

Cafe Yumm! plans 10 new sites in next 2 years

The next location will be in Wilsonville, and it will include a drive-through



Cafe Yumm! on Green Acres Road is one of five in the Eugene-Springfield area. (Brian Davies/The Register-Guard)



Cafe Yumm! has built its success on Yumm! bowls and delicious soups. (Brian Davies/The Register-Guard)

By [Sherri Buri McDonald](#) | The Register-Guard | May 22, 2014

Cafe Yumm! is back on the expansion track, with four new locations expected this year and six next year.

The Eugene-based restaurant company, known for its rice and bean bowls topped with its signature Yumm! sauce, opened its 13th location — a franchise store — in February in southeast Salem.

Cafe Yumm! has its sights on further expansion in Portland and Seattle, and there are other opportunities as well, president and co-founder Mark Beauchamp said.

“Franchise activity has definitely picked up this year,” he said.

“The more locations we have, the more visible we are to more people, particularly as we go into cities like Portland and Seattle that have a lot of travelers and visitors,” Beauchamp said.

“Definitely there’s an impact of the economy stabilizing and people feeling more comfortable investing in businesses.”

Sales have picked up too, especially in the past six months, he said.

The company reported revenues of \$14.8 million systemwide in 2013. Cafe Yumm! employs 266 people systemwide — about 140 of them in the Eugene-Springfield area, Beauchamp said.

The next Cafe Yumm! — a company-owned restaurant — is slated to open in late June in the Argyle Square shopping center in Wilsonville.

“Wilsonville is our first freestanding Cafe Yumm!-designed building,” Beauchamp said. The Wilsonville restaurant will have an electric vehicle charging station and a drive-through.

“That’s a bit of a contrast and a sign of changing times,” he said.

Both the Salem and Wilsonville locations will have drive-throughs — a first for the restaurant chain.

Customers have requested drive-throughs for at least 15 years, Beauchamp said.

“Particularly people who have reason to want to stay in their car,” he said. “The mom or dad with a child, or two, with car seats and a dog. They have to unwrap their car world and move into a restaurant.”

While weighing whether to include drive-throughs at these two restaurants, Beauchamp said he and others at the company gave a lot of consideration to the potential environmental impacts of operating a drive-through, where cars might idle.

He said the company hasn’t put up signs asking customers to please turn off their engines while they wait, but “that is a possibility.”

“The idea is hopefully they get through the line pretty fast,” Beauchamp said.

Cafe Yumm! belongs to the “fast casual” segment of the restaurant market, which doesn’t generate the same volume of customers as fast food, he said.

“We live in a car culture, so we do the best we can with that,” Beauchamp added. “If customers say I want organic food and I want a drive-through, there’s a trade-off there.”

Adding the convenience of a drive-through does help Cafe Yumm! advance its purpose and mission of “getting great food out to people,” Beauchamp said.

A third new restaurant — another franchise — is scheduled to open in August in Lake Oswego.

It will be the second location operated by a current Cafe Yumm! franchise owner, he said.

The fourth restaurant expected to open this year also will be a second location for a current franchise owner. Details will be announced later, Beauchamp said.