Reasor’s opens new store; FAPC members get first-hand look

Stillwater, Okla. – July 7, 2009

Reasor’s Foods opens a new grocery store on June 24 in Jenks, Okla., that is not like any other store in Oklahoma.

The 82,000-square foot store includes about 80,000 items, which more than doubles the items in other Reasor’s stores. The grocery store features a foodservice department with a deli restaurant and soup, salad, coffee and sushi bars, and meeting and banquet rooms.

Jeff Reasor, president of Reasor’s Foods, said it is hard for him to articulate how happy he is to see the opening of the new store.

“Having grown up in the business, I’ve seen the evolution of our stores,” Reasor said. “To see the look on people’s faces when they walk in the new store, there’s not anything like it. It’s a great feeling to be able to put something together like this.”

A VIP luncheon was held the day before the grand opening for business partners of Reasor’s Foods to tour the store and eat at the restaurant. Members of the Robert M. Kerr Food & Agricultural Products Center, located on the Oklahoma State University campus, were invited to the event.

Jim Brooks, FAPC manager of business and marketing services, attended the luncheon and said he was amazed at the look and feel of the new store.

“The new Reasor’s store stands alone when you consider all the thought and planning that had to happen to develop a new type of shopping experience for their customers,” Brooks said. “Each department has its own unique identity, and after taking a complete tour at the VIP luncheon, you almost forget you’re actually in a grocery store.”

The new 24-hour store replaced the existing store in Jenks and employs about 300 people. This amount is twice the amount of employees working at the old store, which means about 150 jobs added to the economy.

Eric Neel, Reasor’s employee for 27 years and store director for the Jenks store, said the store is a one-stop shop for everyone and is catering to a broader market, including those customers that are looking for gluten-free, lactose-intolerant or organic products, and coastal seafood.

“As a company, we’ve made great strides in improving the seafood area,” Neel said. “We’ve hired a seafood director to help teach how to cook seafood, and we are running seafood recipes in ads to give ideas for something quick and easy.”

As the store manager, Neel is responsible for overseeing all departments in the new store. Neel said numerous employees surround him that make the new store a success.

“I wish there were 36 hours in the day, so I can spend more time at the store,” Neel said. “Reasor’s is a great company, and Mr. Reasor would be proud.”

Neel also said another reason the store opening has been a success is because of the community; it’s a good fit for Jenks.

Allen Mills, senior vice president and chief operating officer for Reasor’s, agreed with Neel that Jenks is a great community for the new store.

“This type of store won’t work everywhere,” Mills said. “You have to have the right demographics.”

When designing the concept of the store, Mills and other members of the Reasor’s team traveled across the United States visiting different grocery stores gleaning ideas.

Mills said the goal was to make the new store better than existing stores. In addition to the restaurant and seafood, some of the other concepts incorporated into the store included a painted ceiling to make the store warmer, Wi-Fi and digital restaurant menu boards.

“This is the fun part of my job—seeing the concept go from paper to reality,” Mills said.

Reasor’s was founded more than 46 years ago in Tahlequah, Okla. It was a family-owned company until 2007, when Reasor’s became an employee-owned company. Today, Reasor’s has 15 locations and employs more than 3,000 people in Northeastern Oklahoma.