

Holland & Barrett plots US launch

BY JAMES WILMORE

Health food retailer Holland & Barrett is gearing up to open its first stores in the US, Retail-week.com exclusively revealed.

The retailer has agreed terms on two stores in New York City – one in the new World Trade Center building and the other in central Manhattan. Holland & Barrett, which is owned by US-based NBTY, aims to open at least one of the shops by the end of this year.

NBTY's Europe boss Peter Aldis said: "We've appointed brokers, we're looking at distribution, we've met with a lot of people over there and we've got heads of terms on two sites, but we haven't signed them yet."

Holland & Barrett reported strong growth in Europe last year and aims to capitalise on demand among health-conscious Americans.

Aldis said: "The US is not an easy market to operate in, but they [NBTY] have been watching



The first branch in the new Holland & Barrett format opened in Chester last week

our growth. There was a hesitancy, but NBTY thinks Holland & Barrett is a successful model and could do well."

He said the proposed US stores will play on Holland & Barrett's national roots. "We'll British it up, with things like sepia photographs of Buckingham Palace," he said.

The retailer already has franchise partners in countries such as China, the UAE, Spain and Malta, but the US sites will be directly owned and run by Holland & Barrett.

As of today, NBTY Europe will be rebranded as Holland & Barrett International, Aldis also revealed.

HOLLAND & BARRETT MORE LAUNCHES IN UK

HOLLAND & BARRETT has opened a new store format aimed directly at consumers with food allergies and intolerances.

The first branch of Holland & Barrett More launched in Chester last Thursday and the retailer plans to open 50 shops over the next two years under the banner.

The stores will initially carry around 1,000 'free from' products. In total, more than 3,000 products will be offered by the end of this year, including products for people with nut, egg and fish allergies. The range will also be launched online.

NBTY Europe boss Peter Aldis said the new store type is "natural territory" for the retailer.

"We are seeing a significant change in consumer trends in this market," he added.

► Watch an interview with Aldis Retail-week.com/handbmore