

## Business Updates

Breaking news in local business

From The Boston Globe

ECONOMY

### New chain hopes to bring “fast food without the guilt” to the Hub

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By Chris Reidy, Globe Staff

Energy Kitchen, a chain with ambitious expansion plans and a low-calorie menu, said it is looking to recruit franchisees who will open as many as 12 restaurants in the Greater Boston area over the next five years.

Currently, 11 Energy Kitchens are up and running in New York, New Jersey, and Florida, but with a menu that features no item with more than 500 calories --- think the Bison Burger and steamed vegetables --- the company believes that there is an appetite to open a thousand of its restaurants over the next decade.

“Fast food doesn’t have to be fat food” is one company mantra, and “fast food without the guilt” is another.

Menu options include the likes of grilled salmon and turkey meat loaf and such side dishes as baked fries, steamed vegetables, mashed sweet potatoes, and asparagus salad. The food is grilled, baked, or steamed, but never fried, the company said.

The average cost to open an Energy Kitchen is between \$500,000 and \$600,000, with a franchise fee of \$30,000, the company said.

Manhattan-based Energy Kitchen was founded by Anthony Leone and partner Randy Schechter in 2003. The chain is now backed by Mike Repole, cofounder of Vitaminwater. Vitaminwater was sold to Coca-Cola in 2007, an Energy Kitchen press release noted.

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