

Food Innovation Center

E-nnovator News

October 2007

*Welcome to the second issue of the Food Innovation Center's **E-nnovator News**! **E-nnovator News** is a monthly email newsletter for our friends, colleagues and partners that highlights the latest news from the Food Innovation Center, a business incubation and economic development accelerator program of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station.*

Food Innovation Center News

Food Innovation Center to Receive USDA-CSREES Partnership Award

The Food Innovation Center has been selected to receive the first-ever USDA-CSREES Partnership Award for Innovative Program Models! This award was created to recognize a program at a land-grant university or other cooperating institution that responds to critical/emerging regional or national issues, and combines resources in new ways. Awardees must clearly demonstrate: 1) Exemplary program impact, including appropriate evaluation of outcomes, 2) National or international recognition, 3) Ongoing efforts, and 4) Alignment with CSREES strategic goals. The award will be presented at the annual CSREES Day of Appreciation on October 10, 2007.

Incubator Construction Update

Construction on our 23,000 sq. ft food business incubator facility is now underway. The Food Innovation Center, represented by Lou Cooperhouse and Margaret Brennan, are participating in regular meetings with the Rutgers Facilities construction team, led by Joan Sitler, as well as project architect John Pedersen, plant engineer George Sansiveri, and the contractor team, Stanker & Galetto, of Vineland, NJ. We are very excited to report that this fall the exterior building structure will be in place, and ready for interior fit-out this winter! For photos of the progress, see:

<http://www.foodinnovation.rutgers.edu/incubatorupdateSEP.html>

For more information about our incubator's capabilities, see:

<http://www.foodinnovation.rutgers.edu/plans.html>

Trends in the Marketplace Seminar a Success

The first session in our five workshop series, "Growing Your Business: Farmer's Marketing & Business Planning for Value-Added Agriculture," took place on September 19th, with speaker Ron Tanner of NASFT. Forty-five people attended the workshop. The workshop was well-received, and of those surveyed at the conclusion of the presentation, 88% reported an increased understanding of current marketplace trends. As noted by Tanner, the six hot trends to look for in the specialty food market right now are:

Innovation, International Flavors, Authenticity, Organic, Simplicity and Convenience.
For photographs of the event, see:

<http://www.foodinnovation.rutgers.edu/seminar%201%20pics.pdf>

Upcoming Events

Growing Your Business Workshops

Four workshops remain in the "Business Planning for Value-Added Agriculture" series being held on Oct. 2, Oct. 17, Oct. 30 and Nov. 14 at the Rutgers EcoComplex in Bordentown, NJ. The remaining workshops are as follows:

Session Two: Competitors & Competition, October 2nd, with speaker Jim Prevor of the web-based Perishable Pundit.

Session Three: Distributors & Distribution, October 17th, with speaker Bob Burke, VP of Marketing at Stonyfield Farm Yogurt.

Session Four: Product Development Process, October 30th, with speaker Allen Samson, President and founder of ESCA Enterprises.

Session Five: Business & Marketing Plans, November 14th, with speakers Joe Molineaux, Director of the Small Business Development Center, Adam Borden, of Bradmer Foods and Steve Marakevich of First Pioneer Farm Credit.

Please pass this information on to farmers and food entrepreneurs who may find these outstanding seminars to be of interest. More information about this program and each of these seminars, can be found at:

<http://www.foodinnovation.rutgers.edu/GrowingYourBusiness.html>

Upcoming FIC Presentations at Regional & National Conferences

The Rutgers Food Innovation team will be presenting at a number of regional and national conferences this fall! These include the following:

Sept 28, 2007 - Fall Agriculture, Food and Natural Resource Education Teacher Professional Development Conference, to take place at the Rutgers EcoComplex. Lou Cooperhouse will be presenting to this audience of New Jersey teachers on the topic of "Rutgers Food Innovation Center: A Resource for Food Industry Education and Experiential Learning".

Oct. 4, 2007 - - Incubation and Commercialization Symposium for the Food Processing Sector, to take place in Toronto, Canada. Lou Cooperhouse will be presenting to this audience of economic development officials throughout Canada on the topic of: "The Rutgers Food Innovation Centre Incubator Model: Lessons learned from this recipient of the 2007 Incubator of the Year award."

October 18, 2007 - Fourth Annual Consul Program for New Jersey LifeSciences, to take place at Raritan Valley College (see program at <http://www.raritanval.edu/cibe/events.htm>). Lou Cooperhouse will be presenting to this audience that is composed of commercial officers of foreign consulates, on the topic of: "Business Incubation in New Jersey, and the International Services Provided by the Rutgers Food Innovation Center"

Current Research & Grants

Food Innovation Center Receives USDA Grant for Cooperative Development!

The Food Innovation Center has just been awarded a Rural Cooperative Development Grant from USDA, which will enable it to continue a very successful program it began two years ago. These funds will allow FIC to carry forward the work begun with its Business Association Mentoring Program, and provide New Jersey food businesses with a one-stop resource for cooperative marketing, distribution, purchasing and production initiatives. Plans are in place to support the diverse needs of New Jersey's rural communities, and include helping food and agriculture producers develop cooperatives for dairy, goat meat and value added farm products; establishment of a statewide wood recycling cooperative; and programs to assist rural artists in forming marketing and production cooperatives. Assistance will also be given to Farmers Market vendors that are interested in organizing cooperatives, and to Farmers Market Community sponsors in the development of statewide or regional Farmers Market Associations. For more information on the Food Innovation Center's Business Association Mentoring Program, please see: <http://www.bam.rutgers.edu/>

Client Spotlight

Goat World Receives USDA Value-Added Producer Grant!

The USDA awarded Jim and Nicole Lechner of Goat World a Value-Added Producer's Grant. The grant is entitled "Evaluation of the Economic Potential and the Development of the Marketing and Production Strategies for a Premium Value-Added Goat Meat Market." The project has tremendous potential to create a new consumer market for premium goat meat, and create new opportunities for farmers throughout New Jersey and the Northeast who may choose to raise goats in accordance with Goat World's specifications. For more information on Goat World, please see their website at: <http://www.goatworldnj.com/>