

Restaurant Business

STREET SMARTS FOR THE ENTREPRENEUR

available. An order of three stix weighs in at 6 ounces, but patrons can downsize to two skewers. "Portion control is a priority for our customers," says Lupi.

Right now, Justix relies on regional distributor Queens Gate in Kentucky to source its fresh and dry goods, receiving deliveries three to five times a week. "As we grow through franchising, we'll look for food purveyors in each area that meet our specs," Lupi notes.

UFood Grill, Newton, Massachusetts 9 locations

UFood's mission has changed along with its name; it was founded as the Knowfat Lifestyle Grille. Nutrient-dense fuel—no fat—flavor—attracted the body builders and body-conscious who initially frequented the place. Now the concept offers a wide variety of globally inspired items that meet healthy guidelines.

"My first objective was to banish 'bland' by ramping up flavor and presentation," says Efreem Cutler, VP product development and corporate chef. Items such as Kickin' Thai Chicken and a balsamic-marinated Portabella Wrap prove the point. He's applied the same higher standards to his supply chain, seeking

out whole-grain artisan breads, sourcing proteins like lean beef, bison, turkey and turkey bacon from a purveyor in Vermont and working with manufacturers to develop proprietary products.

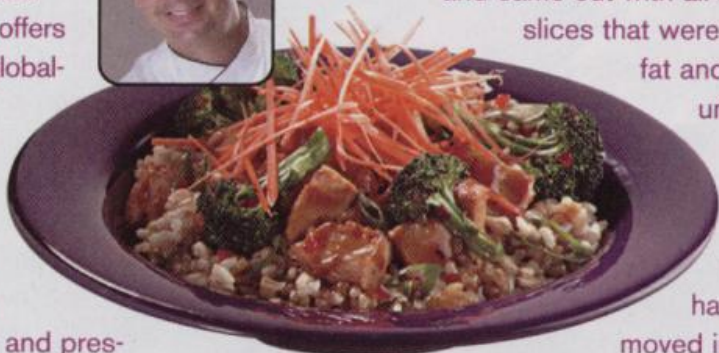
"A spice company helped me create my own Chef's Grill Seasonings. Not only do these spices heighten flavor without added fat, some naturally raise metabolism to help burn calories," Cutler explains. Another manufacturer formulated an antioxidant-rich blueberry-pomegranate vinaigrette for UFood's salads and Costa Fruit and Produce, a local distributor, created a bagged fresh vegetable blend. Cutler even partnered with food giant Land 'O Lakes to source a high-quality burger cheese. "The company was already producing pre-sliced, processed American and Swiss cheese, but they heeded our call and came out with all-natural slices that were low in

fat and sodium," he says.

More manufacturers have now moved into

UFood's court, as the concept gears up for growth. U.S. Foodservice delivers

a majority of the chain's grocery items and DOT, all its refrigerated foods. Cutler also contracts with local producers for specialty and seasonal goods.



**CHOPSTICK CHICKEN
UBOWL WITH BROWN RICE
AND THAI CHILI SAUCE**