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Rutgers Food Innovation Center Director to Speak on Best Practices in Food Business Incubation at Two National Conferences

Bridgeton, NJ - Lou Cooperhouse, director of the Rutgers Food Innovation Center, a globally recognized food business incubation program, will be presenting his research on best practices in food industry entrepreneurship development and business incubation at two leading national conferences during the month of September 2015. Cooperhouse will be a presenter of a half-day intensive training session on “Building Sustainable Food Incubators and Accelerators” at the National Business Incubation Association (NBIA) Training Institute, which will be held from September 8-11 in Orlando, FL. In addition, he will be presenting two seminars, regarding how entrepreneurs can differentiate their food products, and on incubation programs and other resources that are available to food entrepreneurs, during the Process Expo Conference, which will be held from September 15-18 in Chicago, IL.

The Rutgers Food Innovation Center (FIC) is a food business incubation and economic development accelerator program of the New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station (NJAES) at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, and has been named as “Incubator of the Year” by the NBIA and an “Agricultural Innovation Center Demonstration Program” by the USDA. It has also been recognized by the NBIA as a “Soft Landings” program focused on international business attraction and knowledge transfer, and it is the only Soft Landings program in the world that focuses on the food and agribusiness sector. The FIC has also created a food business accelerator program that services its high-growth “gazelle” clients with strategic mentoring and access to funding, which was recognized by the US SBA in its first Growth Accelerator Fund Competition.

“Business incubation is a globally proven model for business growth, economic development and community revitalization,” said Cooperhouse. “Food business incubation programs, however, are particularly challenging to develop as our entrepreneurs require a great deal of diverse and specialized services including guidance in marketing, R&D, operations, and sales, expertise in food safety and access to facilities that are under FDA and/or USDA inspection. There are a great number of business models for how a food incubation program can
be developed and further enhanced over time, and these models will be discussed during the seminars in Orlando and Chicago,” he added.

“We are extremely excited that Lou will be leading this in-depth session on best practices in food business incubation and acceleration at NBIA’s 25th Training Institute,” said Kirstie Chadwick, president and CEO of NBIA. “There is significant growth in food business incubation throughout the US and throughout the world, and Lou’s background and expertise in this category is unparalleled,” she added. The NBIA Training Institute will offer intensive trainings in a wide array of topics that will provide attendees with information, techniques and tools to create or improve their entrepreneurship development program. The NBIA is the world’s leading organization advancing business incubation and entrepreneurship, and serves more than 2,100 members in over 60 nations.

"We are excited to add Lou Cooperhouse's two sessions to our educational program," said Andy Drennan, Senior Vice President of the Food Processing Suppliers Association, organizers of the PROCESS EXPO trade show. "These sessions will highlight the latest trends in today's food and beverage industry and the many resources that are available to food processors to develop a product with greater speed, lower costs, and with enhanced expertise."

Further information regarding about the NBIA and how to register for its Training Institute in Orlando during September 8-11 can be found at http://nbia.org/. Further information about the Process Expo, held during September 15-18 in Chicago, can be found at www.myprocessexpo.com.

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