



Media release & NZX announcement

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**COOKS SIGNS ESQUIRES FRANCHISE DEALS IN OMAN & QATAR:
ACQUIRES DESIGN HOUSE**

Design expertise and beverage products supplied from New Zealand

Listed Cooks Global Foods (NZX:CGF) announces it now has commitments for more than 80 Esquires Coffee Houses in the world's most influential Arab economic alliance.

Master Franchisees reporting to Cooks currently operate 16 stores in Gulf Co-operation Council (GCC) countries Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain and the UAE. Now Cooks has signed master franchise agreements for Oman and Qatar, the remaining two GCC regional nations.

The Oman and Qatar deal will lead to at least 16 Esquires stores opening. The master franchisee is Al Barzah Restaurant Management LLC whose principal is also a shareholder in the UAE master franchise.

The first outlets in each of Oman and Qatar are expected to open within the next six months while a further 10 new stores are planned across the GCC this year alone.

Cooks will be working with its new partner to approve sites for Oman and Qatar over the coming months. Executive director Stuart Deeks says Esquires' projected growth has resulted in a new opportunity to bring store design in house while also improving group profitability.

"To meet the design needs for our projected growth we have purchased Design Environments, the previously privately owned retail design house that has been working with us for the past decade," Deeks says.

"Design Environments is highly regarded and this acquisition will enable us to grow and better service existing clients under the proven leadership of John MacDonald who previously owned the company.

"Importantly, it also enables us to bring design and brand management in house for Esquires for a much more efficient supply chain from a new profit centre for the group supporting a strong existing client base."

Design Environments has a staff of five and is currently recruiting new retail architectural and interior / graphic designers to handle the planned growth. The company has designed interiors for the coffee chain throughout New Zealand, China and the Middle East.

The purchase price will be satisfied in cash and is undisclosed as it is not material and represents comfortably less than 5 per cent of Cooks' market capitalisation.

Cooks is the exclusive supplier of key consumables for its rapidly growing global business including coffee, tea products, syrups and powders. Stuart Deeks is co-founder of Esquires in New Zealand and has been working for four years to complete the licencing of the GCC region which he says has some of the highest levels of disposable income and GDP in the world.

"This latest territory sale is a very important one for the business," Deeks commented. "Brand New Zealand is very well regarded in the GCC where there is significant awareness and respect for all things Kiwi. The Free Trade agreement signed between New Zealand and the GCC has only strengthened the opportunity for New Zealand exporters," he says.

"We are very pleased with progress overall. There are a number of new opportunities we are working on at the moment including gaining efficiencies and further building group profitability. We are introducing the recently acquired Scarborough Fair range of products into the Esquires retail business as well as a number of acquisitions and new territories currently in negotiation."

Deeks, whose responsibilities include development of new markets returned briefly to New Zealand last week after negotiating the GCC agreements. He also spent two months visiting India, Turkey, Romania, Egypt, Singapore, Malaysia, the UK, Ireland and Canada sounding out growth opportunities for the Esquires business.

About Cooks Global Foods:

Cooks Global Foods (NZX:CGF) owns the Esquires Coffee Houses brand and system in global markets excluding Canada, New Zealand and Australia.

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Contacts:

Keith Jackson, Chairman, Cooks Global Foods, Mob: 021-702 509, Email:

keith.jackson@esquirescoffee.net

Stuart Deeks, Executive Director, Tel: 0-9-3092972, Mob: 021-445 042, email:

stuart.deeks@esquirescoffee.net

Leandri Smith, Pead PR, Tel: 0-9-551 2377, Mob: 027 365 9003, Email: leandri@peadpr.co.nz