them,” said Casey Brunner, Co-Founder and Partner at Gondola Capital.

Major food companies like Tyson, Cargill and General Mills are investing in alternative protein. So are leading funds like Kleiner Perkins, Khosla Ventures and DFJ, and visionaries such as Bill Gates, Marc Benioff and Richard Branson. Meanwhile, recent years have seen a steady pace of successful exits as alternative protein companies have been acquired by food giants like Unilever, Kraft and others.

“The Partners at Lever VC have a proven track record of success investing in dozens of early stage alternative protein companies, including leaders like Beyond Meat, Impossible Foods and Memphis Meats. These investments span the globe. You’d be hard-pressed to find a more experienced investment manager which combines both proven institutional investment experience with deep industry networks within the emerging alternative protein space” said Michael Lee, Co-Founder and Partner at Gondola Capital.

“We have extensive deal access in the food tech and alternative protein space. Thanks to our deep networks in the U.S., China, Europe and globally with food entrepreneurs, investors and NGOs, we are often aware of groundbreaking companies before they are even founded. We couldn’t be more excited about our engagement with Gondola Capital which will help to provide investors exposure to the rapidly growing alternative protein sector,” said Nick Cooney, Managing Partner at Lever VC.

The engagement follows a strong growth year for Gondola Capital as it continues to build out a differentiated platform of private equity funds, co-investments, and direct transactions for RIAs, Family Offices, and Institutions.

About Gondola Capital

Gondola Capital researches and provides exposure to carefully curated non-traditional private investments for Registered Investment Advisors, Family Offices, Institutions, and Consultants. Their platform includes

a suite of differentiated alternative investment solutions including private equity funds, co-investments, and direct transactions. With locations in Vail, CO and Raleigh, NC, the founding team of Casey Brunner and



Michael Lee have over 30 years combined experience from institutions including Morgan Stanley Investment Management, Hatteras Funds, The Rock Creek Group, and Direxion Investments.

For more information on Gondola Capital: <https://gondolacapital.com/>

About Lever VC

Managing Partner Nick Cooney is the co-founder and former investment manager of New Crop Capital, a private family office venture capital vehicle which made investments in over twenty alternative protein companies across the United States, Europe, Latin America, Asia and the Middle East. Nick is also the co-founder of the Good Food Institute, the world's largest non-governmental organization working to advance the alternative protein industry. Nick is regarded globally as a thought leader and expert in the alternative protein space, and he brings unique sector expertise, connections and deal flow to Lever VC. He is based in the greater New York City area.

Partner Lawrence Chu is the founder and director of BlackPine Private Equity, a private investment firm that has deployed in excess of \$1.5 billion USD in investments over the past decade across a range of industries, including direct venture capital investments into alternative protein leaders Beyond Meat, Impossible Foods, and JUST. He is also the co-founder of financial services firm Oriente, and an executive committee member of the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce. Lawrence is regarded as a thought leader and expert in the venture capital space in the greater China region, and brings over 15 years of investment experience to Lever VC. He is based in Hong Kong.

Partner Benny Pei is Chief Investment Officer at Hong Kong Tung Fung Investment Group, which invests in fast-moving consumer goods companies in China and southeast Asia. In addition to his investment experience, Benny brings strong governance and operational experience. He has served as independent director of a major publicly listed company in China, and as deputy general manager at multiple consumer goods companies. He is based in Singapore.

Key Risk Factors

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