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## More Food Coming to Lafayette

By *Sophie Braccini*

Chipotle Mexican Grill

is scheduled to open its next East Bay restaurant at the end of August in Lafayette, according to the management of the Chipotle in Walnut Creek. The popular burrito joint's crew is finishing a remodel of the retail space that once housed NorSki and Sports, not far from the new Whole Foods.

The chain restaurant, which has over 1100 locations, features what anyone would expect from a Mexican fast food: burritos, tacos, burrito bowls, salads and, of course, chips and guacamole.

The company makes an effort to put on a quality and eco-friendly face. Its web site offers options for all types of diets, from gluten free, allergy-sensitive, or vegans (they warn vegans and vegetarians that their pinto beans are cooked with bacon), and is communicating on their use of organic and local food suppliers. They also claim that their meat is raised humanly. "Since 2001, we have sourced 100% of our pork from ranchers whose pigs are raised outside or in deeply bedded pens, are never given antibiotics and are fed a vegetarian diet," states their corporate communication material. The company indicates that its goal is to have 100% of the chickens raised without the use of antibiotics, and that currently over 35% of the dairy served comes from pasture-raised cows.

"Our commitment to serving food made with better ingredients from more sustainable sources is one of the key drivers of our business," said Steve Ells, founder, chairman and co-CEO of Chipotle, "Not only is local produce fresher and better tasting, but it also helps support the environment and regional farming communities around the country."

The company that reported \$571.6 million revenue for the second quarter of 2011 (a revenue increased 22.4% compared to the second quarter of 2010) announced that it expects to use more than 10 million pounds of produce from local farms this year. Its definition of local is produce grown on farms within 350 miles of the restaurant where it will be served.

Fenton's Creamery

Joyful anticipation is tempered by uncertainty as stakeholders race to make possible the arrival of Fentons Creamery, which would like to open a Lafayette location in the historic Park Theater (see article page A2).

We're talking food here as well, but of a different type and from a very different company. Fentons Creamery was founded in Oakland in 1894 by Elbridge Seth (E.S.) Fenton, and was passed down through generations until it was sold to Foremost Dairy in the 60's, then to Scott Whidden in 1987.

"Fentons Creamery is once again a family owned and operated business," said Whidden, "Our family is dedicated to the tradition started by the Fenton family, doing all that we can to make every visit to Fentons an event to be remembered." Fentons is well known for its locally made ice-creams and toppings; it also serves meals.

In May 2007, Fentons opened a second location in Vacaville, at the Nut Tree site. A location that, according to Whidden, represents nostalgic times much like Fentons Creamery does. So it makes sense that for its third location Fentons eyed the Park Theater; the Plaza Park business area brims with nostalgia and historic value.

Fentons' arrival hinges on the newly formed parking commission's recommendation. In the meantime the Lafayette business community supports the idea, "Business brings business," commented Lafayette Chamber Executive Director Jay Lifson, referring to the vitality of that specific business stretch. And if there is no parking near by? "Some businesses are worth walking a few blocks for," said Main Street Property Services Craig Semmelmeier.

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