Rutgers Food Innovation Center, NJ Business Incubation Network, and Choose NJ Representatives to Visit Israel
Meetings to Build NJ-Israel Innovation Cluster

Bridgeton, NJ - During the week of June 21, Lou Cooperhouse, director of the Rutgers Food Innovation Center (FIC) and president of the Rutgers University New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, will visit Israel along with Doreen Paolini, director of Rutgers Business Incubation Network, andChoose New Jersey, Inc. representatives. They will be hosted by Olive Grove Ventures (OGV), an international business development consultancy, whose mission is to "help companies grow and succeed abroad."

"We are extremely excited at this first step in creating a NJ-Israel Food Innovation Cluster. Business clustering and cluster development have proven to be a strong catalyst for growth, due to the opportunities created by linking together academia, industry and government," said Cooperhouse.

With the presence of Choose New Jersey, Inc., the goal is to share the message that New Jersey is the gateway to the U.S.

"International outreach gives us the opportunity to nurture relationships with executives, industry groups, and organizations that have operations in New Jersey, including Frutarom and RADWIN, and we seek to expand that roster while in-country," said Paolini.

In addition, Cooperhouse and Paolini will meet with the leadership of several government and privately-funded technology transfer offices, as well as the leadership of various academic and economic development organizations as well as municipal, regional and statewide industry associations.

"The NJ-Israel Food Innovation Cluster is a joint initiative between the FIC, OGV, and Tel-Hai Academic College. The aim is to foster innovation and entrepreneurship by promoting collaboration between New Jersey and Israel. This initiative will enhance the competitiveness of both regions and open new markets for companies in the food industry," said Cooperhouse.

"The New Jersey food industry is a $105 billion industry sector, and a central location that serves 130 million consumers within a day's drive," said Paolini.

"We anticipate that these meetings will result in a series of initiatives expected to be formed between the State of Israel and the State of New Jersey during the next few years. These initiatives may include joint research, co-innovation, joint development projects, and joint marketing and sales campaigns," said Cooperhouse.

"We are confident that these meetings will lead to a robust and thriving NJ-Israel Food Innovation Cluster," said Paolini.
Margaret Brennan-Tonetta, associate vice president for economic development at Rutgers University, stated, “This is an opportunity for us to ... for international cluster development in other areas as well, such as life sciences, energy and advanced manufacturing.”

###

**About Rutgers Food Innovation Center (FIC):**

The Rutgers Food Innovation Center (FIC) is a food business incubation and economic development accelerator program of Rutgers University. Its mission is to foster innovation and entrepreneurship in the food and agribusiness sectors through education, training, and support. The FIC is the only Soft Landings program in the world that focuses on the food and agribusiness sector.

**About New Jersey Business Incubation Network (NJ BIN):**

The New Jersey Business Incubation Network (NJ BIN) is the entrepreneurial ecosystem of New Jersey, with business incubators and accelerators located throughout the state. It has the largest cluster of internationally-focused incubators in the U.S. and the second-largest cluster in the world.

**About Choose New Jersey, Inc.:**

Choose New Jersey, Inc. is a privately funded 501(c)(3) corporation charged with encouraging and nurturing economic growth in New Jersey. It works closely with the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education. For more information, visit www.choosenj.com.