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New York operators have had to cover up the various chamber machines that use to prepare sous-vide meats here.

NRN NATIONAL REPORT

N.Y. sous-vide ban puts pressure on fine-dining chefs nationwide

By Willard Powell

New York — Fine-dining chefs nationwide are rattled by a ban on vacuum-sealed cooking at that city's restaurants enacted last month by local health authorities.

Thinking that vacuum-sealed cooking — also known as sous-vide — would lead to incidents of food poisoning if done improperly, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene prohibited use of the technique until officially sanctioned safety guidelines for the process are drafted.

Health officials said they were particularly concerned about sanitation of Listeria and botulism if temperature controls were poor or if oxygen were to breach the vacuum seals of sous-vide bags.

Although the ban is in effect only in New York, head of its kitchens here many operators are affected, since across the country are concerned that the same be done N.Y. page 11

Industry steps up plans as bird flu concerns soar

Operators, suppliers refine procedures amid predictions deadly strain may hit U.S.

By Paul Frenkel

While government officials predict that a deadly strain of avian influenza is unlikely to reach the U.S. in the foreseeable future, the nation's poultry suppliers and foodservice operators are not waiting for the best scenario to take action.

Domestic poultry processors have stepped up procedures to ensure the safety of their flocks from an infectious companion whose up-and-coming plans to how to deal with an outbreak of the strain H5N1 virus, should any indeed occur here.

In addition to increasing the extent of testing of American flocks, U.S. poultry producers have adopted a battery of biosecurity measures ranging from the use of disinfectants and protective clothing to moving birds of the same age in and out of production houses in groups.

Foodservice operators, for their part, are staying in close contact with poultry suppliers, whom they view as their first line of defense against a biosecurity outbreak. But at the same time, they are allowing the issue to develop, and taking essential materials aimed at operators, reassur-



Given that the virus could be transmitted through properly cooked chicken, many are now ensuring that disinfectants and test kit employees are available on the proper handling and preparation of poultry products. "With these outbreaks around the world, it's not a bad idea for Americans to have a backup plan for any kind of emergency," said Alan Rosenwald, director of research and development at Cook Out Char-Broiled Delivery. The INDUSTRY page 11

Darden pins growth on Red Lobster, Casual-dining company narrows focus, plans to slow expansion

By Sarah E. Lockyer

ORLANDO, Fla. — If you're at Darden Restaurants Inc. any day after 10 and 14 years in the casual-dining game, Red Lobster and Olive Garden, respectively, are no longer the main focus of the company's growth strategy and sales growth in the future.

Darden Restaurants Inc. operates the 34-year-old concept Red Lobster, which has 600 units in the United States and Canada.

But they're not the only ones. Darden, which is owned by private equity, is also developing or planning to develop or purchase a new growth chain in order to reach new markets and build sales.

Darden, which is based in Orlando, Fla., has 1,000 units in the United States and Canada and has more than 100 units in the United States and Canada.



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WHAT'S HOT IN LOUISVILLE, KY.

Bourbons Bistro

2255 Frankfort Ave., (502) 894-8838. Seats: 114. Cuisine: contemporary Southern. Specialties: fried green tomatoes with garlic and chive aioli; prosciutto-wrapped grouper with thyme cream on squash flan. Main courses: \$9.50-\$28. Chef: Jack Tapp. Owners: Jason Brauner and John Morison.

Danielle's American Cuisine and Wine Bar

2206 Frankfort Ave., (502) 893-7677. Seats: 70. Cuisine: American. Specialties: grilled pork tenderloin with seared pineapple salsa, yuca hash browns and orange-habanero mojo sauce; grilled salmon with caramelized onion grits, portobello mushroom and red wine reduction; pan-roasted sea scallops with sweet potato dumpling, caramelized apples and pecans. Main courses: \$9-\$23. Chef/co-owner: Allan Rosenberg. Co-owner: Don Donahoe.

Intermezzo Cafe & Cabaret

316 W. Main St., (502) 561-3344. Seats: 100. Cuisine: American/continental. Specialties: cheese grits with wild mushrooms; grilled fillet of wild salmon with balsamic vinegar reduction; peach and raspberry cobbler with brown sugar and crème fraiche. Main courses: \$15.50-\$26. Chef: Sarah DiFabio. Owners: Barry King and Daniel Wilson.

Proof on Main

702 W. Main St., (502) 217-6360. Seats: 100. Cuisine: modern American/Tuscan. Specialties: bone-in bison tenderloin with buttered leeks, roasted fingerling potatoes, rosemary oil and smoked sea salt; crispy duck with turnips, oyster mushrooms, and sweet and sour garlic; pork cheek Milanese with arugula, grape tomatoes and aged balsamic vinegar. Main courses: \$13-\$28. Chef: Michael Paley. Owners: Laura Lee Brown and Steve Wilson.

Seviche

1538 Bardstown Rd., (502) 473-8560. Seats: 70. Cuisine: nuevo Latino. Specialties: medallions of beef tenderloin topped with fried eggs, caramelized onions and chimichurri sauce; macadamia-crusted sea bass with cranberry-scalion coucous and passion fruit sauce. Main courses: \$13-\$29. Chef-owner: Anthony Lamas.

Compiled by Carolyn Walkup