



C-store Chains Spread Their Wings

At least five convenience retailers eye opportunities outside their traditional markets

2017 may go down in history as the year convenience store chains branched out.

One of Pennsylvania's native sons, Rutter's Farm Stores, plans to step outside its home state for the first time later this year. During a visit with Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Wolf on May 10, Rutter's President and CEO Scott Hartman said the convenience store operator has plans to open locations in Maryland and West Virginia sometime in 2017.

Fellow Pennsylvania-based chain, Wawa Inc. — fresh off its entrance into the state of Florida — now has its sights set on the nation's capital. The retailer is reportedly planning 11 stores for Washington, D.C., and is hosting a mid-June event at the Newseum for local officials and the real estate and development community to unveil plans for the first Wawa store in the District of Columbia, including debuting a special design, the store location, and renderings.

On the other side of the country, Lake Jackson, Texas-based Buc-ee's is spreading its wings across the Southeast with new locations in Daytona Beach and

Fort Meyers, Fla., and Baldwin County, Ala. To date, the retailer has operated its 30-plus supersized stores all in Texas.

And it's not just long-time industry players that are ready to go in a new direction. New to the industry, Yesway intends to add stores under its management in Oklahoma and Arkansas. The operating brand of BW Gas & Convenience also acquired 35 Wes-T-Go and Chillerz convenience stores in Texas last month, and first stepped outside its Iowa home base in March when it purchased five Pic Quik convenience stores in Hutchinson, Kan.

In addition, Getty Realty Corp. President and CEO Christopher Constant said during the company's first-quarter earnings call, held May 5, that the company's pipeline includes locations in geographic regions that both overlap with its existing sites where it would like to increase its presence, and new markets Getty finds attractive. The Southeast and Southwest regions of the United States are on Getty's radar, according to Constant.