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Black Walnut Chain bought by Woodlands Firm

By Allison Wollam, Houston Business Journal

Hubbell & Hudson Market & Bistro, an upscale food market slated to open in The Woodlands in the fall, has purchased all three locations of Black Walnut Café.

Black Walnut Café will retain its core menu at the locations in The Woodlands, Sugar Land and Rice Village, but the counter-service restaurant will take advantage of Hubbell & Hudson's culinary staff, including its executive chef and executive pastry chef.

Hubbell and Hudson also will bring locally grown produce, fresh bread, house-roasted coffee and high end meats into the eateries. A full bar will also soon be added to the Sugar Land and Rice Village locations. Hubbell & Hudson is owned by Hubbell & Hudson Management LLC, a private organization based in The Woodlands.

Terms of the Black Walnut Café acquisition were not disclosed.

Hubbell & Hudson's first ground-up venture will be the 23,000 square foot food market, which is scheduled

to open this fall at 24 Waterway Ave. The concept will feature a high-end market, bistro and catering services. Hubbell & Hudson President Cary Attar says there are a few other changes in store for Black Walnut Café, which was launched three years ago with the Rice Village location (see review on Page 24A).

Following the acquisition, all three locations which were purchased from owner George Pallotta, will now open at 7a.m.

"We're not really changing the lunch and dinner menu as much as we are adding to it," says Attar, who will also serve as President of Black Walnut Café. "The cafes are neighborhood-centered and have a loyal league of followers who are crazy about the food and atmosphere. This is a great fit for Hubbell & Hudson."

Attar has more than 25 years of management experience in specialty food retail and restaurants including Central Market, Dean & DeLuca, Fox & Obel and Brinker International Inc.