



## Have You Heard



# Treat America Food Services expands presence despite loss of Beechcraft account

BY CARRIE RENGERS - THE WICHITA EAGLE

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When **Treat America Food Services** entered the Wichita market three years ago, it was to service the **Beechcraft** facility.

That contract is coming to an end, but that doesn't mean Treat America is leaving.

"We're trying to grow in Wichita," says **Ravi Dasari**, director of marketing for the Kansas City-based company. "It's an expansion market for us."

To that end, the company is going to open a warehouse and a kitchen in the former **Oliver's Little Italy** space at 1930 S. Oliver.

Treat America has eight of its company kitchens across the city. Those are mini grocery stores that employees at various firms can use for round-the-clock access to food and drinks.

The company also recently won a couple of contracts to serve hot food to the **American Red Cross Midway-Kansas Chapter** and **Head Start**, which is what's necessitating the need for a new kitchen since the Beechcraft facility will no longer be available.

**Premier Food Service** will be the new food service provider at Beechcraft – or what’s known as the **Textron Aviation** east campus – starting on Jan. 5.

“The company, which already provides food service to other Textron Aviation locations in Wichita, will offer a variety of vending items, as well as hot lunches to some areas of the campus,” Textron Aviation spokeswoman **Sarah Estes** said in an e-mail. “PFS will also manage the **Beech Activity Center** kitchen and facilities.”

She wrote, “The move to one food service provider throughout our Wichita facilities is part of the ongoing integration of Beechcraft and **Cessna** within Textron Aviation.”

Other than Premier Food Service, Dasari says Treat America doesn’t feel like there are many other options for Wichitans seeking food service providers.

“We feel like we can bring more choice to the Wichita market,” he says.

“We now have a sales person on the ground in Wichita,” Dasari says. “We’ve made a concerted effort since early 2014.”

In addition to expanding its hot food service, Dasari says Treat America also wants to expand its company kitchens here. The firm has about 1,000 of them in 18 states.

“It feeds off the health and wellness emphasis that’s going on across the country,” Dasari says.

He says users can download nutritional information before they make purchases.

Dasari says as the kitchens expand, Treat America needs storage space.

“That’s why we are getting a warehouse at the former Little Italy venue.”

**Troy Farha** of **NAI Martens** handled the deal.

*Reach Carrie Rengers at 316-268-6340 or [crengers@wichitaeagle.com](mailto:crengers@wichitaeagle.com) (mailto:crengers@wichitaeagle.com). Follow her on Twitter: @CarrieRengers (<https://twitter.com/CarrieRengers>).*