

## Artie Awarded Grand Prize of 2023 Purina Pet Care Innovation Prize Program

### *Phoenix, Arizona-Based Pet Startup Wins Additional Funding and Support from Purina in Annual Competition*

ORLANDO, Fla., March 23, 2023 /PRNewswire/ -- Five pet care startups from across the U.S. and Canada pitched their businesses to pet industry influencers in a bid to win the [2023 Pet Care Innovation Prize](#) powered by Purina. [Artie](#) was selected as the grand prize winner during [Global Pet Expo](#), the pet care industry's biggest trade show, which attracts pet focused entrepreneurs and businesses from around the world. The Phoenix, Arizona-based startup is the only countertop appliance system in the U.S. to prepare artisan-inspired, home-cooked meals for dogs at the touch of a button. Artie Harvest Bowls are a mix of highly nutritious meals featuring whole proteins, vegetables, fruits, grains, and essential vitamins. As the grand prize winner of the Pet Care Innovation Prize, Artie was awarded a cash prize of \$25,000 and support from pet care leader, Purina.

"This award is so meaningful to us," said Scott Eller, co-founder of Artie. "We have worked so hard to get here and surrounded ourselves with the right people all the way. The time spent with the team at Purina has been extremely rewarding."

Artie was selected by a panel of judges that included industry experts, and the leaders from Purina's 9 Square Ventures division. Earlier this year, five startups were selected from nearly 140 companies from across the United States and Canada to participate in the 2023 class for the Pet Care innovation Prize. Each winner received \$25,000 cash and participated in a bootcamp accelerator experience with business experts, industry leaders, veterinarians, and Purina executives to broaden their network, strengthen their business plan, and gain knowledge from across the pet care landscape. The 2023 class of Pet Care Innovation Prize winners represents what's new and what's next in the \$123 billion\* pet care industry.

The other 2023 Pet Care Innovation Prize Winners are:

**EpiPaws ([EpiPaws.com](http://EpiPaws.com)) - Fort Lauderdale, Florida-based** EpiPaws is the maker of a pet age test kit that can help determine a pet's estimated birthday with a quick oral swab. Once the pet's age is determined, EpiPaws offers nutrition, behavior insights, and other helpful information based on the pet's life stage for proactive healthcare management.

**Happy Bond ([Http://HappyBond.com](http://HappyBond.com)) - Los Angeles, California-based** Happy Bond makes preservative-free dog food with no fillers, and no additives. Each jar is filled with premium, human-grade ingredients and doesn't need to be refrigerated until it's opened. The company also makes supplements to support healthy hips and joints based on a pet's age.

**PDX Biotech (<https://orastrupdx.com/>) - Huntsville, Alabama-based** PDX Biotech is the creator of OraStripdx, a first-in-class, rapid screening test for veterinarians to detect periodontal disease in dogs and cats early in the disease, while it is invisible. Results are returned in 10 seconds so that proper care can be quickly recommended.

**Sylvester.ai (<https://www.sylvester.ai/>) - Calgary, Alberta Canada-based** Sylvester.ai creates predictive visual healthcare products using artificial intelligence. The company's first app, Tably, uses AI trained on vet approved pain scales to see how a pet is feeling, based on subtle facial cues

uses AI trained on vet-approved pain scales to see how a cat is feeling, based on subtle facial cues. It's especially useful after a procedure, to make health-related decisions.

"We look forward to seeing the success of Artie and the entire 2023 class. We are very thankful to be a part of their journey," said Bill Broun, co-lead of Purina's 9 Square Ventures division, and Vice President of Personalization and Business Development at Purina. "By offering programs like the Pet Care Innovation Prize, we get the opportunity to work with forward thinking startups who are doing great work to advance the pet care industry. It's an honor to support their growth and work together to shape the future of pet care."

The [Pet Care Innovation Prize](#) was created to support and connect with early stage pet care startups that are currently in market with an innovative business addressing pet and pet owner needs in the areas of pet health and wellness, services, technology, and food, treats or litter. The Pet Care Innovation Prize is a collaborative effort of [Purina's 9 Square Ventures division](#) and impact investors [Active Capital](#). Previous Pet Care Innovation Prize winners have raised millions of dollars in equity and prizes from investors and accelerator programs across the U.S. Several startups have been successfully acquired and/or made appearances on Shark Tank, the business reality television series where contestants try to convince one of the sharks to invest money in their idea.

As Purina's corporate venturing group, [9 Square Ventures](#) has been focused on connecting with pet care startups since 2014. The team's mission is to leverage Purina's knowledge, experience, and financial resources to help emerging pet care startups scale their businesses and make a positive impact on the lives of as many pets and their owners as possible.

To find out more about the Pet Care Innovation program, visit [PetCareInnovation.net](#).

### **About 9 Square Ventures:**

9-Square Ventures is a corporate venture arm of Nestle Purina PetCare which is focused on investing in emerging pet food and snack brands. It also evaluates other pet care businesses and advanced food technologies.

### **About Active Capital:**

Active Capital is a St. Louis-based impact investing leader, helping startups and investors come together to grow innovative products and initiatives. Active Capital manages the Pet Care Innovation Prize.

### **About Purina**

Nestlé Purina PetCare creates richer lives for pets and the people who love them. Founded in 1894, Purina has helped dogs and cats live longer, healthier lives by offering scientifically based nutritional innovations. Purina manufactures some of the world's most trusted and popular pet care products, including Purina ONE, Pro Plan, Fancy Feast and Tidy Cats. Our more than 8,700 U.S. associates take pride in our trusted pet food, treat and litter brands that feed 51 million dogs and 65 million cats every year. More than 500 Purina scientists, veterinarians, and pet care experts ensure our commitment to unsurpassed quality and nutrition.

Purina promotes responsible pet care through our scientific research, our products, and our support for pet-related organizations. Over the past five years, Purina has contributed more than \$150 million towards

organizations that bring, and keep, people and pets together, as well as those that help our communities and environment thrive.

Purina is part of Nestlé, a global leader in Nutrition, Health, and Wellness. For more information, visit [purina.com](https://www.purina.com) or [subscribe here](#) to get the latest Purina news.

\*American Pet Products Association

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