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## **Israeli Agtech Company Chooses St. Louis as U.S. Headquarters**

*St. Louis innovation ecosystem attracts Kaiima*

ST. LOUIS – November 24, 2014 – BioSTL, the St. Louis organization advancing regional prosperity by cultivating the innovation ecosystem and bioscience sector, announced that Israeli agtech company Kaiima Bio-Agritech has selected St. Louis as the location of its U.S. headquarters. Kaiima’s decision represents the first success of BioSTL’s newly-launched initiative targeting Israeli companies for recruitment.

Kaiima is an innovative, Israel-based plant genetics and breeding-technology company that has developed a non-GMO technology platform that improves crop productivity. Founded in 2007, the company has raised \$98 million (USD) in multiple venture capital financings.

Israel, frequently referred to as the “Startup Nation,” is one of the largest sources of commercially-promising innovation in the world, particularly in agritech, medical technologies, and cyber-security – areas that match nicely with St. Louis’ strengths. Many Israeli ventures have a fundamental business need to establish a U.S. presence to access markets, capital, networks and corporate partnerships.

“Kaiima established a North American office in order to bring our food, feed and energy solutions closer to U.S. farmers. We selected St. Louis as our base of operations because of the region’s tremendous strengths in plant science research and commercial activity,” said Kaiima CEO, Dr. Doron Gal. “St. Louis’ vibrant and collaborative entrepreneurial community has also impressed us.”

BioSTL’s newly-launched St. Louis-Israel Innovation Connection (SLIIC) initiative establishes a direct pipeline for business interaction between St. Louis and the country of Israel, with the aim of recruiting Israeli companies that are seeking to establish a U.S. presence and that are aligned with St. Louis’ business, scientific and technological strengths. The SLIIC team identifies and screens prospective target companies and strategically matches these Israeli companies with St. Louis resources, including potential corporate and institutional partners, investors, and scientific and business expertise that can lead to establishing a company presence in St. Louis.

“St. Louis has impressive assets in certain areas, including plant sciences, that can give us a competitive advantage in attracting some very exciting high-growth companies to our region,” said Donn Rubin, president and CEO of BioSTL. “SLIIC’s collaborative approach leverages an array of assets in St. Louis’ innovation ecosystem that offer value to prospective relocation candidates such as Kaiima.”

“Missouri is building a global reputation as being a bioscience powerhouse,” says Mike Downing, director of the Missouri Department of Economic Development. “Whether startup or international bioscience corporation, Missouri’s talented workforce, research institutions, and supportive business community provides an environment that fosters growth and allows them to commercialize their innovations and create next generation jobs.”

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During a May trip to Israel to explore the SLIIC initiative's potential, the St. Louis team met with Kaiima's management and highlighted specific assets -- including the unparalleled facilities of the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, proximity to major agtech corporations like Monsanto and KWS, and a growing concentration of agtech and bioscience startups -- that together distinguish St. Louis as a premier location for Kaiima's U.S. headquarters.

Numerous St. Louis organizations have collaborated in facilitating Kaiima's presence in St. Louis. The St. Louis Regional Chamber provided relocation assistance and the Missouri Partnership, along with the Missouri Department of Economic Development, helped identify a strategic economic incentive package that the company can receive if it meets strict job creation and investment criteria. Kaiima's St. Louis team will locate in the Cambridge Innovation Center - St. Louis (CIC-St. Louis) and plans to take full advantage of the strong regional ecosystem.

To see the full scope of involvement in SLIIC by regional partners, [visit our infographic](#) depicting the collaborative nature of the initiative.

### ***About BioSTL***

BioSTL advances St. Louis' prosperity by cultivating a thriving bioscience sector. BioSTL builds regional capacity, nurtures a collaborative environment, and focuses community leadership and resources to capitalize on the unique convergence of St. Louis' corporate, university, and entrepreneurial strengths in medical and plant bioscience. Please visit [www.bioSTL.org](http://www.bioSTL.org) for additional information. Follow BioSTL on twitter [@BioSTL](https://twitter.com/BioSTL).

### ***About Kaiima***

Kaiima, whose name in ancient Hebrew means sustainability, is an innovative Israel-based plant genetics and breeding-technology company. Kaiima developed a pioneering, non-GMO technology platform called Enhanced Ploidy (EP™). EP™, coupled with advanced breeding programs, boosts the inherent productivity and resource usage efficiency of high-impact food and energy crops. The company's mission is to help feed the world and energize it by introducing new varieties of key agricultural crops, specifically designed for sustainable agriculture, and with vastly improved yields. Kaiima partners with leading seed companies around the globe to develop solutions for key agricultural markets based on its EP™ technology. More information is available at [www.kaiima.com](http://www.kaiima.com).

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