

Tyson Foods invests in oven and meals maker Tovala

By Andy Coyne | February 6, 2018

US meat giant [Tyson Foods](#) has made another investment through its corporate venture subsidiary Tyson Ventures, this time in start-up Tovala.

Chicago-based food Tovala supplies WiFi-enabled countertop steam ovens to cook a range of meals developed by its team of chefs.



The terms of the investment are not being disclosed.

Consumers first order the Tovala steam oven and then set up a meal plan, against which they receive a "meal box" of meals. The shopper connects the oven to WiFi, which enables the appliance to gather data to know how to cook the meals. "The Tovala sends your phone a notification when your meal is ready so you don't have to wait around the kitchen," the Tovala website reads.

Tyson Ventures joins a group of investors including Origin Ventures, the Pritzker Group, start-up incubator Y Combinator, Morningstar founder Joe Mansueto, and restaurant entrepreneur Larry Levy in a Series A round of funding.

The capital raised will be used to support Tovala's growth, including adding staff across all departments, geographic expansion and investment in product, operations, technology and marketing.

Justin Whitmore, executive vice president corporate strategy and chief sustainability officer of Tyson Foods, said: "Our venture-capital fund was created to invest in promising entrepreneurs who are on the cutting edge of innovation in the food industry.

"Our investment in Tovala gives us another opportunity to explore new ways of meeting consumer demand and shape the future of food. We look forward to our collaboration."

David Rabie, co-founder and CEO at Tovala, said: "Our mission is to make it easier for busy people to eat better at home. By controlling the experience end-to-end including the hardware, software, and food, our customers benefit by not having to sacrifice convenience, health, or taste.

"We're excited to work with Tyson Foods to explore bringing a wider variety of meals to our customers' homes."

Tyson Ventures was launched in December 2016 and is focused on investing in promising entrepreneurial food businesses that are pioneering new products or technology. It has previously invested in [alternative protein business Beyond Meat](#) and [lab-produced meat company Memphis Meats](#).

Tovala was established in 2015.