

# Today's Restaurant

THE FOODSERVICE INDUSTRY AUTHORITY

VOLUME 28

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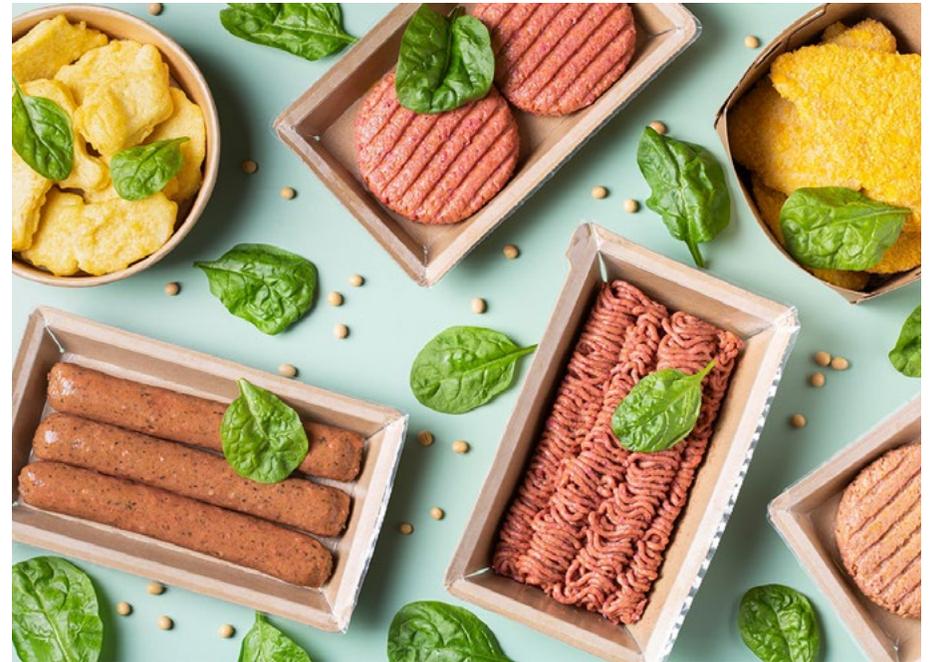
# Foodservice outlets now offer plant-based food & beverage ingredients

Plant-based foods is a small but evolving category in retail and foodservice markets

Chicago, IL - The recent buzz about plant-based foods at retail and foodservice has many questioning if interest in plant-based foods is a fad or a long-term trend. Plant-based is a small but expanding category, and as more innovations and products become available and accessible, consumer interest broadens. According to The NPD Group\*, about 25 million consumers eat plant-based beverages and foods occasionally or regularly, consuming these foods as part of a meal or as an ingredient. About one in five consumers say that they want more plant-based foods in their diet.

When it comes to eating plant-based foods, consumers are definite in which types of plant-based beverages and food they want to eat at home and which they eat from a restaurant or foodservice outlet. Although drinking dairy milk at home is still a more prominent behavior, about 93% of meals or snacks that include milk alternatives are consumed at home, and 7% are at/from a restaurant or foodservice outlet. Consumers eat more plant-based meat, poultry, and seafood analogues from restaurants because these foods are prepared in the same way animal protein menu items are, which means the consumer isn't sacrificing taste for what they believe to be a healthier option.

At retail, the total volume sales of milk alternatives were down 3% in the 52 weeks ending January 1, 2023,



compared to a year ago, according to IRI. Almond and coconut milk alternatives were among the top declining products. Oat milk alternatives offset steeper declines for the total category, with volume sales up 22% versus a year ago. Volume sales of meat alternatives in the frozen aisle were down 3% from a year ago, with lunchmeat, meatball, and breakfast sausage alternatives the top decliners. Frozen meat alternative formats growing were wings, ingredient cuts, and nuggets. Fresh meat alternatives were down 15% compared to the prior year; breakfast sausage, meatball, and patty alternatives were the top

declining categories. The growth formats in the fresh retail case during the period were wings, ingredient cuts, and nugget alternatives.

"Retail is likely in a transition period, following fast expansion before and during the pandemic. As consumers are returning to their pre-pandemic habits and living with high inflationary prices, we are seeing slower velocity rates and a higher number of lost buyers than new buyers," Chris Dubois, executive vice president, Americas Protein Practice Leader, IRI. "As long

See **PLANT-BASED FOOD** page 14

# Cupbop looks to build on 2022 success



Salt Lake City, UT - Cupbop, the nation's first fast-casual Korean Barbeque in a cup concept, is starting the new year strong with plans for new locations and robust economic projections. With 47 locations throughout the United States and over 150 locations in Indonesia, Cupbop offers a new twist on Korean cuisine and is leading the way in the Asian quick-service restaurant space. The brand opened ten new locations and plans to build upon this growth in 2023.

This past year, Cupbop opened ten locations across Las Vegas, Idaho, Oklahoma, and Arizona, including Tucson, Tempe, and Phoenix. Part of a multi-unit deal, all three locations were opened by one franchisee who was grandfathered in since 2017. The brand anticipates opening 15-20 new locations in 2023, specifically targeting the Midwest and Southern areas of the country for future development.

"Sharing Korean culture across the U.S. is a huge part of what we do," said

See **CUPBOP** page 8

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## Appell Pie

Common sense service

Howard Appell ♦ Today's Restaurant Publisher

Ask ten people if they would go out to eat on a Holiday and I bet 50% would say no. Why? Let me explain why.

**Experience #1** - This year Terri and I decided to go out for Valentines Day dinner with three friends and we made a reservation for 6:30 at an Italian restaurant that would be categorized as a nice neighborhood restaurant. We were seated on time and given menus. There was not a prix fixed menu selection which the owners will realize the need for by the next Holiday meal.

Drinks and bread arrived after a long wait and our orders were not taken for almost 40 minutes. The seating capacity is probably 100 -135 and they only had 4 servers on duty. One hour in we were still waiting for our food. We all began speaking about the operation and the lack of a presence by the manager to smooth over any rough spots in service, he/she was no where to be found though.

To make a long story short we did not leave the restaurant until just about 9:30 after eating a mediocre meal which was not the usual quality of this nice neighborhood stop. What happened?

1. No Prix Fixe Menu. Using the regular menu slowed down the kitchen production
2. Not enough staff. We understood this problem
3. Not enough silverware and glassware. We were served water and soft drinks in Styrofoam cups.
4. It took at least thirty minutes to get the bill and pay.
5. Management was not engaged and absent.

One person in our party was so upset by the way one of her favorite places was operating, waited two days and then called to speak to the manager

who disavowed any problems and said that he doesn't think any customers would discontinue coming to the restaurant based on their performance on Valentines day. Wrong buddy! You lost five of us and a table of eight next to us.

**Experience #2** - While coming back from meetings, Terri and I decided to catch a quick early dinner at a Florida based sports bar who runs dinner specials almost every night and they are usually very busy.

We approached the hostess stand at 5:35 and asked for a table for two. We were told that she could not seat us. I asked why not? She stated that the servers were not in yet and they wouldn't be in until 6 ish. We asked to be seated with the full acceptance of the labor shortage. She said she couldn't do that. I can't believe that any business in the economic climate of 2023 would turn customers away. I asked for the manager, not to plead our case but to understand if this was a policy they embraced. After a discussion he agreed to seat us at a booth with no server until an unknown time. We were able to get water from the manager.

As six o'clock approached we were offered a table in a section that had servers and we accepted. We ordered our meals and the chef came out of the kitchen to deliver the meals and say hello, nice touch. (I had given the manager my card earlier)

We all know about the supply chain and labor problems all businesses are experiencing and this is when management earns their pay check. If I was the manager I would have seated us, taken the order and delivered the order before the staff arrived and kept my customers happy.

If both management teams were doing their job this column would not have been written.

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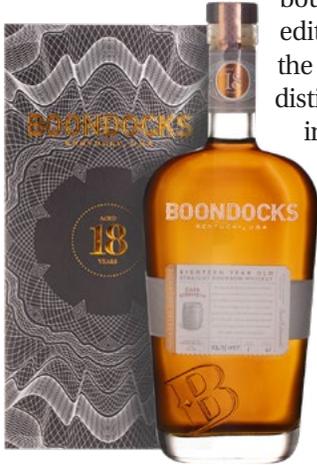
## Important new products, corporate news and industry events

**Chill-N Nitrogen Ice Cream**, a made-to-order nitrogen ice cream pioneer, is reporting 2022 as one of the most successful years in its 10-year history. This marked the fourth consecutive year that the brand experienced positive sales growth. **Chill-N also made entry into Texas** for the first time in 2022, opening shops in San Antonio and Fort Worth, as well as expanded its **South Florida footprint, opening up a franchise location in Pompano Beach.**

David Leonardo is the CEO. **In addition to Chill-N's impressive sales and growth performance, the brand signed four franchise agreements in 2022 which will expand its footprint into three new states in the upcoming years: South Carolina, Georgia and New Jersey.** Chill-N also plans to open at least three other shops in 2023, including its first in Tennessee location in Nashville as well as its first location in Orlando, Florida.



Royal Wine Corp has released **Boondocks 18 Year Old Straight Bourbon Whiskey**, the latest in Boondocks' Signature Series Collection. This exceptional cask-strength bourbon will have a limited production of just 1,620 bottles, each individually numbered. Like all of Boondocks' premium whiskeys, ryes, and bourbons, this limited edition is created by the legendary master distiller David Scheurich, a 45+ year industry veteran and winner of the Whisky Advocate Lifetime Achievement Award. This 18-Year-Old Straight Bourbon Whiskey is enticing barrel-aged blend (52.7% ABV) and has aromas of decadent toffee, dark maple syrup, and a touch of spice. Complex flavors of Tahitian vanilla, butterscotch, and dark roasted coffee are balanced with fruity notes, leading to a warm mouthfeel and a long, pleasant finish. This very limited release is sold by Royal Wine Corp and available only in FL, GA, IL, KY, NH, NJ, NY and TX. Royal Wine Corp.'s spirit and liqueur portfolio offers some of the most



sought-after scotches, bourbons, tequilas, and vodkas as well as hard-to-find specialty items such as flavored brandies and liqueurs.

**Kolache Shoppe, Houston's boutique bakery that's served scratch-made Texas-Czech kolaches and coffee since 1970, will open a fourth location in Pearland, Texas.** Franchisees Cecilia and Luis Rey have partnered with Kolache Shoppe owners Lucy and Randy Hines to helm the new location at 11940 Broadway, located within Pearland's new Broadway Plaza shopping center. The bakery is slated to open in Summer 2023.



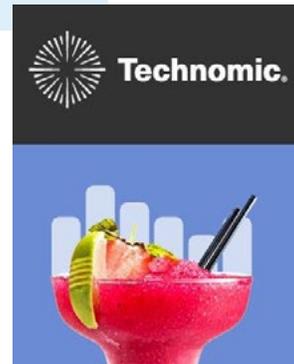
Food Network star and co-founder of the eponymous Artichoke Basille's Pizza, **Chef Sal Basille** is preparing to launch new locations of his pizza brand, **Sally Boy's**, around the country. Sally Boy's will open new locations



not only in the brand's state of New Jersey, but also in Los Angeles, in Dallas, and here in **Miami.** The opening timeline and location for Sally Boy's Miami have not yet been announced. Visit them on Instagram. Sally Boy's Online Marketplace will be coming soon to ship nationwide also along with new locations.



**Technomic released its latest U.S. whitepaper, What We Foresee for 2023, sharing its foodservice industry trend predictions for the upcoming year.** Restaurants are still facing significant challenges — largely due to the continued effects of the COVID-19



pandemic—resulting in a delay in a complete return to sustained normalcy. Economic headwinds, including inflation and the threat of a recession, are also setting up new hurdles for operators to navigate. But, despite a challenging start to 2023 expected, the latter part of the

year should bring about optimism as the industry emerges from high inflation and a soft economy. "The industry

See **WHAT'S GOING ON** page 10

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# Bluezone Technology actively purifies and disinfects indoor air

Indoor air quality and purification continues to be an extremely important and pressing issue. This remains a significant National problem, one that is not going to just drift away and end. We have learned to deal with the airborne contaminants and are seeking ways to add layers of protection to indoor spaces. *The Bluezone brand team has succeeded with installations in government office spaces, conference rooms and even corporate cafeterias that need a definite solution for the destruction of potential contaminants.*

In order to create a dramatically improved indoor air environment, a robust hygiene protocol must be created and followed. The deployment of UV-C germicidal light to kill the virus (and molds & bacteria) has been endorsed by American firms installing Bluezone and by the U.S. Military. Another key development in 2022 occurred when the FDA cleared our product and Bluezone by Middleby was granted a Class II Medical Device rating. This FDA rating has really helped resolve lingering doubts and skepticism.

In addition, the CDC and the WHO clearly stated that tiny airborne particles can travel beyond 6' feet and concluded that tiny aerosols are the most important threat to manage. **The air**

**scrubbing & disinfecting properties of Bluezone (pulling potentially contaminated air into the kill chamber with a robust motor) does address the WHO, CDC and U.S. FDA issues regarding tiny aerosols and the role in spreading the virus.**

## Destroying the Virus, Molds and Bacteria with UV-C light:

- ◆ Bluezone technology for food preservation was tested and approved by the U.S. Army Labs (Natick, Mass.) more than 11 years ago

- ◆ Units are safe to use 24 hours / 7 days a week

- ◆ Potential contaminants in the air are pulled into the unit and four (4) UV-C germicidal lights (254 wavelength) to destroy the RNA of the coronavirus

- ◆ The Ministry of Health in Israel tested 27 products. Only 4 firms passed the testing & evaluation procedures. Bluezone is one of the 4 endorsed by the Ministry of Health

- ◆ The U.S. FDA evaluated and reviewed all the testing protocols for over a year. We earned the Class II Medical Device from the FDA in February of 2022.

## Bluezone Testing Completed & Successful U.S. Military Installations

- ◆ Aerosol Research and Engineering Laboratories in Kansas, was the firm



that tested the Bluezone products. This 3rd party lab used the aerosolized MS2 (a SARS-CoV-2 surrogate) to determine the efficacy of the Bluezone viral kill product. The surrogate and lab process and procedures comply with the FDA and its stated "good laboratory practices."

- ◆ Prior to the testing by Aerosol Research and Engineering Laboratories, the U.S. Army Testing Labs in Natick, Massachusetts tested the Bluezone Food Preservation Units. Specifically, Mr. Louis Jamieson directed the testing process and procedures. The military testing results were successful and resulted in immediate deployment. Bluezone Food Preservation units are:

1. Installed in all U.S. Naval aircraft carriers (walk-in coolers)

2. Earned a U.S. Army Achievement Award for increasing the life of fresh fruits and vegetables

- ◆ The Food Preservation units use the UV lights and there was no exposure, no product issues to resolve. The light is contained in the box and safety measures are already in place to turn the electricity off, if the unit was accidentally opened. We have years of successful use and experience with the U.S. military. Bluezone.com.

See **PURE AIR** page 12

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Greg Flynn



## Flynn Restaurant Group raises over \$9.5 Million in donations in 2022

San Francisco, CA – Flynn Restaurant Group, the world's largest franchise operator, recently announced it contributed more than \$9.5 million in charitable and food donations across its brands – Applebees, Panera Bread, Taco Bell, Pizza Hut, Wendy's and Arby's – through numerous national and local fundraising campaigns in 2022.

"We are proud to announce we have donated over \$9.5 million through national and local fundraising campaigns across our six franchise concepts in 2022," said Greg Flynn, Founder, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Flynn Restaurant Group. "As a part of every community we serve, it is our responsibility to go above and beyond as an employer and a restaurant business. We do so by serving great food in a friendly environment and being an active participant in supporting important causes. We thank our incredible team members and guests for their generous contributions and look forward to hosting additional fundraising campaigns in 2023."

Guests who visited restaurants owned and operated by Flynn Restaurant Group in 2022 participated in fundraisers benefiting local schools and charities, such as Dine to Donates and Flapjack Fundraisers, by purchasing limited-time menu items matching donation funds and rounding up at the register. Six franchisees within Flynn

Restaurant Group that helped raise funds include:

◆ **Apple American Group, Applebee's largest franchisee, raised over \$1.3 million in 2022.** Proceeds benefitted, Muscular Dystrophy Association, Jimmy Fund, Special Olympics, various local non-profit and school organizations and longtime partner, Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation. "Apple American Group is one of ALSF's first partners, and over the years, their commitment to the cause has only grown. Their prominence and national reach have helped to introduce countless people over the years to ALSF and raised more than \$6 million in the fight against childhood cancer," said Liz Scott, Alex's mom and Co-Executive Director of Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation. "We are truly grateful for their continued partnership to help find cures and support families during their child's treatment and beyond." In recognition of these efforts, the franchise group was honored by Applebee's Restaurants, Inc. as the Lloyd Hill Neighbor of the Year, as well as Applebee's Operator of the Year and Culinary Partner of The Year. The franchisee also celebrated with their team member, Emily Canady from Highland, CA, who was awarded Restaurant General Manager of the Year.

See **FLYNN RESTAURANT** page 14

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# Sarpino's USA achieves significant franchise development success in 2022

Chicago, IL – Sarpino's USA, a fast-growing pizza and Italian food delivery franchise, is reporting 2022 as one of the most successful years in its company history after it signed four franchise agreements to develop 10 new locations in the coming years. Of the agreements signed, two were multi-unit development agreements to bring the brand's first-ever locations to the Miami and Denver metro areas, with the commitment of three and five stores in each market, respectively. The first locations resulting from these agreements are projected to open this year – in Westminster, Colorado and in the Brickell neighborhood of Miami.

"Last year kicked off our aggressive national franchise expansion plan to open dozens of new Sarpino's USA locations by the end of 2027. We're happy to report that 2022 was a banner year for our brand, laying a solid foundation for the growth we anticipate over the next five years," said David Chatkin, president of Sarpino's USA. "With proven systems and processes in place, a standout concept, and an unwavering commitment to innovation, we look forward to an even greater 2023."

In addition to development in Miami and Denver, Sarpino's USA will be expanding its presence in Broward County, Florida this year with a new Pompano Beach location slated to open in October. The brand will also make entry into Palm Beach County, Florida soon, with a



location planned for Boca Raton. Moving into 2023, Sarpino's USA is continuing to drive its franchise development efforts where it is already experiencing great success, including South Florida; Kansas City, Missouri; and other states throughout the Southeast and Midwest regions.

Former restaurant employees are fueling much of the brand's ongoing success, with Kateryna Tserkovniuk owning the future Pompano Beach and Boca Raton locations and Said Demirovski spearheading the brand's development in Denver. Tserkovniuk got her start with Sarpino's USA as a cashier in the brand's downtown Fort Lauderdale franchise, while Demirovski worked for a Sarpino's USA franchisee in Chicago.

"Sarpino's USA has a history of restaurant employees turning into franchise owners and we couldn't be more pleased to have such confidence in our brand," added Chatkin. "It's franchisees like Kateryna and Said who make Sarpino's USA what it is, and we're thrilled to have their continued investment as well as welcome new franchisees to our growing system."

In addition to its significant franchise development success in 2022, Sarpino's USA remained committed to menu innovation, launching limited time offers that drove unit sales and increased franchisees' bottom line. In 2022, Sarpino's USA brought back its Roasted Garlic Chicken Pizza, which has been the brand's most successful LTO to date,

remaining in the top five pizzas sold weekly for the original promotional period. The brand also introduced Deep Dish Pizzas to its menu in 2022, paying homage to its Chicago roots. Today, Deep Dish Pizzas account for more than 3% of Sarpino's USA's systemwide sales, just months after launching.

Since entering the U.S. in 2002, Sarpino's USA has grown to nearly 50 locations across Illinois, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, and Texas. The delivery-focused concept has developed a reputation for blending Old World Italian authenticity and American ingenuity, offering a robust menu with roots traced back to Calabria in Southern Italy as well as a convenient, seamless customer experience.

Today, Sarpino's USA offers more than 60 specialty and gourmet pizzas, roughly 20 calzones and 20 sandwiches, 12 pastas, 11 salads, five bone-in wing flavors, and a variety of appetizers, plus an entire separate vegan menu. In a world of sameness and low-quality, factory-made pizzas, Sarpino's USA has forged an entirely different path and makes its food from scratch, taking an artisanal approach to pizza-making simply not found in big chains.

*About Sarpino's USA: Sarpino's is a pizza delivery and take out franchise concept dedicated to from scratch cooking and baking. This allows Sarpino's owners to honor the traditions of its Calabrian heritage while simultaneously elevating them to create better opportunities for growth and profitability.*

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# Spork Technology launches all-in-one digital operations platform

Spork Technology, a cutting-edge technology company based in San Francisco, CA, has announced the launch of Spork, its new digital operations platform for restaurants. Spork is the digital backbone for restaurants of all sizes and types, serving as the single source of truth for restaurant operations across dine-in, delivery, and take-out channels.

"We are thrilled to bring Spork to market and empower restaurants with a new level of efficiency, revenue generation, and customer service," said Gennady Shpiler, CEO of Spork Technology. "Spork is the solution that restaurants have been searching for, streamlining operations and bringing all the disjointed and often incompatible technology products and services into one easy-to-use platform."

Spork serves as a customizable, all-in-one digital operations platform that provides restaurants with the tools they need to maximize revenue, streamline operations, and enhance the guest experience. By connecting a

variety of technology products and services, Spork eliminates the need for restaurants to rely on multiple, separate systems, making it easy for restaurant owners to manage their operations without requiring any technical skills.

"At Spork, we are dedicated to helping restaurants succeed and grow," added Gennady Shpiler. "Our goal is to provide a comprehensive solution that simplifies restaurant operations and allows restaurant owners to focus on what they do best - providing exceptional food and service to their guests." **TR**

**About Spork Technology:** Spork Technology - Sporkinc.com - is a leading technology company based in San Francisco, CA. With a focus on serving the restaurant industry, Spork Technology provides a comprehensive restaurant digital operations platform designed to streamline operations, maximize revenue, and enhance the guest experience. With a mission to help restaurants succeed and grow, Spork is dedicated to delivering innovative solutions that simplify restaurant operations and allow restaurant owners to focus on what they do best - providing exceptional food and service to their guests.

## Cupbop from page 1

Dok Kwon, Chief Operating Officer of Cupbop. "Our food is not only delicious, but is a way to bring communities together. It means a lot to us to be able to bring that experience to new cities around the country."

Not only does the brand have plans for growth, it continues to see success. Cupbop was selected as the best fast food in Utah in Food & Wine's ranking of the best fast food in every state. It saw a high level of revenue, and ended December with 26% year-over-year same store sales growth.

"This year, our goal is to continue to expand and build upon the brand," continued Kwon. "We are looking to selectively open new locations in our target areas, and partner with strong franchisees who can further our mission to bring Korean BBQ inspired food to the US."

Founded in 2013 by Junghun Song, the concept of Cupbop originally began as a food truck in Salt Lake City. The brand quickly captured the attention of locals and tourists, but has not opened for franchise opportunities until now. Cupbop's sole franchisee group recently raised an additional \$10,000,000 in funding to accelerate Cupbop store openings, which shows the franchisee's strong conviction in the Korean QSR brand. The fast-casual Korean establishment is committed to providing quality cuisine while showcasing Korean flavors and culture. Serving up tasty

noodles, the brand offers a unique take on Korean BBQ classics that puts an emphasis on fresh, quality ingredients. Ensuring that everyone can enjoy the Cupbop experience, the brand caters to a variety of dietary needs, providing good tasting gluten-free and vegetarian options.

With 47 locations currently operating throughout the U.S., Cupbop - www.cupbop.com - is planning on opening at least 15-20 locations in 2023. The brand is seeking experienced multi-unit franchisees with an entrepreneurial spirit, strong people management skills, and a passion for providing delicious, high-quality products and unmatched customer service to its community. The corporate team offers prospective franchisees the tools to operate successfully through teamwork and strong leadership while creating a first-class experience for guests. **TR**

**About Cupbop:** As the nation's first quick-service Korean Barbeque in a cup franchise, Cupbop is committed to providing quality Korean cuisine. The brand has seen success both internationally and nationally with over 150 locations in Indonesia and 47 locations open throughout the states of Utah, Idaho, Arizona, Colorado, Nevada and Oklahoma, they plan on opening at least 15-20 locations by the end of 2023. Originally founded as a food truck in 2013, the brand has stayed true to its roots with small storefronts and simple operational procedures, offering a streamlined business model that helps ensure franchisee success Cupbop is dedicated to highlighting Korean culture and has reimaged the Korean barbeque experience with their unique menu items.

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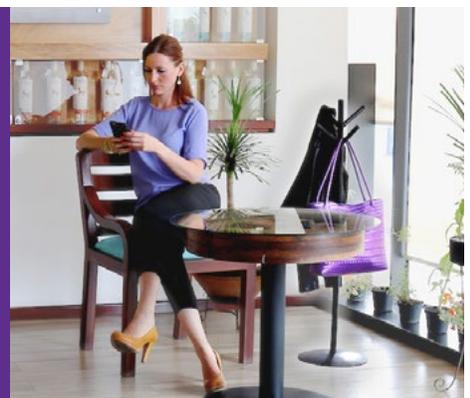
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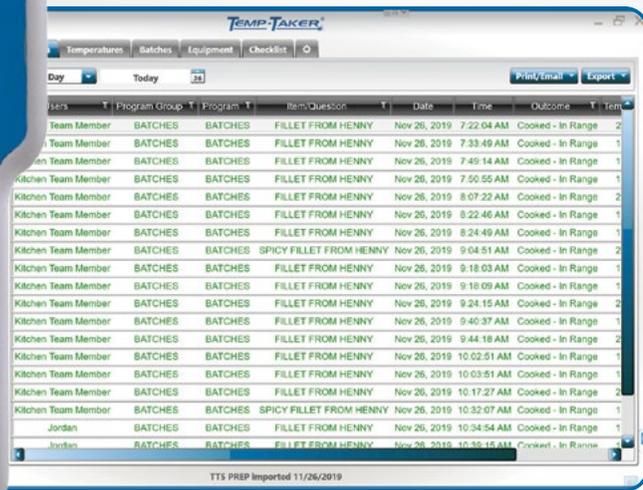
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# What's Going On from page 3

is expected to face some stumbling blocks going into 2023, led by weakened consumer sentiment and ongoing pricing difficulties," says Joe Pawlak, managing principal within Technomic's Advisory group. "But as the year progresses, the situation is expected to moderate and the industry will benefit with stronger sales and traffic."



◆◆◆◆◆  
**Steeped Coffee**, a Certified B Corp and Benefit Corporation, announced today it is partnering with purpose-driven coffee company **Connect Roasters** to bring the company's popular coffees to single-serve drinkers nationwide. Served to players in the clubhouse at Chicago's Wrigley Field, Connect Roasters is a notable addition to the 400+ specialty coffee roasters who use the Steeped Brewing Method to deliver single-serve benefits without any barriers. "Steeped doesn't take its barista-approved standards lightly and we've worked closely with industry experts to validate every aspect of the Steeped Brewing Method, from extraction to taste to freshness," said Josh Wilbur, Founder and CEO, Steeped Coffee. "Most importantly, we are bringing an authentic specialty coffee experience to single-serve coffee lovers

everywhere. We are thrilled to partner with Connect Roasters to bring its premium roasts to as many people as possible." Visit online at [steepedcoffee.com](http://steepedcoffee.com).

◆◆◆◆◆  
**Kava Culture Kava Bar**, which opened at Miromar Outlets in Estero, became just the latest in the growing trend of Kava bars opening throughout Southwest Florida. Kava is a root that grows on islands in the Pacific Ocean. Their drinks are non-alcoholic. Lindsey Bronson is the Franchisee for this location. Almost a dozen more are in the works.



◆◆◆◆◆  
 As rodent populations expand nationwide, Xcluder® continues to enhance its industry-leading catalog of rodent-proofing solutions to protect facilities against pests and contaminants. The newest addition - **the Xcluder Pest Control Dock Leveler Rear Hinge Seal** - seals the open hinge gap found on most dock levelers using Xcluder Fill Fabric and durable PVC-coated vinyl. The seal, designed for use in combination with Xcluder's full suite of loading dock rodent-proofing solutions, eliminates a potential rodent entry point in

an area notorious for rodent activity. Left unprotected, loading docks create a popular thoroughfare for rodents and other pests. "Thoroughly sealing a loading dock area against rodents is critical not only to protecting the health of those within, but also to complying with safety regulations and certification programs," said Troy Bergum, Sales Manager, Xcluder. "Loading docks are a prime target for rodents and we're proud to offer our customers another solution to effectively safeguard this area and maintain compliance with auditing standards." Xcluder has 17 years of experience working closely with industry leaders - including rodentologists, quality assurance specialists, facilities management teams and pest control professionals - to design the exact types of products necessary to protect retail, medical, food service and food production facilities. More information is available at [www.buyxcluder.com](http://www.buyxcluder.com).



◆◆◆◆◆  
**Biscuit Belly** opened their first location in the Peach State in Acworth, Georgia in 2022. The location instantly experienced the support of their communities and have seen great success. The brand also responded to the growing consumer demand in their home state of Kentucky by adding another corporate owned location in Louisville. Lisa Dwelly is Biscuit Belly's new VP of Operations and Training to strengthen the brand's development. They will be kicking off the new year by putting down roots in Alabama, with two new locations opening in Huntsville and Hoover in early 2023, with plans to open a total of eight by the end of the year.

◆◆◆◆◆  
 With limited plant-based protein options, chefs and restaurants seek to create more diverse plant-based menu items other than the normal veggie burger. Without access to versatile, cuisine agnostic plant-based proteins, chefs have had to limit their offerings on menus. Luckily BIPOC owned startup, **High Time Foods**, created a highly versatile protein with no refrigeration required and can be used in a variety of cuisines, empowering chefs to create more culinary diversity in their dishes. Made from a special blend of wheat, peas, mung beans, and spices, their first product is a shelf-stable mix which functions like minced chicken when combined with water and oil. Chefs can use this product to expand their plant-based



◆◆◆◆◆  
**Vital Farms** Launches with **Dot Foods**, expanding foodservice offerings nationwide. Vital Farms has kicked off a new relationship with Dot Foods, the largest food industry redistribution company in North America, to make their eggs available to their network of 5,200 distributors across all 50 states. Dot Foods enables suppliers like us to ship to distributors in "less-than-truckload" quantities every week. They're a bridge between the big distributors and suppliers. Dot Foods' redistribution model will help us reach even more foodservice operators, from high-volume brunch spots to smaller regional chains and family-owned restaurants. 

◆◆◆◆◆  
**The U.S. foodservice industry has had a perfect storm of challenges over the past few years**, the lingering pandemic, labor shortage, inflation, higher operational costs, and an increasing number of meals eaten at home. Still, pockets of growth indicate calmer seas ahead. U.S. commercial foodservice customer traffic to restaurants and other foodservice outlets ended 2022 flat compared to a year ago. Consumer spending at foodservice outlets was up 4% due to higher prices, reports The NPD Group\*. Retail foodservice, specifically convenience store foodservice traffic, was a growth area for the industry. Convenience store visits for prepared beverages and foods were up 2% last year versus the year before. Restaurant traffic, representing most of all foodservice visits, was down 1% in the 12 months ending December versus a year ago, with most of the visit losses from full service restaurants. Visits to quick service restaurants, representing 82% of total restaurant traffic, were flat last year versus the prior year. "Looking forward to 2023, we anticipate improvements in supply chain disruptions, inflation deceleration, and increased consumer use of foodservice," says David Portalatin, NPD food industry advisor and author of *Eating Patterns in America*. "And while we expect challenges in 2023, we believe the U.S. foodservice industry will continue down the path of recovery this year, although growth will be modest."

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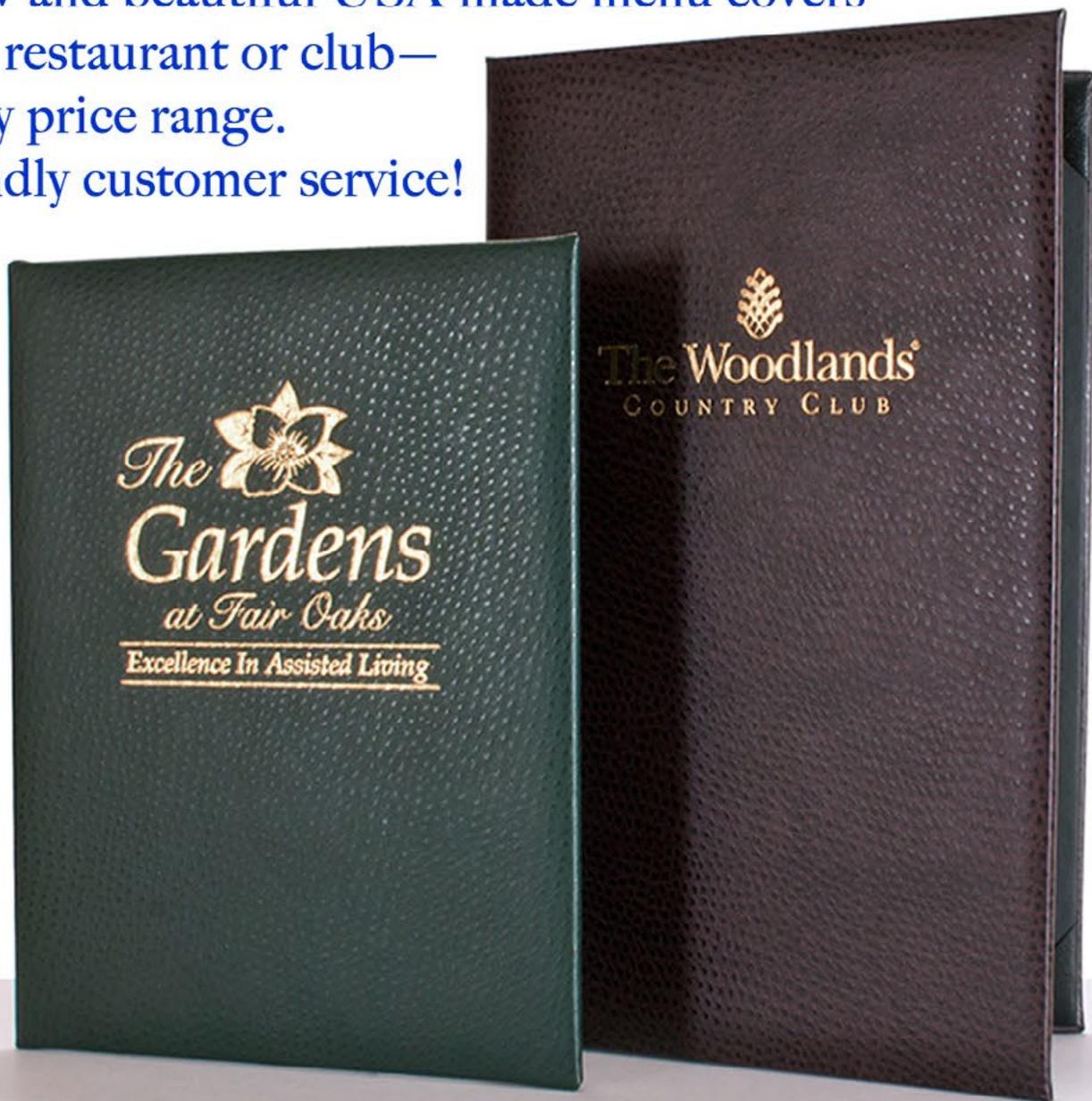
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# Food safety tips for power outages

Silver Spring, MD - We are in the middle of winter, making extreme weather conditions and power outages more common. A power outage can happen at any time, so it's important to have a plan in place to safely store your food during an emergency. Here's how to keep your food safe if the power goes out:

## Plan Ahead and Be Prepared

- ◆ Use a refrigerator and freezer thermometer, and check it regularly to ensure your refrigerator temperature is

- ◆ Stock your pantry with a few days' worth of ready-to-eat foods that do not require cooking or refrigeration.

## If the Power Goes Out

Cold temperatures slow harmful bacteria growth. Keeping food at safe temperatures is key to reduce the risk of foodborne illnesses (also known as food poisoning).

- ◆ Keep refrigerator and freezer doors closed as much as possible. The refrigerator will keep food cold for about 4 hours, and a full freezer will keep the

be safe as long as the doors were kept closed. When the power comes back on, check the temperature in the refrigerator or of the food. Discard any refrigerated perishable food (such as meat, poultry, seafood, milk, eggs, or leftovers) that has been at temperatures above 40°F for 4 hours or more. Perishable foods with temperatures that are 45°F or below (measured with a food thermometer) should be safe, but you should cook and consume these foods as soon as possible.

- ◆ If the freezer thermometer reads 40°F or below, food is safe and may be refrozen. If you did not have a thermometer in the freezer, check each package to determine its safety; you can't rely on appearance or odor. If the food still contains ice crystals or is 40°F or below, it is safe to refreeze or cook.

- ◆ Be aware that perishable foods that are not kept adequately refrigerated or frozen may cause food poisoning if eaten, even after they are thoroughly cooked.

## Learn more:

- ◆ <https://www.fda.gov/food/buy-store-serve-safe-food/food-and-water-safety-during-power-outages-and-floods>

- ◆ <https://www.fda.gov/food/buy-store-serve-safe-food/food-and-water-safety-during-power-outages-and-floods#video>

NEWS PROVIDED BY: U.S. Food and Drug Administration

## Pure air from pg 4

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**Commercial Foodservice Equipment:** Middleby is one of the largest global providers of solutions for the commercial kitchen. The company manufactures innovative equipment for use in cooking, refrigeration, and beverage, as well as advanced solutions to run operations more efficiently. These advanced solutions include IoT which provides real-time data, air purification and a full-service ventless operation, among others. Middleby is used in restaurants, from quick service to fine dining, as well as in grocery stores, hotels and institutional foodservice such as hospitals and schools. Middleby can usually be found anywhere there is a commercial foodservice. Middleby customers in the Commercial Foodservice Equipment Group include YUM! Brands, Dunkin', Burger King, Domino's, Five Guys, Kroger and many others. Middleby is used and endorsed by top chefs worldwide, while being the recipient of top industry and customer awards and for its patented cooking innovations. The company has many ENERGY STAR® rated products in its portfolio. Contact LeAnne at [Lwilliams@evoamerica.com](mailto:Lwilliams@evoamerica.com). **TR**



at or below 40°F and the freezer is at or below 0°F.

- ◆ Plan for ice when a storm is forecast. Know where you can get dry or block ice. Make ice cubes and freeze containers of water or gel packs to help keep food cold when there is a loss of power.

- ◆ Keep coolers on hand to store refrigerated food if the power will be out for more than 4 hours.

- ◆ Freeze refrigerated items that you may not need immediately, and group foods close together in the freezer.

temperature for approximately 48 hours (24 hours if half full) if the doors remain closed.

- ◆ Use ice (dry or block ice, or ice cubes) and frozen containers of water or gel packs to keep your refrigerator and freezer as cold as possible.

## When Power is Restored

After a power outage, check the temperatures inside your refrigerator and freezer.

- ◆ If the power was out for no more than 4 hours, refrigerated food should

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# Plant-based food from page 1

as the big plant-based companies continue to deliver taste, texture, and innovations while working toward price parity with other protein options, the category can thrive, especially in the frozen case where the strength and base are consistent.”

In foodservice, plant-based foods represent less than 1% of all foods shipped through broadline foodservice distribution to commercial and non-commercial foodservice outlets, with many categories growing. Plant-based meat analogues have expanded from primarily beef alternatives to poultry, seafood, and pork. Pound sales of chicken and fish analogues shipped from broadline foodservice distributors increased by 38% and 5%, respectively, in the 12 months ending December compared to a year ago. Grain alternative pizza crusts, like cauliflower crust, grew broadline foodservice pound sales by 35% in 2022 compared to a year ago.

“Chefs and foodservice operators see the plant-based protein category as a versatile option to serve a greater diversity of guests,” says Darren Seifer, NPD food and beverage industry analyst. “Plant-based provides the options to create center-of-plate recipes that delight guests and bring them back for more.”

NPD forecasts dairy and meat alternatives to grow through 2024, driven almost entirely by Millennials and

Gen Zs, who choose these products because of their interest in sustainability, animal welfare, and better health. The deep-rooted values of Gen Zs and Millennials behind their choice of plant-based foods enabled the category to continue to grow throughout the pandemic. These plant-based consumers look for various meat, poultry, or seafood analogues, flavor profiles, and formats.

“Plant-based beverages and foods are growing and gaining loyalty,” says Seifer. “These products still represent a small share in the categories in which they compete but give consumers and foodservice operators more options to consider.”

*\*The NPD Group recently merged with Information Resources, Inc. (IRI®) to create a leading global technology, analytics, and data provider.*

**About The NPD Group:** NPD - npd.com - is a global market information company offering data, industry expertise, and prescriptive analytics to help our clients understand today's retail landscape and prepare for the future. Over 2,000 companies worldwide rely on us to help them measure, predict, and improve performance across all channels, including brick-and-mortar, e-commerce, and B2B. We have services in 21 countries worldwide, with operations spanning the Americas, Europe, and APAC. Practice areas include apparel, appliances, automotive, beauty, books, B2B technology, consumer technology, e-commerce, fashion accessories, food consumption, foodservice, footwear, home, home improvement, juvenile products, media entertainment, mobile, office supplies, retail, sports, toys, and video games. Follow us on Twitter: @npdgroup.

# Flynn Restaurant from page 5

◆ **Pan American Group, Panera Bread's second largest franchisee, donated \$5.3 million in bakery products** from local cafes in 2022, along with nearly **\$240,000 in monetary donations**. Proceeds benefitted Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, Young Women's Breast Cancer Awareness Foundation, Cancer Bridges, West Virginia Breast Health Initiative, University of Kansas Cancer Center, Joyce Murtha Breast Care Center, UC Davis Comprehensive Cancer Center, American Cancer Society, American Red Cross and The Salvation Army.

◆ **Bell American Group, Taco Bell's second largest franchisee, raised over \$1 million** through the Taco Bell Foundation's Round Up program. With each transaction, guests had the chance to round to the nearest dollar, ultimately supporting communities and youth nationwide with scholarships and educational experiences.

◆ **Wend American Group, Wendy's fifth largest franchisee, raised more than \$785,500** in 2022. Hosting over 140 fundraising campaigns, the brand's donations primarily supported the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption®.

◆ **Hut American Group, the largest Pizza Hut franchisee, raised over \$403,500**, benefitting the Pizza Hut Foundation and **First Book**, a nonprofit social enterprise that provides new books, learning materials, and other essentials to children in need.

◆ **RB American Group, Arby's largest franchisee, raised over \$318,500 in**

2022. A portion of the proceeds benefited the Arby's Foundation's "Make A Difference Campaign," which supports youth leadership and career readiness initiatives while combatting childhood hunger. On a local level, charitable campaigns benefitted Alex's Lemonade Stand Foundation, Arkansas Children's Foundation, Camp Destination Innovation, Little Light House, Giant Steps of St. Louis, UMPS CARE, two food banks - Mulberry Community Food Pantry and Food Bank of Kansas, and numerous community non-profit organizations.

In addition to funds raised by Flynn Restaurant Group's six brands, the franchise operator also raised over \$1.15 million to benefit 859 employees through the **Flynn Family Fund** - an employee funded donation program embodying the idea of people helping people, focusing on assisting employees of the Flynn Restaurant Group while they are going through emergency or crisis situations. Since its 2015 inception, the Flynn Family Fund has given \$6.48 million in personal grants to over 4,700 employees.

*About Flynn Restaurant Group LLC: Flynn Restaurant Group LP - FlynnRestaurantGroup.com - is the largest franchise operator, and one of the top 20 largest food service companies of any kind, in the United States. Founded by Chairman & CEO Greg Flynn in 1999, Flynn Restaurant Group owns and operates 2,355 Applebee's, Taco Bell, Panera, Arby's, Pizza Hut and Wendy's restaurants spanning 44 states, generating \$4.6 billion in sales, and employing 73,000 people.*

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561.633.7808 ♦ 561.609.6405  
rsmith@touchsuite.com ♦ www.TouchSuite.com

#### PAYROLL

Heartland Payroll Randy Pumputis  
585.622.2993 ♦ randall.pumputis@e-hps.com

#### PURCHASING CONSULTING SERVICE

Strategic Supply Chain Partners  
John Mulholland / Chris Rodrigue / Kevin Anderson  
jmulholland@yahoo.com ♦ 678.362.7307 ♦ https://ssc.partners  
chris.rodrigue@ssc.partners ♦ 985.778.1515 ♦ https://ssc.partners  
kevin.anderson@ssc.partners ♦ 407.497.9495 ♦ https://ssc.partners

#### QR ORDERING SYSTEMS

Ser.vi Sal Iozzia  
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#### SALES TRAINING

Bernie Cronin Bernie Cronin International  
954.925.9202 ♦ berniecronin84@gmail.com

#### TELECOMMUNICATION

TRACI.net Darin Gull / Jeff Fryer  
954.354.7000 Ext. 103 ♦ daring@traci.net ♦ jeffrif@traci.net  
www.traci.net

#### TYING MACHINE

Bunn Tying Machines John R. Bunn  
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#### UNIFORMS

Workwear Outfitters Terry Lena  
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#### UTENSIL SAVER

SilverSaver Ron Weber  
630.596.6527 ♦ ron.weber@minelab.com ♦ www.getsilversaver.com

#### UTILITIES SAVINGS

Current NRG Seth Levy  
855.215.5483 ♦ seth@currentnrg.com

### CHAPTER 2 ♦ VIRTUAL MEETINGS ♦ FRIDAYS 9 AM

#### ADVERTISING / MARKETING / PUBLISHING

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#### BUSINESS BROKER

Anchor Business Advisors Steve Whitehill  
561.376.7500 ♦ Steve@anchorbb.com

#### CYBER SECURITY

Propel-U-4-Ward Kevin Emahiser  
734.234.0208 ♦ kemahiser@propelu4ward.com ♦ www.propelu4ward.com

#### ICE CREAM MAKING EQUIPMENT DISTRIBUTOR

Seacoast Sales/Carpigiani Ed Guertin  
904.334.4489 ♦ seacoastsale3477@bellsouth.net

#### LEASE/FINANCING

Rogue Leasing Brian Josselson  
404.723.7222 ♦ brian@rogueleasing.com

#### MEDICARE AND HEALTH INSURANCE

Affiliated Health Insurers Rick Israel  
561.777.8813 ♦ 256.698.8774  
rickbamainsurance@gmail.com ♦ info@affiliated-health.com

#### MANAGEMENT RECRUITER

Restaurant Recruiters of America Chris Kauffman  
912.245.4540 ♦ 404-233-3530  
chris@kauffco.com ♦ www.RestaurantRecruitersofAmerica.com

#### PEO

Employers Rx Bruce Silver  
561.843.4333 ♦ bruce@employers-Rx.com ♦ employers-Rx.com

#### POS/PROCESSING

Card Payment Services Joe Creegan  
954.635.5044 ♦ jcreegan@cardpaymentservices.net  
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#### SALES TRAINING

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We are looking for new members! Call for info or to join us at the next meeting!

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