

There's still time



From Sherrell <sherrell@sherrelldorsey.com>
To Steve <sjohnston@tuesdayforumcharlotte.org>
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REGENERATIVE

By Sherrell Dorsey

Bite-sized case studies and insights on disruptive climate innovators, investment trends, and the policies shaping our green future.

My third year at the TED Conferences left me brimming with inspiration and a healthy dose of overwhelm – a familiar feeling amplified by a cross-country red-eye and a brief Miami layover before heading to Atlanta. The conference, centered on the vital themes of democracy, empathy, and humanity, delivered exactly what I've come to expect: a powerful lineup of dynamic speakers with transformative ideas.

It was a powerful reminder that amidst the noise of current events, there are brilliant minds focused on building a better future, grounded in the essential truth that technology must serve human needs.

One of the highlights for me was the opportunity to connect with fascinating individuals in the quieter corners of the conference. I had a captivating conversation with Hamish McKenzie of Substack, who offered a beautiful analogy of community and content as a flourishing garden. Jeffrey Reed shared compelling insights on the future of work, emphasizing the importance of purpose-driven innovation for the next generation of technologists. And I was truly impressed by my conversation with Jenny Du of Apeel, whose company is tackling food waste in a revolutionary way – using food itself! More on this in my company spotlight below.

And while these conversations underscored the immense potential for change, I'd be remiss to not consider the urgency of the challenges we face. My experience at TED allowed me to escape for a few days from the news cycle as I focused on the task at hand: identifying innovation for a sense of hope.

I recently reread a post from Don Lemon, **We are not crazy. We are tired**, that affirmed much of the grief many of us are experiencing in the wake of trying to do mission-driven, impact work. We're all used to embracing difficulty, but persevering during this time where barriers seem to emerge every 24 hours in the way of new tariffs, blocked funding, and any whimsical threat to operating a society that centers kindness and opportunity, can make almost anyone ready and willing to throw in the towel.

This week, I'm leaning into grit. Watching for the signals of progress, and pulling myself away from constant social media scrolling in an effort to keep my sanity.

If you'd like to hear my firsthand conversations from TED, be sure to subscribe to the TED Tech podcast on **Apple**, **Spotify**, and all major podcast platforms.

Wishing you a week filled with meaningful connections.

Sherrill Dorsey

COMPANY TO CLOCK: Apeel

Apeel Sciences Extends the shelf life of fresh produce using plant-derived materials, reducing food waste and promoting sustainability. Their "Apeel" coating slows down water loss and oxidation, key factors in spoilage.

Headquarters Goleta, California

Why it matters Apeel Sciences addresses the massive global issue of food waste, which has significant economic, social, and environmental consequences. By extending the shelf life of produce, Apeel helps:

- Reduce waste throughout the supply chain (from farm to consumer).

- Increase access to fresh produce in areas with long supply chains or inadequate infrastructure.
- Decrease the environmental impact of food production (less wasted resources like water and land).
- Improve the profitability of growers and retailers.

How big the industry is The global food waste reduction market is substantial and growing, driven by:

- Increasing consumer awareness of food waste.
- Government regulations and initiatives aimed at reducing waste.
- Rising demand for sustainable food solutions.
- The perishable nature of fresh produce.

The market impacts various sectors, including agriculture, retail, logistics, and packaging.

Traction

- Significant funding raised (over \$640 million).
- Valuation of \$2 billion.
- Partnerships with numerous major growers and retailers across the globe.
- Proven ability to extend the shelf life of a wide variety of produce (e.g., avocados, citrus fruits, apples, berries).
- Demonstrated environmental impact through millions of pieces of fruit preserved and reductions in water usage and greenhouse gas emissions.

Major investors Apeel Sciences has attracted investment from a diverse group, including:

- Venture capital firms (e.g., Andreessen Horowitz).
- GIC
- Temasek
- Rock Creek Group
- Oprah Winfrey
- Katy Perry

BIG BILLS, BIG DEALS

- **Khosla-Backed Energy Startup Nabs \$258 Million to Help Power Data Centers** Mainspring Energy's generators are able to run on different types of gas, including carbon-free hydrogen. (Bloomberg)
- **Symphonic Capital unveils \$13.5 million first fund** to back digital health and fintech startups (Fortune)
- **Mainspring Secures \$258 Million in Financing to Scale Linear Generator Business**. Investors include General Catalyst, Amazon's Climate Pledge Fund, among others (Mainspring)

INDUSTRY EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES

- **Elemental Interactive**. Every year, Elemental invites exceptional founders and investors to highlight progress and accelerate action. April

22. [Learn more.](#)

- **Climate Tech Investors Summit** at San Francisco Climate Week. April 22. [Learn more.](#)
- **MetLife Foundation is accepting applications** for its 2025 Community Impact Grant Program, awarding up to \$200,000 to nonprofits working to improve food security, mental wellbeing, environmental sustainability. Deadline: May 2
- **TOTAL IMPACT SUMMIT: Invest in Transformative Impact.** May 14-15. [Learn more.](#)
- **SOCAP 25** features a day-one focus on creating capital connections for LPs and GPs. Oct 27-29. [Learn more.](#)
- **[Reuters Responsible Business USA 2025 summit.](#)** June 23-24

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