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-Newark, will lead the FIC delegation to Israel. The delegation includes Varvara Paolini, director of operability and growth of the New Jersey-Israel Innovation Cluster.

During the meetings, the New Jersey delegation will be hosted by Olive Grove Ventures (OGV), an international business development consultancy, whose mission is to help bridge the global business gap through innovative strategies. OGV is dedicated to creating platforms for New Jersey companies to learn about market entry resources and opportunities from Israel.

The NJ-Israel Food Innovation Cluster is a joint initiative between the FIC, OGV, and Tel-Hai Academic College. The cluster focuses on creating a collaborative environment between academia and industry, and introduces the latest innovations in science and technology as relates to healthier food.

“We are extremely excited at this first step in creating a NJ-Israel Food Innovation Cluster. Business clustering and collaboration can facilitate the introduction of new technologies, methodologies and innovative practices. This clustering initiative is expected to be a platform that will speed up the growth of the food industry by introducing innovative practices that have been developed in Israel for application in New Jersey,” 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. The State of New Jersey is home to a food industry sector that generates $105 billion in revenue annually and serves 130 million consumers within a day’s drive.

“International outreach gives us the opportunity to nurture relationships with executives, industry groups, and Israel-based companies that have operations in New Jersey, including Frutarom and RADWIN, and we seek to expand that roster while in-country,” said Cooperhouse.

In addition, Cooperhouse and Paolini will meet with the leadership of several government and privately-funded technology 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 opportunity to build a cluster in New Jersey, a precursor 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. It is part of the larger New Jersey Business Incubation Network (NJ BIN), which focuses on food and agribusiness. 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 providing support across the state. It is reported to have 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 development in the state of New Jersey. It is funded by Choose New Jersey, Inc., a private corporation, and supported by the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education. For more information, visit www.choosenj.com.