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 New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, and Stefania Paolini, OGV (Olive Grove Ventures) partner and executive director of the New Jersey Business Incubation Network, will be visiting Israel. The trip is part of a larger initiative to build an NJ-Israel innovation cluster.

They will be hosted by Olive Grove Ventures (OGV), an international business development consultancy, whose mission is to introduce Israeli companies to business development organizations in the United States, and specifically in the food industry, in order to help them enter the market. OGV aims to help Israeli companies understand the market entry process and access the resources needed to succeed in the US.

The NJ-Israel Food Innovation Cluster is a joint initiative between the FIC, OGV, and Tel-Hai Academic College, which aims to foster collaboration between NJ and Israeli universities and industries, particularly in the food sector. The goal is to bring together the latest innovations in science and technology as it relates to healthier food.

“We are extremely excited at this first step in creating a NJ-Israel Food Innovation Cluster. Business clustering and cluster management are key to ensuring long-term 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 US food industry, which is a $105 billion sector, and serves 130 million consumers within a day’s drive.

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

In addition, Cooperhouse and Paolini will meet with the leadership of several government and privately-funded technology transfer organizations, as well as 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 important milestone for New Jersey and the state of Israel, and a model 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. It helps small business food entrepreneurs grow and succeed in the highly competitive food business market by providing a comprehensive suite of services, including business incubation, technical assistance, and business acceleration. The FIC is part of the New Jersey Business Incubation Network (NJ BIN) and 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 incubation and economic development serving as its core mission. The NJ BIN is the state’s primary network of business incubators, and 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 development in New Jersey. Its mission is to support economic development initiatives that create jobs and drive economic growth across the state.