JetBlue Helps Food Brands in New York Blossom With Third BlueBud Business Mentoring Program

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-- BlueBud Provides Innovative Food Companies With a Chance to Learn What It Takes to Get Their Product Onboard Directly From JetBlue Leaders, Applications are Currently Being Accepted --

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- JetBlue (Nasdaq:JBLU), New York's Hometown Airline®, today announced the opening of the application process for its business mentoring program – BlueBud (buddies + budding new companies). Now in its third year, JetBlue's BlueBud initiative offers innovative, socially responsible food and beverage brands special access to JetBlue senior leaders and the airline's unique product development culture, as well as valuable industry insights. BlueBud is focused on products from New York State. Applications are currently being accepted here until August 30, 2017.

BlueBud is one way JetBlue connects with diverse suppliers starting with environmentally and socially conscious food companies and start-ups. The program helps feed the airline's pipeline with sustainable and innovative food products. Small companies learn what it takes to break into the aviation catering space while remaining true to their social mission.

"With BlueBud we're supporting food companies that have impactful ideas and responsible practices," said Sophia Mendelsohn, head of sustainability, JetBlue. "In partnership with GrowNYC, we're highlighting the diversity of food products grown right here in New York State. Getting products onboard an aircraft is no easy task. Brands that are conscious of their environmental impact are among our first choices to serve onboard and in our airports."

JetBlue is partnering with GrowNYC for the selection process to connect with food and beverage businesses focused on sustainable sourcing and social responsibility. A celebration announcing the winning company will be held this fall at Project Farmhouse, GrowNYC's state-of-the-art sustainability and education center located near Union Square in New York City. As part of the airline's passion for ethically sourced food, JetBlue is a sponsor of Project Farmhouse which serves as a classroom for the cultivation of ideas and relationships. A broad, dynamic range of programming takes place at the Farmhouse to help plant ideas and foster healthier, environmentally-friendly decisions and actions.

"GrowNYC is pleased to once again partner with JetBlue on this important program to support local food producers," said Marcel Van Ooyen, President/CEO at GrowNYC. "Small startup food companies face countless challenges in producing and marketing their products. JetBlue's innovative BlueBud program gives new food and beverage companies a much-needed leg up and helps them build a foundation for success."

Previous Winners:

Bronx Greenmarket Hot Sauce - In 2016, Bronx Greenmarket Hot Sauce was selected for the program. The flagship hot sauce is made from local serrano peppers grown in collaboration with GrowNYC and Bronx Greenup. More than 40 Bronx greenmarket farms and community gardens grow these peppers. Each bottle sold directly supports these gardens and farmers and helps to revitalize the Bronx's budding economy, asserting the borough as the next big culinary destination for local food in New York. Bronx Greenmarket Hot Sauce is available in JetBlue's T5 in the New York Minute shop, a concept store that offers New York-produced products.

Hot Bread Kitchen - The first winner of the BlueBud program, in 2015, was Hot Bread Kitchen – a social enterprise bakery based in Harlem. The bakery creates economic opportunity through careers in food, with paid on-the-job training in baking for foreign-born and immigrant women. After a year of mentorship, the bakery learned what it takes to partner with an airline, and then pitched their product to JetBlue. Although being part of BlueBud is no guarantee to making it onboard, JetBlue was impressed by Hot Bread Kitchen's pitch and introduced the bakery's challah rolls onto its Mint brunch menu. Mint is JetBlue's unique take on premium service and is available on select routes.

BlueBud promotes innovation and helps JetBlue offer responsible food and beverage options to its customers. Airlines haven't traditionally been associated with fresh and responsible foods. JetBlue is changing that as its product development, strategic sourcing and sustainability teams work to ensure nutritious options are available onboard.

The BlueBud Program Mentorship:

The company selected for this year's BlueBud mentoring program will participate in a mentorship initiative that may include:

A tour of JetBlue's Long Island City, NY Support Center, JetBlue's home terminal – T5 at JFK Airport, and an airline catering station to understand how food gets onboard

A trip to JetBlue's orientation in Orlando to understand JetBlue's culture and values

A speaker and taste-testing event opportunity for JetBlue crewmembers at the airline's Queens, NY Support Center

Access to JetBlue teams including Strategic Sourcing, Corporate Social Responsibility, Sustainability, Communications and Marketing, Brand and

Onboard Product

Travel certificates for travel to and from New York City for sessions with relevant JetBlue leaders and business partners

Application Criteria:

Applications are being accepted from New York based companies with focuses in any or all of the following categories:

Responsible foods: Foods focusing on making positive environment and social impact

Tasty foods: Foods that are nutritious and conscious of targeted needs

Informed foods: Foods that are innovative, diverse, and part of a curated experience

Homegrown foods: Companies with a connection to our New York hometown

To apply for the BlueBud program visit, https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/bluebud2017. For more information on JetBlue's sustainability efforts visit, visit jetblue.com/green.

About JetBlue

JetBlue is New York's Hometown Airline®, and a leading carrier in Boston, Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood, Los Angeles (Long Beach), Orlando, and San Juan. JetBlue carries more than 38 million customers a year to 101 cities in the U.S., Caribbean, and Latin America with an average of 1,000 daily flights. For more information, please visit www.jetblue.com.

About GrowNYC

GrowNYC is the sustainability resource for New Yorkers: providing free tools and services anyone can use in order to improve our City and environment. More gardens, Greenmarkets, more recycling, and education for all. Learn more at www.grownyc.org.

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