

## Navarro pushes ahead with store openings

By Geoff Walden

MIAMI – Navarro Discount Pharmacy has opened its 30th store, a unit in Homestead, Fla., as the regional drug chain moves forward with its expansion strategy.

Navarro's next unit, one of more than 20 planned additional outlets, will premiere in Pembroke Pines in Broward County in the spring.

"Due to the strength of the Navarro brand in the Hispanic community, the new Homestead store, our southernmost store, has had excellent traffic and higher-than-normal opening sales," said chief executive officer Juan Ortiz. "There is a tremendous need locally for a community pharmacy such as Navarro and a lot of pent-up -demand."

The first 200 customers at the Homestead store received a free Navarro reusable bag filled with products. There was product sampling throughout the day, as well as two-for-one offers. Representatives from Florida Health College, Dade Medical College and the American Heart Association staffed tables and administered free vascular, glucose and vital sign screenings.

"We're proud of the fact that all of the new employees hired for the Homestead store are local residents," said store manager Javier Fernandez. "We are very grateful to the city of Homestead for assisting us with recruiting and with our job fair earlier this year."

For added convenience and improved service, the pharmacy department has been moved to the front of the 11,280-square-foot store. The store layout features new colors and enhanced signage in English and Spanish, wider aisles, more products in the refrigerated food and dairy section, and a larger fragrance section with added light boxes. Services include a pediatric window for busy parents, pharmacy compounding, free Diabetes Club membership for adults and children, and free prescription delivery.

The shelves in Homestead are stocked with ethnic products for the Mexican community, including Jumex nectars, an extensive variety of chili peppers, piñatas, and Hispanic products from Goya and Gamesa. Other signature products for Hispanics include Café La Llave Espresso coffee and Fabuloso multipurpose cleaner plus popular brands such as Valentini, El Sembrador and La Fe.

The opening follows the chainwide and online launch of Navarro's Vida Mia private label line of Hispanic products.

"Having a solely Hispanic-focused brand such as Vida Mia with bilingual product packaging will allow us to better cater to our market, which lacks culturally relevant products that appeal to this growing and diverse population," said Ortiz. "We will also continue satisfying our loyal customer base, who were instrumental in developing this brand and come to Navarro for both value and quality. We have also received strong interest to date from retailers in Texas, California and Latin America, with strong Hispanic customer bases who wish to buy the Vida Mia products on a wholesale basis."

Vida Mia (translated as "My Life") is the first brand in the United States targeting Hispanics across a wide range of categories including over-the-counter drugs, household products, beauty, food, and body and baby care. The line of more than 300 SKUs is being distributed through Navarro subsidiary Magellan Distribution Solutions LLC, a wholesale and export company. The retailer's marketing campaign for the launch has included in-store sampling and coupon offers.

Vida Mia is available on a wholesale basis and online at [www.navarro.com](http://www.navarro.com). Navarro also will license the brand to retailers around the country who have a strong Hispanic customer base.