

Can artificial intelligence already beat growers?

This year we launched the world's first Autonomous Greenhouses Challenge, an international competition to improve food production using artificial intelligence and autonomous greenhouses.

The challenge is sponsored by Tencent and Tencent CXO David Wallerstein. In a preliminary round last spring, the number of international teams was reduced from fourteen to five. Since August these teams have been managing a real greenhouse in which they have to grow cucumbers autonomously using artificial intelligence with as little remote input as possible. Each team

has been allocated a 100 m² greenhouse on our site. The teams are awarded points for different aspects: net profit from the cucumber crop, sustainability and the use of artificial intelligence. They will be judged by an independent jury.

The five remaining teams consist of AI and horticultural students and experts from organisations including Intel, Microsoft Research, Tencent, Delphy, AgroEnergy and universities. The teams are competing against a group of Dutch cucumber growers who are growing manually in a reference greenhouse.



Text: Silke Hemming