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, will visit Israel for meetings to build a NJ-Israel Innovation Cluster. Cooperhouse and Scott Paolini, director of the Rutgers Innovation Network, will meet with Rutgers University-Israel Office staff, various technology transfer offices, and the leadership of the Israeli innovation ecosystem.

They will be hosted by Olive Grove Ventures (OGV), an international business development consultancy, whose mission is to help Israeli companies become global leaders. OGV specializes in bridging the gap between Israel and the U.S. market.

OGV and Rutgers Food Innovation Center partnered with Tel-Hai Academic College to launch the NJ-Israel Food Innovation Cluster. The cluster will provide a platform for innovation and collaboration between the State of New Jersey and the State of Israel. The goal is to speed up the transfer of technology and business from New Jersey to learn about the market entry resources and platforms to help Israeli companies succeed in the U.S.

The NJ-Israel Food Innovation Cluster is a joint initiative between the FIC, OGV, and Tel-Hai Academic College. The cluster will connect New Jersey and Israeli researchers, entrepreneurs, and companies in the food sector.

“We are extremely excited at this first step in creating a NJ-Israel Food Innovation Cluster. Business clustering and innovation are critical to the economic 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. and home to a $105 billion food industry sector, and a central location that serves 130 million consumers within a day’s drive.

“International outreach gives us the opportunity to nurture relationships with executives, industry groups, and trade associations in New Jersey and Israel, and further positions New Jersey as a leader in the global food sector,” said Cooperhouse.

In addition, Cooperhouse and Paolini will meet with the leadership of several government and privately-funded technology transfer offices, and several academic and economic development organizations as well as municipal, regional and statewide industry associations.
Margaret Brennan-Tonetta, associate vice president for economic development at Rutgers University, stated, “This is an ... for international cluster development in other areas as well, such as life sciences, energy and advanced manufacturing.”

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**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’s School of Public Health. The program is co-hosted by New Jersey’s leading food business incubation and economic development accelerator, the NJ Food Business Incubation Network (NJ BIN), and is sponsored by the Soft Landings Institute, a British-based company with worldwide operations. The FIC is the only program of its kind in the United States and one of the few 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 throughout the state. NJ BIN is 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 the State of New Jersey through the public-private partnership.”