Rutgers Food Innovation Center, NJ Business Incubation Network: 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 AgriFood Innovation Group, will lead a delegation of Rutgers representatives to Israel. The purpose of the trip is to explore opportunities for joint research and development initiatives expected to be formed between the State of Israel and the State of New Jersey during the next few years.

They will be hosted by Olive Grove Ventures (OGV), an international business development consultancy, whose mission is to help Israeli companies succeed in the US. OGV is working with the FIC to establish a presence in Israel and to bring Israeli businesses to New Jersey.

The NJ-Israel Food Innovation Cluster is a joint initiative between the FIC, OGV, and Tel-Hai Academic College. The goal is to create a cluster that will promote the exchange of knowledge and technology in the food industry, and to facilitate collaboration between academia, industry and government.

“We are extremely excited at this first step in creating a NJ-Israel Food Innovation Cluster. Business clustering and collaboration are essential 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 US food industry, which has 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 other organizations 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 industry 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. It 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 in 18 counties. 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 by the New Jersey State Economic Development Authority, and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education. For more information, visit www.choosenj.com.