

# Key Food Marketplace coming to New Brunswick

Susan Loyer, @SusanLoyerMyCJ 9:56 p.m. EDT April 24, 2015

*Key Food Marketplace is slated to open in New Brunswick in September.*



(Photo: ~ File photo)

NEW BRUNSWICK – Key Food Marketplace is slated to open in the city in September.

The marketplace will take over the vacant space downtown in the New Brunswick Health and Wellness Plaza with renovations beginning in mid-May, according to a statement from the city.

The New Brunswick Parking Authority Board, the owner and manager of the New Brunswick Health and Wellness Plaza, approved a 20-year lease for the space at a special meeting Friday.

"After a thorough search for a new grocery store, we feel that we have found the best operator for the space," Mitch Karon, executive director for the New Brunswick Parking Authority, said in the statement. "Renovations will begin soon and residents should be able to do their grocery shopping in the downtown before the fall."

The store will be operated by Kevin Kim.

"We are excited about Mr. Kim's vision for the Marketplace," Mayor Jim Cahill said. "The Marketplace will be a critical component of addressing the city's commitment to make healthy, fresh food readily available to our residents."

Kim specializes in providing customers with an extensive variety of fresh food, including a large and varied produce section, both organic and conventionally grown, largely sourced from farms in New Jersey, California, Florida and Texas, the statement said.

The supermarket will feature fresh seafood, meat and poultry with organic options. Customers will have the option to dine at the store's prepared food bistro, which will offer a coffee bar, tossed salad bar, juice bar, bubble tea, sushi and sashimi and a variety of Asian-influenced dishes. The store also will offer home-delivery service and a wholesale-priced section stocked with household staples such as paper, rice, oil and tomato products, the statement said.

"Customers will enjoy the freshness of our products and the very low prices we provide," Kim said. "We work very hard to obtain only the best items and look forward to offering the New Brunswick community healthy, delicious food."

The site was the former home of The Fresh Grocer, which ceased operations of its Wellness Plaza location last year. Last February, the city announced that the store owed its landlord, the New Brunswick Parking Authority, \$784,000 in back rent and other expenses.

"After months of discussions, negotiations and efforts to come up with a suitable arrangement, we were not able to come to an agreement that would allow them to continue operating here," Cahill said in an interview last May.

At that time, Fresh Grocer President Pat Burns said several unique and continuing operational challenges thwarted best efforts to succeed.

"In spite of the tremendous efforts made by all parties, including the City of New Brunswick, DEVCO, and the New Brunswick Parking Authority to make it work, the store, unfortunately, never reached an acceptable sales level to be sustainable," Burns said.

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