

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**National franchises to set up shop in Hastings**

Esquires Café, LJS Seafoods and Wholly Bagel, Para Rubber are the latest to join a growing list of retailers looking to secure franchisees or a presence in Hastings.

Despite a nationwide cooling of retail activity, Hastings has continued to grow at a rate that exceeds both the wider region and national trend. For the year ending March 2009, Hastings specialty retail sales grew 3.2%, over double the national average of 1.5%.

Results like this have the attention of retailers in expansion mode.

Sandra Hazlehurst, Hastings City Marketing President says new businesses are attracted by the continued growth in speciality retail sales in Hastings, population base and regional growth as a whole.

Up to 10% turnover or churn of retail tenants is considered normal within the retail sector as businesses open, close and relocate for various reasons.

“Unlike other retail strips and shopping malls experiencing high levels of tenant turnover in the current environment, there is still strong demand for prime retail space in Hastings with several new retail businesses to open in the next few weeks.”

In many cases, prime sites already have tenants lined up to backfill the space.

National retailers Esquires, Wholly Bagel, The Coffee Club, and LJS Seafood are all looking for local franchisees. Iconic retailer Egg maternity is looking for additional stockists.

Several local businesses also report significant growth. Jessicas Design Store has upgraded to a larger store after only 12 months trading in Hastings, Pet Essentials is set to open its second store and Instinct women's fashion has expanded the operation from Palmerston North.

Hastings continues to be the economic powerhouse of Hawkes Bay providing over half the region's employment and generating more than 55% of the region's economy.

### **The changing face of Hastings Retail**

- Driving Miss Daisy – new national franchise, already franchised to 9 areas
- Brady McNaughton –local business investing in store fitout and rebranding
- Sutto Café – recently purchased by Chef Graeme Smith
- Richardsons Pharmacy – rebranded to Care Chemist
- Outdoor Megastore – new online store for Great Outdoors Hastings
- Pet Essentials – Napier-based business expanded to Hastings.
- Jessica's – doubled their store size having only been in Hastings 12 months
- Instinct – new fashion business to Hastings and Hawkes Bay
- Esquires, Wholly Bagel, The Coffee Club, Egg maternity (TBC), and LJS Seafood, Para Rubber – national retailers looking for Hastings franchisees

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