

Ohio-Israel Agricultural Initiative of The Negev Foundation
Annual Report – FY 2012/2013
7/1/12-6/30/13

INTRODUCTION

The activities of the Ohio-Israel Agricultural Initiative of The Negev Foundation in FY 2012/2013 focused on promoting Ohio-Israel trade and business development in the agriculture and food industries. The Initiative accomplished this by working directly with Israeli and Ohio companies. In addition, the mission was furthered by participating in tradeshow, presenting workshops, facilitating demonstration of company products, assisting in technology transfer, and promoting and coordinating collaborative R&D between Ohio and Israel.

ACTIVITIES

One-on-One Trade Assistance to Ohio and Israeli Companies

The Initiative worked directly with numerous Ohio and Israeli agribusinesses and food producers. It assisted these companies in pursuit of initiating or expanding export/import between the two regions. The Initiative staff also assisted in finding potential partners for export-import of their products, and in their quest for setting up contract manufacturing, joint venture, and business re- or co-location. These activities included:

- Assisting Ohio companies that are interested in export to Israel and/or in contract manufacturing in Israel to explore the Israeli market.
- Helping Ohio companies that are in the early stages of export to Israel to increase their exports.
- Supporting Israeli companies interested in exporting to the U.S. by looking for potential Ohio importers, distributors, partnerships, joint ventures, contract manufacturing, logistics centers, and warehouses.
- Maintaining assistance to those Israeli companies that have already established a presence in Ohio.
- Assisting Ohio and Israeli companies that have participated in the Initiative's activities (trade missions, tradeshow) to achieve their strategic objectives.
- Presenting Ohio and Israeli companies in tradeshow, showcasing their products and looking for potential clients and distributors.
- Assisting Israeli companies that are interested in demonstrating their products in an educational environment and/or commercial setting by finding Ohio partners to demonstrate the respective products.
- Assisting Israeli companies interested in R&D designed to test and improve their products by coordinating R&D programs with Ohio experts.
- Working with Israeli businesses interested in exploring Ohio as a base for manufacturing or distribution in the U.S.
- Assisting Israelis coming to Ohio on trade and buying missions and assisting Ohio company representatives going to Israel in identifying potential clients, distributors, and other business opportunities.

- Hosting Israeli executives and experts that come to Ohio to explore business opportunities.
- Continuing to work with Israeli companies that have already been on an initial exploratory visit to Ohio, as well as those companies that have established presence in Ohio.

Some examples include:

Israeli companies:

Agam Greenhouse Energy Systems

Agam Greenhouse Energy Systems company of Hod Hasharon, Israel (www.agam-greenhouses.com) specializes in manufacturing highly efficient, revolutionary heating and dehumidification systems for the horticulture greenhouse industry. The Initiative has been helping Agam enter the U.S. market and promoting Agam's products in Ohio. Agam has recently made its first U.S. sale to an Ohio farmer who operates several greenhouses in Delaware, OH, selling 3 units for \$87,000.00. The Agam units will also be used for R&D, demonstration and tour destination for other Ohio farmers. Agam's management team came to Ohio in February 2013 for the installation.

Elad Etgar Ltd.

Elad Etgar Ltd. of Bet Lehem Haglilit, Israel, is an agribusiness that manufactures harvesting machines (i.e., harvester heads, implements). The company was looking for a U.S. partner that could assemble, manufacture and distribute Etgar's harvesting machines. The Initiative contacted many Ohio companies, distributors, organizations and farmers in search of a potential partner for Etgar. The following Ohio companies expressed interest in further discussing the partnership opportunity with Etgar: George F. Ackerman Co. of Curtice - for assembly and distribution; and Hogback E-Z Trail Mfg. LLC. of Fredericksburg, OH; J&M Manufacturing Inc. of Ft. Recovery, OH and Remlinger Manufacturing Co., Inc. of Kalida, OH - for manufacturing and distribution. The Israeli company was put in direct contact with the interested Ohio companies for further negotiations.

Ezuz Organic Olive Oil

Ezuz Organic Olive Oil of Ezuz, Israel, produces quality organic olive oil made of olives grown organically in Ramat Negev. The company is looking to enter the U.S. market, and approached the Initiative for assistance. The Initiative gathered information about products, quantities, pricing, and samples, and has started the process of identifying food importers that specialize in organic foods and are interested in importing the Israeli product.

Minhat Haarets

Minhat Haarets of Hedera, Israel, is an importer and distributor of organic grains, and operates an organic grains flour mill. The company approached the Initiative looking for a U.S. source of organic spelt. Minhat Haarets is interested in importing 100 tons/year of organic spelt (about \$121,000–137,000/year worth of grains). The Initiative identified the largest one-point source of organic spelt in Ohio, Hirzel Farms. Hirzel Farms, which represents many Ohio farmers, expressed interest. The Initiative arranged for a direct dialog between Ohio's Hirzel Farms and the Israeli company. Final decisions regarding pricing and export will be done once the organic spelt is harvested at the end of July 2013.

Phoenix Farm

Phoenix Farm of Ramat Negev, Israel, is a producer of tropical ornamental fish in the heart of Israel's desert. They approached the Initiative asking for help to enter the U.S. market with their freshwater, live-bearing tropical ornamental fish (Guppies, Swordtails, and Platys). The Initiative contacted various Ohio companies that sell and distribute ornamental fish, and was referred to larger U.S. importers. As a result of this expanded search, the Initiative introduced Phoenix Farm to two major ornamental fish importers that expressed initial interest in the Israeli fish - Dolphin International (CA) and Segrest Farms (FL). The Israeli company is in direct contact with these U.S. importers.

RAM International Trading Corporation Ltd.

RAM International Trading Corporation Ltd. of Jerusalem, Israel, is an international trading corporation that supplies raw materials to the food and pharmaceutical industries in Israel, working with Israel's largest food manufacturers. RAM wanted to import large quantities (several hundred tons) of items from the U.S. such as whole and skimmed milk powders, whey protein concentrates, sodium and calcium caseinate, milk protein concentrate, and demineralized whey powders. The Initiative approached various Ohio dairies in search of these products, and identified two companies which may be able to supply some of the required products: Brewster Cheese of Brewster, OH, and Hans Rothenbuhler & Son, Inc., DBA Middlefield Cheese, of Middlefield, OH. RAM International Trading Corporation was put in direct contact with the Ohio dairies to further explore this trade opportunity.

Technoram Ltd.

Technoram Ltd. (www.technoramltd.com) of Hod Hasharon, Israel, is a producer of irrigation products, specializing in manifolds and water flowing accessories such as tap filters, coupling accessories, telescoping stands, and thread connectors. Technoram was looking to enter the U.S. market and was referred to the Initiative for assistance. The Initiative invited Technoram's Export Manager & CEO to attend OFA 2012 tradeshow and presented the company in the OIAI booth there. With the help of the Initiative, Technoram made contact with various potential distributors of irrigation supplies at the tradeshow. In addition, Technoram expressed interest in manufacturing their irrigation manifolds in the U.S. The Initiative's staff showcased Technoram's manifolds at the OIAI booth at RAPRA's Global Polymer Innovation Expo (GPIE) 2012, and looked for potential Ohio contract manufacturing companies for Technoram. RP+M of Avon Lake, OH expressed interest in contract manufacturing Technoram's manifolds. Additionally, PolymerOhio, Inc. of Westerville, OH, expressed interest in contract manufacturing Technoram's manifolds, and has been communicating directly with Technoram.

OH Companies

1-2-3 Gluten Free, Inc.

1-2-3 Gluten Free, Inc. of Orange, OH, is a manufacturer of gluten-free, allergen-free, all natural, baking mixes. The products are certified gluten free and kosher parve (OU). The company expressed interest in exporting to Israel, and asked the Initiative for assistance in identifying potential Israeli importers and clients. The Initiative contacted various Israeli importers on

behalf of 1-2-3 Gluten Free, Inc. and found companies that expressed initial interest. The Initiative and 1-2-3 Gluten Free, Inc. are following up on these contacts.

Cowboy by Choice

Cowboy by Choice of Stow, OH, is a food manufacturer and distributor that has kosher-certified products such as mustard, horseradish sauce, barbecue sauce, potato chips and pretzels. The company was interested in exporting to Israel. The Initiative presented Cowboy by Choice's products to 15 Israeli food import companies and identified several companies that were interested in the products. Currently, Cowboy by Choice is in direct trade discussions with several potential Israeli importers, including the popular Tiv Taam supermarket chain.

Omega Sea, LLC.

Omega Sea, LLC. of Painesville, OH, manufactures marine salts and dry and frozen fish food for ornamental fish. With the assistance of the Initiative, the company has been exporting its products to SeaShell company of Zur Moshe, Israel, which is an importer of products for ornamental fish. Omega Sea, LLC. had asked the Initiative to help in re-establishing contact with the Israeli importer, SeaShell. With the Initiative's mediation, a new order of fish food worth about \$10,000 will be coming in shortly. In addition, SeaShell of Israel is interested in beginning to import marine salts from Omega Sea.

Ricerca Biosciences, LLC

Ricerca Biosciences, LLC of Concord, OH, provides contract studies for agrochemicals and veterinary drugs registration. The Initiative has been instrumental in helping Ricerca search for Israeli agrochemicals and veterinary drug companies that need the services that Ricerca offers. New for this year – Ricerca received a \$100,000 contract from an Israeli Agrochemicals company in June 2013; is expecting a \$100,000 contract from another Israeli Agrochemicals company; and is anticipating a large contract of >\$500,000 from another Israeli Agrochemicals company, pending third partner funding. In addition, the Initiative presented Ricerca with two other potential Israeli clients – Concept for Pharmacy Ltd., which manufactures the BlueVet veterinary disinfectant - for drug registration; and Fruitura - for contract manufacturing. The Initiative is also assisting Ricerca with plans to visit Israel for a second round of meetings with current and potential clients.

Select Sires, Inc.

Select Sires, Inc. of Plain City, OH, and its international arm, World Wild Sires, have been exporting dairy and beef cattle semen to Israel. The Initiative has helped promote Select Sires' semen to Israeli cattlemen and extension personnel. The scope of Select Sires' semen sales to Israel was \$105,130 in 2011 and \$117,705 in 2012.

YZ Enterprises, Inc.

YZ Enterprises, Inc. of Maumee, OH, the producer of Almondina cookies, had shipped one pallet of Almondina cookies, worth \$3,048, to a new distributor, Moryam Marketing Ltd. of Kibbutz Tzora, Israel, in May 2013. This shipment will be sold in Israel's Tiv Taam supermarket chain, and, based on success, other shipments will follow. The Initiative has helped YZ Enterprises with its continued efforts to export cookies to Israel.

Business Attraction

The Initiative has been instrumental in S.A.E. Afikim's choosing Ohio for their North America headquarters, which has provided many economic benefits to the State of Ohio. The Initiative was also responsible for attracting Gad Dairy to Ohio for their U.S. market manufacturing base. These two companies represent significant business attraction of Israel companies to Ohio. The Initiative continues to help these companies thrive and succeed in Ohio.

S.A.E. Afikim

S.A.E. Afikim of Kibbutz Afikim, Israel, manufactures Afimilk herd management systems for livestock producers and milking parlors. With input from the Initiative, the company opened S.A.E. Afikim U.S.A., Inc., in Massillon, OH, which consists of its North America headquarters, logistics and distribution center, warehouse, and training center. The establishment of this American headquarters has led to the successful marketing of its Israeli-made products in the North American market. About \$2.8 MM retail worth of equipment was sold by the Northeast Ohio-based facility in 2011, \$9.6 MM in 2012 (estimate), \$9.3-9.7 MM projected for 2013, and \$11.4 MM projected for 2014. In 2011 it created two new full time jobs for Ohio residents, and retained three other jobs. One new Ohio job was created in 2012, and one new Ohio job is projected to be created in 2014. Afimilk systems were installed in two Ohio farms in 2012. In addition, one system was installed in OSU/OARDC in 2012, and one system still operates at OSU in Columbus, both for R&D purpose. An R&D collaboration between OARDC/OSU and Afimilk began in 2012 and is ongoing. The Massillon, OH facility serves as a training center, presenting quarterly one-week training programs for 50 people at a time.

S.A.E. Afikim U.S.A. has recently introduced a new line of products to the U.S. market – its sheep and goat management system, AfiShepherd. These products have already been successfully integrated into dairy farms in North America.

Gad Dairy

Gad Dairy, Israel's 4th largest manufacturer of Mediterranean-style cheeses and other dairy products (an \$80 million operation company), was looking for a U.S. partner. The Initiative had explored the dairy manufacturing industry of Ohio, and presented four Ohio dairies to Gad Dairy as potential candidates. Following a visit to Ohio in January 2013 by Gad Dairy's Owner and its Business Development Director, Gad Dairy selected Bunker Hill Cheese Co. of Millersburg, OH (in Holmes County), as a potential partner. The joint venture is to produce Gad Dairy's specialty cheeses at the Northeast Ohio facility, which will create new jobs in Ohio. The Initiative identified and introduced to Gad Dairy several potential Ohio-based distributing companies for their products. The Kroger Co. of Cincinnati, OH, has expressed interest in distributing Gad Dairy's Ohio-made products to their supermarket chain. It is anticipated that products from the Ohio-based facility will be sold throughout the United States and some specialty products might be manufactured specifically for export to Israel.

Bunker Hill Cheese Co. owners had visited Gad Dairy in Israel in May 2012, and its VP of Operations and Production Manager visited Gad Dairy in Israel in early April 2013. Gad Dairy's Owner and Director of Development were in Ohio for one week in mid-October 2012 for pilot

production of Feta cheese at Bunker Hill. The Director of Development was again in Ohio for further meetings with Bunker Hill on January 24-25, 2013.

The feta cheese product was launched at the Fancy Food Show in San Francisco, CA, in January 2013 with great success. Many distributors and sellers expressed interest in the product. The feta cheese is to be presented in 2 other food tradeshow in June 2013 – one in Orlando, FL and one in New York, NY.

A joint venture agreement between Gad Dairy and Bunker Hill was signed in May 2013. Production of commercial quantities of Feta cheese started in March 2013, and retail sales began in mid-May 2013. Distribution is done through the current Bunker Hill distribution network, as well as to the distributors that expressed interest in the products at the January 2013 Fancy Food Show. The Initiative had put Gad Dairy in touch with several Ohio-based kosher certification authorities out of which they selected Quality Kosher. As of March 2013 the products are Kosher certified by Quality Kosher of Canton, OH (Rabbi Aryeh Spero).

Tradeshows in Ohio

OFA 2012

The OFA Short Course International Floriculture Conference and Tradeshow is held annually in Columbus, OH. The OFA Tradeshow is the largest horticulture tradeshow in the U.S. and third largest in the world. It features about 550 international exhibitors including manufacturers, distributors and suppliers to the horticulture industry. The tradeshow is made up primarily of greenhouse growers, garden centers, and nurseries. Close to 10,000 people attend the show, most of whom are buyers and decision makers for companies from all over the world. In addition, over 130 educational sessions are presented.

The Initiative had an Israeli horticulture booth at OFA 2012 tradeshow in Columbus, OH July 15-17, 2012. Three Israeli horticulture and irrigation companies were showcased at the booth:

- Agam Greenhouse Energy Systems Ltd. – A manufacturer of a highly efficient, unique and revolutionary dehumidifying, filtering & heating system for greenhouses in cold and moderate climate conditions (www.agam-greenhouses.com)
- Diversified Imports – A distributor of Israeli equipment to the greenhouse and poultry industries (www.diversifiedimports.com)
- Technoram Ltd. – A producer of irrigation products, specializing in manifolds and water flowing accessories such as tap filters, coupling accessories, telescoping stands and thread connectors (www.technoramltd.com)

Representatives of all three companies were at the tradeshow to promote their respective products and look for potential distributors and clients. Initiative staff assisted the Israeli companies and promoted Ohio-Israel trade.

The representatives of all three Israeli companies were pleased with the exposure they had at the Initiative's booth. They also valued the contacts and sales leads they made directly and with the

Initiative's introductions and assistance. The respective Israeli companies continued the dialogues begun at the tradeshow independently, and the Initiative helped follow up when asked by the Israeli companies.

Media

- An article titled "Upcoming OIAI Trade Events" was published in the July 2012 issue of "Negev21C", the Negev Foundation's e-Newsletter, which was distributed to about 700 recipients on 7/11/12. It highlighted the OIAI booth at OFA 2012 tradeshow and described the three participating Israeli horticulture companies.

RAPRA's Global Polymer Innovation Expo (GPIE) 2012

The Global Polymer Innovations EXPO 2012 (GPIE) (www.GlobalPolymerInnovationEXPO.com) was organized by the North American office of the Rubber and Plastics Research Association Ltd. (RAPRA), which is based in Hudson, OH. The Expo took place in the Greater Columbus Convention Center in Columbus, OH 8/27-28/12. About 300 attendees and 52 exhibitors from the U.S. and 6 other countries participated in the event. The GPIE focused on the six key areas of growth for the polymer industry: Conductive & Electronic Polymers, Polymer Nanocomposites, High Performance Polymers, Bio-based Polymers & Feedstocks, Degradable & Recyclable Polymers, and Direct Digital (Additive) Manufacturing.

The Initiative had a booth at the tradeshow, promoting trade with Israel, the planned 2013 Trade Mission to Israel and Dubai, and other OIAI activities. The Initiative's representative met with Shauna Brummet, President & CEO of BioHio Research Park in Wooster, OH, to review OIAI's activities and discuss possible collaboration with BioHio. The Initiative staff also found potential Ohio contract manufacturers interested in injection molding and assembling manifolds for Israel's Technoram company.

Media:

An article titled "Strengthening the Ohio-Israel Connection", published in the Negev Foundation's August 2012 Negev 21C e-Newsletter on 8/20/12, describes OIAI and its participation in the RAPRA GPIE tradeshow.

Ohio Farm Bureau Foundation's Annual Meeting Hospitality Corner 2012

The Ohio Farm Bureau Foundation (OFBF)'s Annual Meeting Hospitality Corner took place in Columbus, OH 11/28-29/2012, and was attended by approximately 800 participants. This year, for the first time, the event was extended from only one day to having a second day that included a VIP dinner and special reception at the hospitality corner for OFBF delegates and invited VIPs. The Initiative had a booth at the hospitality corner and Initiative staff promoted trade opportunities with Israel and other Initiative activities.

Events, Seminars and Workshops in Ohio

Initiative representatives participated in seminars and workshops throughout Ohio, where they introduced Ohio-Israel trade opportunities and offered the Initiative's assistance in pursuing such opportunities. In addition, the Initiative promoted upcoming activities during such events. Examples include:

ODOD

6/26/12 - ODOD Food Export seminar, at Cleveland State University (CSU), Cleveland, OH – OIAI staff gave a presentation about trade opportunities for Ohio food producers with Israel and the option of using OIAI as a resource. The staff also promoted participation in the planned trade mission to Israel.

7/18/12 - ODOD Food Export workshop "Why Export" (with a focus on Latin America), in Columbus, OH – OIAI staff gave a presentation about food export to Israel and met with Ohio food producers that expressed interest in exploring this opportunity. The Initiative's staff also promoted the planned trade mission to Israel.

BioScience Consortium of Northeast Ohio quarterly meetings, Ashland, OH

6/13/12

Northeast Ohio Agribusiness Forum monthly meetings, Ashland, OH

6/22/12, 8/24/12

JumpStart Entrepreneurial Network, Cleveland

10/4/12 – Crowdfunding 101

Missions and Delegations

Trade Missions from Ohio to Israel

Ohio Trade Mission to Israel and Dubai, March, 2013

The Initiative and ODOD planned to lead a two-country trade mission to Israel and Dubai. The mission was scheduled to take place in early March 2013. The Initiative's role was to plan and arrange for the Israel part of the trade mission. An itinerary for the trade mission was outlined, meeting rooms for B2B meetings with Israeli companies were decided on, a place to set up samples of the Ohio companies in order to showcase it to invited Israeli importers was arranged, hotel rooms were secured under a group rate, quotes for all flight itineraries to both countries at various combinations were obtained, a driver for the group in Israel was secured, and arrangements were made with tour operators for sightseeing options for those participants who are interested in extra stay in Israel. The Initiative staff promoted the trade mission in various

tradeshows, conferences, and seminars to recruit Ohio companies. In addition, recruitment was done via direct contact with specific companies. Several companies expressed interest in participating in the mission. However, ODOD notified the Initiative that the Dubai portion, which was handled by ODOD, could not be done. An alternative second country, Turkey, which was suggested to ODOD, also did not work out. Thus, the trade mission was cancelled.

Trade Missions from Israel to Ohio

Midwest Food Buyers Mission 2013

International buyers from various countries will participate in the Midwest Buyers Mission 2013, which takes place 9/15-21/2013. One of the three stops of the mission participants will be in Columbus, Ohio, on September 18, 2013, where mission delegates will be on hand for one-on-one meetings with Ohio food producers. The event is organized by the Food Export Association of the Midwest USA and the Ohio Development Services Agency (DSA) Global Markets Division. The purpose of this event is to create international export opportunities for Ohio food producers. Representatives of Ohio food companies will attend the event.

A food buyer / importer from Israel, Mr. Henri Isacovitch, who is the Import Manager of Tiv Taam supermarket chain in Israel, was chosen as the Israeli representative for the Midwest Food Buyers Mission 2013. The Initiative will assist the Israeli buyer in preparing for the mission and will join the buyer throughout his meetings with Ohio food producers. The Initiative will also help Ohio DSA in recruiting Ohio food producers interested in participating in the event and in meeting with the Israeli buyer to explore the opportunity of exporting their products to Israel. The advantage of having Tiv Taam's buyer in this mission is that Tiv Taam is the only Israeli supermarket chain that does not require the food products to be kosher certified. Thus, the Israeli buyer will be able to consider all Ohio food products that are presented.

Demonstration of Israeli Agricultural Technology and Products for Enhanced Farm Efficiency

Drip Irrigation and Horticulture Demonstration Unit at OSU South Centers

The drip Irrigation and horticulture demonstration unit at OSU South Centers in Piketon, OH, is a collaboration between OSU South Centers and the Initiative. It serves to demonstrate Israeli agriculture and horticulture technologies to Ohio farmers and train the farmers in the use of these technologies. The demonstration facility has a focus on micro and drip irrigation, fertigation, water filtration, growth substrates, troughs and trellising. Ten Israeli horticulture and irrigation companies have been on permanent display at the site: Amiad, Netafim, Arkal, Dorot, ARI, Arad, Pelemix, PIP, Tefen, and NaanDanJain Irrigation. In 2012/2013 three new Israeli companies were added to the demonstration unit:

- Technoram - Modular, high quality, cold-weather resistant manifolds in various sizes for drip irrigation systems (www.technoramltd.com)
- Paskal – Orchard, vineyard, and greenhouse trellising items including hooks, clips and trestles/tressels (www.paskal.biz)

- Mapal Plastics, Agricultural Products Division – Troughs and other systems for soil-less and hydroponic greenhouses (<http://www.mapalplastics.com/agri>)

Thus, a total of 13 Israeli irrigation and horticulture companies currently display their products and information in the demonstration unit at OSU South Centers.

A \$1,000 grant was given to the Initiative by one of the demo unit participating companies (NaanDanJain Irrigation). It is designated for use in the planned expansion of the outdoor display area at the OSU South Centers facility, which will be accomplished by establishing a second demonstration plot near the current site.

The demonstration unit is used on an on-going basis by OSU South Centers to educate Ohio farmers about Israeli agriculture technologies during training sessions in both the classroom and the display area outdoors. The training workshops are given by OSU Extension staff, and some include an Initiative representative and/or representatives of the participating Israeli companies.

The following training workshops have been or are going to be presented in 2012/2013:

- 7/19/12 – “Drip Irrigation Field Night”, presented by Brad Bergefurd at OSU South Centers in Piketon, OH
- 2/8/13 – “High Tunnel Basics” workshop, presented at OSU South Centers in Piketon, OH. The workshop was organized by OSU Extension in partnership with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). One hundred and ten Ohio farmers attended. Topics taught at the workshop included Site and Crop Selection, Tunnel Construction & Management, Pest & Environmental Control, Micro Irrigation Set-Up & Management, High Tunnel Economics, and USDA Program Opportunities. Israeli horticulture and drip irrigation products of the 13 Israeli companies showcased at the demonstration unit at OSU South Centers were presented during the workshop by Brad Bergefurd, OSU Extension. Workshop participants also toured the demonstration unit display. Chris Gibbs, Chairman of the OIAI Advisory Committee, gave a brief presentation about OIAI. The workshop was well publicized in the media.
- 5/16/13 - “Strawberry Plasticulture Field Night”, at OSU South Centers, Piketon, OH, presented by Brad Bergefurd. The Israeli companies at the OSU South Centers horticulture demonstration unit were showcased, with a focus on Israeli drip irrigation and fertigation products, systems and technologies.
- 7/18/13 - “Blueberry, Blackberry, Wine Grape Field Night” workshop, to be presented at OSU South Centers by Dr. Gary Gao and Dave Scurlock. The drip irrigation demonstration unit will be showcased and the technologies of the respective Israeli companies will be discussed at the workshop.
- 8/15/13 – “Hops Field Night” workshop, to be presented at OSU South Centers by Brad Bergefurd. The drip irrigation demonstration unit will be displayed and the participants will be trained in the irrigation technologies of the respective Israeli companies.

- 9/5/13 – “Hops Production Twilight Tour” workshop, to be presented at OARDC by a team of experts from OSU South Centers and the OSU Department of Entomology. Israeli irrigation technologies will be included in the training.

The increase in Ohio sales by the Israeli companies participating in the demonstration unit has been attributed to the Initiative’s efforts in promotion to and training of Ohio farmers in the respective technologies. These farmers consequently demand and buy these products.

Media

- An article titled “Israeli Technology Finds its Way to Piketon, Ohio”, which described the demonstration unit at OSU South Centers that showcases Israeli drip irrigation and horticulture products and technologies, was published in the Negev21C e-Newsletter on 1/23/13.
- An article about the demonstration unit at OSU South Centers was published in the Ohio Jewish Communities (OJC) Friday Leadership Report on 1/25/13.

S.A.E. Afikim

S.A.E. Afikim, with the assistance of the Initiative, installed a new Afimilk/AfiLab milking parlor and herd management system at the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center (OARDC) campus of the Ohio State University (OSU) in 2012. A second system is in place at OSU’s main campus. Ohio farmers can observe the Afimilk/AfiLab equipment in use and learn how it can improve farms’ dairy operations.

Agam Greenhouse Energy Systems

Starting in July 2013, Agam Greenhouse Energy Systems’ greenhouse dehumidifying and heating systems will be on display at a farm in Delaware, OH and serve as a tour destination for Ohio farmers.

Collaborative Bi-National R&D

- Gad Dairy of Israel is in the process of establishing a R&D project with Ohio State University to study and develop a reduced-salt feta cheese. The project will be led by Professor Valente Alvarez, Ph.D., who is the Director of the Food Industries Center in the Department of Food Science and Technology at OSU. The Initiative had introduced Dr. Alvarez to Gad Dairy and helped to establish the research program.
- S.A.E. Afikim of Israel continues its collaborative R&D program with OSU’s OARDC scientists. The R&D is led by Dr. Alon Arazi of S.A.E. Afikim and Dr. Joe Hogan of OARDC. The project covers various aspects of dairy herd management using the Afimilk/AfiLab systems. The Initiative had been instrumental in helping OARDC obtain S.A.E. Afikim’s AfiLab system.
- Agam Greenhouse Energy Systems, Ltd. of Israel had sold three of its dehumidifying & heating units to a farm in Delaware, OH. The greenhouses owner and Agam will use the

installed units for R&D and to collect data about Agam's system performance under cold weather conditions. The objective is to demonstrate the advantage of the machine in cold weather environments such as Ohio. The successful testing would enable Agam to market the dehumidifier to greenhouse operators in Ohio and throughout the United States. The Initiative has been working with Agam and helped establish the partnership for this project.

Specific Projects

Greenhouse Initiative

The Negev Foundation is planning to build a commercial demonstration greenhouse and high tunnels in Ohio using Israeli technology. OIAI has been in contact with various Israeli turnkey companies (Growing Smart, PMarom, Azrom, Yamko Yadpaz, and Envirotech Greenhouse Solutions) to get proposals and quotes for building a one-acre greenhouse and three high tunnels. This input was incorporated into The Negev Foundation's executive proposal, which was presented to Ohio legislators and state government officials. In addition, the Initiative looked for an appropriate site to set up the greenhouse and for an interested farmer to run the greenhouse, and identified a farmer in Wilmington, OH who expressed interest.

The Negev Foundation has conducted an extensive search for a funding source for the Greenhouse Initiative. Ohio's Third Frontier program was considered, but it was determined that it would not be a suitable match. The executive proposal will be used to seek funding from the federal government in the hope of making this project a reality.

Export of Red Angus Embryos from Ohio to Israel to Establish a Breeding Herd

Israel expressed interest in starting a Red Angus breeding herd in the Ramat Negev region of Israel, which is located in the Negev desert. Currently, there is no Red Angus herd in Israel. Moreover, the import of bovine embryos or live cattle from the U.S. to Israel is not allowed. The Initiative was able to secure a special permit to import bovine embryos from the U.S. to Israel. After a long search, OIAI identified an Ohio breeder, Gene Steiner of Livestock Consulting/Management Services, GSM Inc. in Mason, OH, who, in collaboration with an approved Ohio veterinarian, Dr. Nate Steiner of Fulton Road Genetics, Marshalville, OH, agreed to produce Red Angus embryos under Israel's strict import certification requirements. Production (hormonal treatment / heat preparation of dams and artificial insemination) was done in the spring of 2013. Embryo flushing was performed on 5/10/13 and 6/10/13. A total of 39 embryos were produced using four different combinations of Ohio Red Angus donor cows (dams) and semen of Ohio's Select Sires bulls, based on Israel's specifications. The embryos were immediately handled as per regulations and frozen. The frozen embryos, worth \$18,900, are expected to be shipped to Israel by Select Sires/World Wide Sires of Plain City, OH on 7/11/13, to arrive in Israel before the special permit's deadline. In Israel, the embryos will be collected by Dror Porat of Piryon, and transplanted into cows at Tenne Farm in Ramat Negev under the supervision of a veterinarian from Sion. A cattle extension expert from Israel's Ministry of Agriculture will give input during this stage of the project.

Red Angus are desirable for their meat and are well-suited to withstand Israel's desert climate. Having a local herd in Israel will alleviate the need to import such meat from foreign sources, and is anticipated to create significant economic opportunity and jobs for Israeli cattlemen.

Media

- A Press Release about the Red Angus embryos project was issued by OIAI on 4/11/13.
- An article titled "Ohio Agriculture Initiative to Help Israeli Livestock Grow", written by Kristen Mott, was published in the Cleveland Jewish News on 4/19/13. It describes the Initiative's project of producing Red Angus embryos in Ohio and exporting them to Israel to start a breeding herd of Red Angus in Israel's Negev desert.
- An article titled "OIAI Tapped to Jump Start Cattle Breeding in Israel" was published on 6/24/13 in the summer 2013 edition of The Negev Foundation's Negev 21C quarterly e-Newsletter. The article summarizes OIAI's activities towards the establishment of a Red Angus breeding herd in Israel's Negev region.

Advisory Committee and Leadership Forum

The bi-national advisory committee of the Ohio-Israel Agricultural Initiative is chaired by Mr. Chris Gibbs and is made up of 29 members (22 from Ohio and 7 from Israel), 1 advisor and 2 staff members. The advisory committee met on 10/29/12 to review OIAI's activities and offer their input. In addition, a report on OIAI activities was prepared and sent to all members on 3/21/13.

An OIAI bi-national leadership forum consists of a subgroup of the advisory committee, and includes 11 Ohio members and 7 Israelis, as well as 1 advisor and 2 staff members.. They are contacted on an as-needed basis.

Endorsement Letters

The Initiative has received endorsements letters from some of the Ohio and Israeli companies that it has assisted in pursuing their trade goals (S.A.E. Afikim, YZ Enterprises, Danziger, Diversified, Gad Dairy, Hishtil, Netafim, OmegaSea, and Ricerca). The Initiative has also received endorsement letters from various Ohio associations, organizations and institutions in support of the Initiative's work: OSU/OARDC, Ohio Produce Growers & Marketers Association (OPGMA), Braintree, Southern Ohio Agricultural & Community Development Foundation (SOACDF), Ohio Aquaculture Association (OAA), Ohio Soybean Council (OSC), OFBF, and The Association of Horticulture Professionals (OFA).