

NEWS RELEASE

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C&K Market announces plans to expand store offerings

The company emerges from bankruptcy

Brookings, Ore., Aug. 12, 2014 – Yesterday, C&K Market previewed what customers can expect in the future, as it emerged from bankruptcy on Aug. 10.

“We’ve been in the stores, talking with customers and identifying how we can serve them even better,” said Karl Wissmann, C&K Market’s president. “With bankruptcy behind us, we’re in a position to enhance our stores. Customers can expect more selection and new offerings.”

Customers will notice Ray’s Healthy Living, a new initiative that integrates natural and organic items with traditional groceries. In addition, items will feature gluten-free, low-carb, low-sodium and GMO-free shelf tags, making it easier for customers to find products. “Our customers will enjoy the convenience of a community one-stop store, a place they can find local, regional and natural products, as well as their conventional favorites,” Wissmann said.

Stores will also emphasize local produce including more organic items, Certified Angus beef, a larger selection of general merchandise offerings, including more natural options and an expanded wine selection. Some stores will also see the addition of salad bars, hot prepared food options and sushi.

“We launched our *Eat Fresh Eat Local* program this summer at 11 Ray’s Food Place stores in Oregon, and customer response continues to be overwhelmingly positive,” Wissmann said. This farm-to-store produce program brings fresh items from nearby family farms to the stores. “These farmers use sustainable methods, and we’re offering our customers more than 100 varieties of local fruits and vegetables through the season. Our complementary Pick 5 CSA program lets customers select five fruits and vegetables every Saturday morning is also receiving rave reviews.”

“We recognize that customers may now shop at both a big box and a local grocer,” Wissmann said. “By listening to our customers and catering to their preferences, shoppers are buying more when they shop with us. Our strategy is definitely working, and we see additional opportunities for our smaller, independent chain to add real value in the communities we serve.”

The remodel of the Roseburg Ray's showcases many of the chain's new programs. It incorporates signage to call attention to new items, such as local and organic produce and a large variety of healthy options in the grocery department, as well as highlighting standard items like produce and meat. An integrated paint palette provides context for various departments.

"As I've worked with our employees and talked with customers, I'm confident that we're delivering what our customers want and will continue to make enhancements that will keep them shopping in our stores," Wissmann said. "At our core, we're a community grocery store that's proud to serve its neighbors. It's important that we keep our individual store uniqueness since we serve a variety of communities.

"I view our company as a chain of independent stores rather than an independent chain of stores," Wissmann said. "That means we tailor our programs to suit the individual communities we serve rather than follow a cookie cutter approach like many other chains. That culture continues, and our employees are a significant factor in our ability to be successful."

Wissman worked with C&K Chief Financial Officer David D. Doty on the successful turn-around of Hawaii based Star Markets (now Times Supermarkets) when he was its president and CEO.

C&K also announced two new financial partners: Crystal Financial LLC and GE Capital, Corporate Retail Finance.

"Crystal is pleased to provide C&K's term debt and assist the Company in its emergence from bankruptcy with financing to achieve its long-term objectives," said Stephen Krawchuk, managing director of Crystal Financial. "Consistent with its mission, Crystal provided a quick, flexible, and user-friendly debt solution."

GE Capital, Corporate Retail Finance is providing financing that will be used to support the company's operations and expected growth as it implements a new customer experience strategy. "We look forward to working with C&K Markets as they implement an exciting new business plan," said Rob McMahon, senior managing director at GE Capital, Corporate Retail Finance.

About C&K Market, Inc.

C&K Market Inc., an independently owned grocery retailer based in Brookings, Ore., operates 43 grocery stores in Oregon and Northern California under the banners of Ray's Food Place, Shop Smart and C&K Market. More information can be found at www.ckmarket.com.

About Crystal Financial

Crystal Financial LLC, a portfolio company of Solar Capital Ltd., is an independent commercial finance company that provides senior and junior secured loans for both asset-based and cash flow financings (minimum of \$10 million in fundings) to middle-market companies. Its team of experienced, responsive professionals has underwritten, closed and managed more than \$20 billion in secured debt commitments across a wide range of industries. For more information please visit www.crystalfinco.com.

About GE Capital, Corporate Retail Financial

[GE Capital, Corporate Retail Finance](#) provides asset-based, cash flow and structured loans and leases to mid-size and large U.S. businesses expanding in North America, Asia and Europe. Funding may be provided through GE Capital, Corporate Retail Finance's affiliate, GE Capital Bank, Member, FDIC. Financing supports working capital, growth, acquisitions, turnarounds and balance sheet optimization in key sectors: Aerospace and defense; automotive and transportation; chemicals and plastics; construction and building products, corporate aircraft; energy; food and beverage; manufacturing; marine; metals and mining; paper, packaging and forest products; retail; and technology and electronics. With Access GE, clients also benefit from access to GE's best practices to help build their business. Visit gelending.com/clnews or follow [@GELEndLease](https://twitter.com/GELEndLease) on Twitter.

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