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 Biotechnology Incubator, and Rob Paolini, executive director of the New Jersey Business Incubation Network (BIN) will travel to Israel to meet with Israeli business leaders. The purpose of these meetings is to evaluate potential joint 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 bring Israeli small and mid-size technology companies to the US market. OGV will provide the Rutgers and BIN representatives with an overview of the Israeli market and assist the delegation in finding opportunities to explore business and collaborative initiatives from New Jersey to learn about the market entry resources and platforms to help Israeli companies succeed in the US.

The NJ-Israel Food Innovation Cluster is a joint initiative between the FIC, OGV, and Tel-Hai Academic College. The Cluster is designed to foster the formation of academic and technology initiatives to bring Israeli companies and New Jersey companies together. By bringing New Jersey's leading food researchers and technology companies with the knowledge and expertise in the food industry with Israel's leading food scientists and businesses with 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 is a proven way to accelerate 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. The state boasts 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 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 initiatives expected to be formed between the State of Israel and the State of New Jersey during the next few years.
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.”

###

**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. The FIC is both a Soft Landings and a National Center for Advancing Manufacturing program. Rutgers University is a leader in the food and agri-business sector and 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 that are part of a network of over 130 in 35 states. NJ BIN is responsible for 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 through partnerships with other state agencies such as the New Jersey Economic Development Authority, and the Office of the Secretary of Higher Education. For more information, visit www.choosenj.com.