



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Social Enterprise Greenhouse Drives Innovation in Food Cluster with Launch of First Food Accelerator on February 9th

Twelve high-impact New England-based do well, do good food entrepreneurs selected from a pool of 28 applicants will embark on a 3-month business development journey to bring their ventures to the next level.

Providence, Rhode Island (February 2, 2016) - The Social Enterprise Greenhouse (SEG) will launch its first Food Accelerator cohort with a celebration on February 9, 2016 at the SEG Hub (10 Davol Square, Suite 100, Providence) from 6:00pm-8:00pm. The 12 New England-based food businesses selected for the program will introduce their ventures and goals, as well as provide tastings of their products. This event is an opportunity to celebrate the commencement of the 12-week program with the SEG and local food communities. The Food Accelerator, delivered in partnership with Brown University and funded by the Henry P. Kendall Foundation, provides high potential entrepreneurs with the knowledge, networks and resources they need to take their venture to the next level. This event is free and open to the public.

Although SEG continues to provide support and resources to social enterprises across industry, this new industry-specific cluster approach enables SEG and strategic partners to better provide resources and support to ventures that can respond to challenges in these specific sectors and ultimately help boost economic development in Rhode Island.

The Food Accelerator is SEG's first industry-specific program, offering a 12-week blended learning model that provides high impact New England-based food entrepreneurs with the knowledge, networks, and resources they need to accelerate the growth of their enterprises. The program is made possible by a network of 200+ coaches and advisors, many of whom are among Rhode Island's top business and food community leaders. Additional value is provided by 1-on-1 intensive coaching, a peer cohort model, and access to SEG's recently opened coworking space at 10 Davol Square in Providence. Upon graduation, participants will receive priority access to the SEG loan fund that provides below market interest rate loans to high potential social enterprises.

The purpose of this new program is to stimulate innovation in Rhode Island's burgeoning food sector and to help create more successful, sustainable do well, do good businesses in Rhode Island and the region, leading to a more extensive and healthy local and regional food system.

"Rhode Island's food economy is strong and getting stronger," said Congressman Jim Langevin. "Social Enterprise Greenhouse is doing phenomenal work supporting start-up businesses, including those in the food industry. This Food Accelerator will no doubt further grow our vibrant food economy, and I can't wait to see what this class of participants achieves with the help of the hardworking team at SEG."

"Our final 12 ventures are passionate, socially-driven, and dedicated to making an impact on RI's food system. Thanks to the support from the Henry P. Kendall Foundation and our Food Advisory Council, we have formulated a program that will give these ventures the tools they need to thrive in RI and beyond," Isabella Cassell, Director of Food Initiatives, SEG

This year's Food Accelerator program will conclude with a graduation and final pitch event on May 10, 2016.

Learn more about the Impact Accelerator program at <http://segreenhouse.org/blog/foodacceleratorlaunch>

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MEET THE INAUGURAL FOOD ACCELERATOR COHORT

[Agraria Farm and Edibles](#) is a Rehoboth-based farm that strives to contribute a new model of small scale agriculture that provides sustainable and systemic change.

Entrepreneur: Barbara Link

[Bellicchi's Best Biscotti](#) now offers three delicious flavors. This RI-based company was born out of adversity and donates 5% of profits to the Alzheimer's Association and also plans to help others start successful home businesses.

Entrepreneur: Kathleen Bellicchi

[Fox Point Pickling Company](#) is on a mission to provide the Ocean State with a delicious, locally sourced sugar free, additive free, naturally gluten-free and non-GMO small-batch pickle.

Entrepreneur: Ziggy Goldfarb

[Glenwood Garden](#) is an e-market for sustainably made food while helping nonprofits gain a recurring source of revenue.

Entrepreneur: Jonah Shapiro

[The Humble Pie Company](#) provides its customers with freshly baked, honest pies made with wholesome ingredients sourced from local farms.

Entrepreneur: Daniel Sheehan

[Laughing Gull Chocolates](#) uses all direct trade, premium local ingredients to allow consumers to get closer to their food source, and learn the intriguing, magical story of chocolate.

Entrepreneur: Lindsay Tarnoff

[Leah's Recipe](#) is a snack line of evolved, plant-based, whole-food snacks that integrate into a health and wellness-based lifestyle.

Entrepreneur: Leah Rosin-Pritchard

[Mesa Fresca](#) offers an authentic chimichurri sauce and hopes to address the gap in the marketplace for authentic, fresh packaged Hispanic food.

Entrepreneurs: Nathalie and Alan Alberto

[Newport Cooks](#) partners with local chefs to offer affordable cooking classes to the community. They teach adults and children to cook for fun, creative inspiration and to promote healthier lifestyle choices.

Entrepreneur: Mary Weaver

[Ocean State Smoked Fish Company](#) offers locally sourced, uniquely smoked fish. They also set aside a portion of their profits for a culinary scholarship fund dedicated to Rhode Island fishing families.

Entrepreneur: Jeffrey Powell

Savory Fare is a meal delivery service for seniors, enabling them to stay healthy and remain in their own homes.

Entrepreneur: Mary Hughes

[SecondsFirst](#) is a food processing business that prepares, freezes, and packages imperfect vegetables from local farms and also processes under-appreciated RI fish into fish cakes for food insecure communities.

Entrepreneur: Erika Lamb

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