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News

San Jacinto gets Fresh & Easy

By CHARLES HAND/The Valley Chronicle

The second Fresh & Easy grocery store has opened in the San Jacinto Valley.

A market opened this week in the new shopping center at Sanderson and Esplanade avenues in San Jacinto.

The world's first Fresh & Easy opened in Hemet in early November.

The chain is owned by Tesco, an English company that is one of the largest supermarket chains in the world.

The San Jacinto opening was part of a six-store Southern California opening.

The company plans to have hundreds of stores in Southern California, Nevada, and Arizona if the concept works out. This is Tesco's first shot at Trader Joe's-style markets of 10,000 square feet or so with a relatively small selection.

One of its primary concepts is providing fresh food at good prices, much of it packaged for singles and two-person households, in a small store near home.

Before Tesco - the largest retailer in England and the third largest in the world - opened its first store, its researchers talked with consumers in other stores, in the street, even in their homes, said Fresh & Easy spokesman Brendan Wonnacott, and built the Fresh & Easy concept around the results.

Fresh & Easy carries about one-tenth the number of products found in most full-service markets.

The company's news releases focus on the concept of small stores situated near where people live, even near where employees live.

More than 50 percent of Fresh & Easy employees live within three miles of the stores at which they work, according to one news release.

A huge distribution center at March Air Reserve Base is intended to supply all the Western stores, but it has run into problems with the approval process and there has even some suggestion that it may have to be razed and built anew.

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