

## NEWS RELEASE

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### RUTGERS FOOD INNOVATION CENTER RECEIVES NATIONAL AWARD USDA-CSREES Recognizes Innovative Program Model

Bridgeton, NJ - The Rutgers Food Innovation Center, an economic development program and business incubator of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, has been awarded the USDA-CSREES Partnership Award for Innovative Program Models for “achievement as a model for community and economic development and jobs creation.” The award was presented to Lou Cooperhouse, director of the Rutgers Food Innovation Center, and Margaret Brennan, associate director of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station, during a Day of Appreciation ceremony held on October 10, 2007 by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Cooperative State Research, Education and Extension Service (CSREES). USDA CSREES Administrator Colien Hefferan announced this award.

Recognizing there are many outstanding contributions that partners at the land-grant universities and other cooperating institutions and organizations achieve, CSREES established a new Partnership Awards Program as part of its 2007 Annual Day of Appreciation event. The CSREES Partnership Awards recognized excellence in Mission Integration, Multi-state Efforts, Innovative Program Models, and Effective and Efficient Use of Resources. The three other awardees include The University of Kentucky Wheat Science Group honored for Mission Integration; The Families First: Nutrition, Education and Wellness System honored for Multi-state Efforts; and Steven S. Poindexter of Michigan State University honored for Effective and Efficient Use of Resources.

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The Food Innovation Center has received previous national and international recognition for its efforts. In April 2007, it was Awarded “Incubator of the Year” by the National Business Incubation Association, in the services and manufacturing category, among incubators globally. It was also previously recognized by USDA Rural Development as an “Agricultural Innovation Center Demonstration Program,” one of only ten such centers in the US.

The Rutgers Food Innovation Center offers business and technical expertise to farmers, agricultural cooperatives, food business entrepreneurs, small and mid-sized established food companies, and retail and foodservice operations that promote locally sourced food products. Business incubators like the Rutgers Food Innovation Center provide entrepreneurs with the expertise, networks and tools they need to make their ventures successful. The Food Innovation Center is currently constructing a 23,000 sq. ft. food business incubator facility that will be located in the city of Bridgeton, and open during the summer of 2008.

More information about the Rutgers Food Innovation Center can be found at [www.foodinnovation.rutgers.edu](http://www.foodinnovation.rutgers.edu). More information about the services and programs of the Rutgers New Jersey Agricultural Experiment Station can be found at [www.njaes.rutgers.edu](http://www.njaes.rutgers.edu). More information about USDA-CSREES can be found at <http://www.csrees.usda.gov/>.