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New Seasons Market moves in

Market continues to take shape at the Progress Ridge TownSquare

BY CHRISTINA LENT

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There's a new neighbor setting up shop in Progress Ridge TownSquare.

The New Seasons Market is gearing up to throw its own house warming party for the community on Sept. 14 that will continue through the weekend.

Boxes are being unpacked, shelves stocked, furniture arranged, art hung and a work family is making sure everything is in order before welcoming shoppers for an open house celebration.

“We are happy to bring the friendliest store in town to the Progress Ridge neighborhood,” said Lisa Sedlar, president and chief executive officer of New Seasons Market. “This store was designed to reflect the personality and character of the community – vibrant, healthy and inviting.”

As she toured the bright, spacious 42,000-square-foot building last week with store manager Jon Rich, Sedlar painted a picture of what neighbors will discover as they walk through the doors.

“Ultimately, we want to feed you when you come in,” Sedlar said.

With that goal in mind, a solutions counter staffed by a food expert will greet customers as they walk in.

This counter serves as the heart of the store, where shoppers can expect to sample an array of treats, gain product knowledge, gather ideas for meals and find assistance whether it's a patch kit for a flat tire, phone to call home or tool to rescue keys from a locked car.

“This is where we set the tone for their shopping experience,” said Rich, who helped open the locally owned company's Cedar Hills store five years ago.

The Progress Ridge location, nestled between Murrayhill and Bull Mountain on the north side of Southwest Barrows Road in Beaverton, marks the 11th New Seasons Market opened in 11 years.

“We've gotten pretty good at opening stores now,” Sedlar said. “Each store is new and different.

“We picked Progress Ridge based on tons of customer requests for us to open a store in this neighborhood. This will be a place for community – we're a neighbor in the neighborhood, it's not just a grocery store.”

Local value

In keeping with a tradition started with the opening of the first New Seasons Market in Raleigh Hills in 2000, more than a third of the new store's 30,000 everyday staples and specialty items will come from



JAIME VALDEZ / BEAVERTON VALLEY TIMES
Store Manager Jon Rich talks with Lisa Sedlar during a tour last week of the New Seasons Market, which opens in the Progress Ridge TownSquare on Sept. 14 at 8 a.m.

Northwest farmers, food producers and entrepreneurs, including fresh produce, dairy, grocery products, seafood, meats, flowers and home goods.

“Every time we open a new store, we are supporting more local farmers, ranchers, fishers and specialty food producers,” Sedlar said. “And, together with our community of eaters, we’re ensuring that these farms are around for generations to come.

“The average age of a farmer in Oregon is about 60. Over the course of the next five to 10 years, a lot of agricultural land will change hands. If there isn’t a plan for that land, those farms are going to go away.”

New Seasons markets are doing their part to keep farms in Oregon, Washington and Northern California in business, she added.

“The value of spending \$1 locally is huge,” Sedlar said. “It means a lot to our eaters, too.

“Spending that dollar locally means you are voting to keep jobs in Oregon, voting to keep family farms in production in Oregon and voting to buy food that tastes better because it’s grown nearby. It’s the right thing to do, and it makes good business sense.”

In addition to providing 180 family-wage jobs to the Progress Ridge area, 10 percent of the store’s after-tax profit goes back to the community and 20 percent goes back to the staff in profit shares. “That too has value,” Sedlar said.

Building relationships

As Rich watched the action taking place around him in the store, he admitted that he’s eager to open its doors.

“Between the friendly staff we have hired and the amazing store being built for the community, I am excited to create a truly special shopping experience for the neighborhood,” he said. “We can’t wait to get to know all of our Progress Ridge neighbors and share what genuinely friendly service is.”

The store will feature an ever-changing selection of entrees and side dishes prepared by store chef Ronnie McQuarrie, as well as full-service deli, floral department, coffee bar, wine and cheese bar and artisan bakery.

In addition to grab-and-go options for convenience, New Seasons offers a range of item options from value-pack favorites to organic, all-natural selections.

“There’s a lot of value in our store,” Sedlar said. “We price check our competitors and make sure we are affordable for everyone.

“We’re not the food police. We’re very much about choice.”

Patrons of all ages are also encouraged to hang around for a while in a dining area near a cozy fireplace. That same community space will provide the setting for Scrabble, chess and knitting nights for neighbors to gather together.

“This is a place for people to build relationships with each other,” Rich said. “You can get to know your butcher and your neighbors.”

That philosophy blends well with the mix of tenants at the Progress Ridge TownSquare, which is already home to Cinetopia Progress Ridge 14 and Big Al’s Family Entertainment Center, Sedlar added.

“We all want this to be a destination for the community to gather and enjoy,” she said. “It makes for really great neighborhood synergy.”