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St. Louis Attracts Third Israeli Agtech Company in Seven Months

Forrest Innovations selects St. Louis for U.S. headquarters

ST. LOUIS – June 5, 2015 – BioSTL, the St. Louis organization advancing regional prosperity by cultivating the bioscience and innovation ecosystem, announced that Israeli agtech company Forrest Innovations has selected St. Louis as the location of its U.S. headquarters. The company’s decision represents the third success in seven months for BioSTL’s initiative targeting Israeli companies for recruitment.

Forrest Innovations is an agtech company working at the forefront of technology to address two major challenges in the outdoor environment: reducing mosquito-carried disease and overcoming a bacteria that is threatening the citrus industry’s existence.

“St. Louis is renowned for its leadership in plant science and top notch scientific personnel, offering us a wonderful opportunity for recruiting highly qualified employees. St. Louis also provides a great platform for promoting innovation and collaboration. We are very happy to become the latest members of this promising community,” said Nitzan Paldi, CEO of Forrest Innovations.

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. BioSTL’s St. Louis-Israel Innovation Connection (SLIC) initiative capitalizes on the fundamental business need of many Israeli ventures to establish a U.S. presence to access markets, capital, networks and corporate partnerships.

“Although we anticipated the strengths of our St. Louis ecosystem would resonate with Israeli companies, the pace of success has exceeded all expectations,” said Donn Rubin, president and CEO of BioSTL. “It’s not surprising that our early momentum has been in agtech, an area where St. Louis shines, with remarkable corporate and research partners, talent and specialized facilities.”

Prior to Forrest Innovations’ decision, Kaiima Bio-Agritech (November) and Evogene (February) each announced establishment of their U.S. base in St. Louis.

Building on the momentum, a delegation from St. Louis, including representatives from BioSTL, the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center, KWS, Monsanto, Missouri Partnership and St. Louis Regional Chamber visited Israel last month to amplify St. Louis’ story and increase awareness of the region as a preferred relocation site.

BioSTL’s SLIC 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.

SLIC takes a collaborative approach to leverage a wide array of assets in St. Louis’ innovation ecosystem and provide the region a competitive advantage by offering value to prospective relocation candidates. Forrest Innovations will locate at BRDG Park, a Wexford Science + Technology development on the campus of the Donald Danforth Plant Science Center focused on plant and life science companies. The Missouri Partnership facilitated Forrest Innovations’ state incentives.

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“This latest success says a lot about the shared vision and clear purpose with which we approach economic development,” said Mike Downing, director of the Missouri Department of Economic Development. “By leveraging our strengths and harnessing the combined resources of the state and local communities, we’re seeing a burgeoning bioscience industry here in St. Louis.”

“This economic development win is a testament to the region’s ability to attract new and exciting bioscience companies, and we are excited to welcome them to St. Louis” said St. Louis Regional Chamber President & CEO Joe Reagan.

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

About BioSTL

BioSTL advances St. Louis’ economic vitality by cultivating a strong bioscience and innovation ecosystem. BioSTL organizes business, university, and philanthropic leaders around a set of deliberate strategies that capitalize on St. Louis’ strengths in medical and plant sciences. Focus areas include: building and investing in startups through our venture development arm, BioGenerator; improving access to investment capital; ensuring appropriate physical infrastructure; promoting science- and innovation-friendly public policy; fostering a more inclusive entrepreneurial talent pool in the region; attracting the U.S. presence of international companies; and communicating St. Louis’ strengths. Please visit www.biostl.org for additional information. Follow BioSTL on twitter [@BioSTL](#).

About Forrest Innovations

Forrest Innovations is headquartered in Israel, with additional state-of-the-art facilities in Brazil and in California. Forrest leverages its “Nature-treats-Nature™” platform to develop exciting novel green solutions and initially addresses two major outdoor challenges facing humanity: 1) To dramatically reduce the burden of disease vectoring mosquitoes, which debilitate millions of people around the world and kill more children than any other cause. 2) To save the Citrus industry from a devastating bacterial disease (‘Citrus Greening’) that is wreaking havoc in the major citrus producing geographies of the world and which is literally demolishing the orange juice industry of Florida.

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