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Who Will Own the Local Falafel Market? Amsterdam or Maoz?

Posted by **Tim Carman** on Jan. 22, 2009, at 7:57 pm



Maoz Vegetarian, an

Amsterdam-based falafel chain, appears to have [serious designs on the D.C. market](#). In fact, Its [first foray into the area](#), on M Street NW near Dupont Circle, could open in as soon as three months.

Which got me to wondering: How will this Dutch import affect the expansion plans of [Amsterdam Falafelshop](#)? Last time I talked to owners **Scott** and **Arienne Bennett**, way back in April 2007, [they had pulled the plug on their second Falafelshop](#) on Capitol Hill but were still moving ahead on a franchise location in Herndon. But nearly two years later, there's still only one Falafelshop, the original in Adams Morgan. What gives?

Well, it turns out the expansion delays have nothing to Maoz, says Arienne Bennett. The couple just realized a while back that they needed more expertise if they planned to franchise the Falafelshop. So the Bennetts turned to [FranPoint Partners](#), an Annapolis-based franchise development company. FranPoint is helping the couple develop a franchising plan "the proper way, so that our franchisees would be happy with what they got," Arienne Bennett says. And so that they'd be happy with the profits, too, she adds, unlike too many franchisees who slave away for the corporate mothership and have little to show for it.

The Bennetts, in fact, seem to welcome Maoz's entrance into the market.

"They were one of the [companies] we looked at in how falafel could be better in the United States," Arienne Bennett says, noting that Amsterdam Falafelshop has evolved into something different from its European inspiration. "We're the gourmet one, and they're the Wal-Mart one...but not in a bad way."

Besides, the Bennetts believe the market can support more than one falafel chain. Look at the burger market, Arienne Bennett suggests. [Elevation Burger](#) hasn't stopped its expansion plans just because of [all the new burger joints](#) that have popped up in recent years.

"We're not out to compete directly with Maoz. We realize there is plenty of room in the market" for both groups, Bennett says. "If you wanted to put a Maoz next door to us, I think we'd do just fine."

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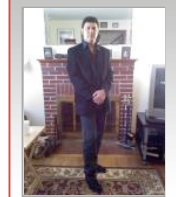
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