



GEN Korean BBQ Secures Its First Direct Southern California and Hawaii Regional Costco Purchase Order

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CERRITOS, Calif., May 13, 2026 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- GEN Restaurant Group, Inc. ("GEN" or the "Company") (Nasdaq: GENK), operator of GEN Korean BBQ, the largest full-service Korean BBQ restaurant chain in the United States, today announced it has received a direct retail purchase order from Costco's Southern California regional buying team, securing freezer aisle placement across approximately 40 Costco warehouse locations spanning Southern California and Hawaii.

The placement represents an important milestone in GEN's broader retail and consumer packaged goods ("CPG") expansion strategy. The order was issued without a preceding regional roadshow requirement, reflecting GEN's established regional brand presence, prior retail execution, and existing consumer demand within the market.

Costco maintains a highly selective merchandising and vendor qualification process for retail inventory placement, which commonly includes regional roadshow demonstration programs consisting of live in-store sampling and consumer engagement events used to evaluate product demand prior to broader inventory placement decisions.

On May 7, 2026, GEN announced the launch of its Costco roadshow demonstration program, a multi-region initiative bringing the Company's signature ready-to-cook marinated meat products to Costco members across additional markets, including Oregon, Washington, Alaska and Texas, as part of its broader phased retail expansion strategy.

GEN also plans to conduct roadshow activations within the Southern California and Hawaii locations carrying its products, not as a prerequisite for placement, but as a demand-driving initiative designed to increase product awareness, accelerate consumer trial, and support consumer engagement during the initial launch period.

The Korean cultural wave, spanning globally dominant music acts including BTS and BLACKPINK, internationally acclaimed streaming content, and the expanding influence of Korean food, fashion, and lifestyle across mainstream American consumer culture, has created measurable tailwinds for Korean BBQ as a retail category.

GEN's position within the market is well established. The Company operates a high concentration of restaurant locations throughout Southern California, has built a retail presence across major grocery banners not limited to but including the likes of Albertsons, Pavilions, Safeways, Stater Brothers, Vons, Bevmo and many other retailers. GEN's position within that market is well established. The Company maintains a high concentration of restaurant locations throughout the region, a retail presence across major grocery banners including Albertsons, Pavilions, and Vons, and a branded gift card presence across more than 91 Costco warehouse locations and over 55 Sam's Club locations nationwide, consistently ranking among the top-performing restaurant gift card products in the warehouse channel across multiple regional markets.

That combination of restaurant footprint, retail sell-through history, and Gen Korean BBQ customer engagement provided Costco's Southern California regional buyers with sufficient demand visibility to proceed directly to a purchase order.

GEN's entry into Costco's retail inventory is the result of years of deliberate retail infrastructure development. The Company successfully completed Costco's full vendor qualification requirements, including the Buy Doc/Item Agreement, Food Safety Audit ("FSA") report, and Basic Buying Agreement ("BBA"), prior to any product placement. Across more than 100 supermarket demonstration events conducted to date, GEN has achieved sell-through of 100 to 300 units per four-hour window at individual store locations, establishing a documented performance record that informed Costco's evaluation.

"Receiving a direct purchase order from Costco's Southern California region, without a roadshow as a prerequisite, is a meaningful validation of the brand equity and retail execution we have built over the past several years. The strength of our demonstration program across supermarket and warehouse channels speaks to the growing consumer demand for Korean BBQ in mainstream retail, and we believe this Costco placement is a direct reflection of that momentum. We are focused on executing this launch with the same standard of quality and hospitality that has defined GEN from the beginning," said David Kim, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of GEN.

The Company views the Southern California and Hawaii placement as a foundational step in its broader retail distribution strategy and will continue evaluating opportunities to expand across additional Costco regions and retail partners nationwide, informed by ongoing roadshow performance across existing markets.

GEN's ready-to-cook marinated meats are prepared using the same recipes and quality standards featured across the Company's restaurant operations, offering consumers a convenient way to recreate the GEN Korean BBQ experience at home while extending the brand into at-home dining occasions as part of the Company's broader omnichannel growth strategy.

For more information or to locate a GEN Korean BBQ restaurant, visit www.genkoreanbbq.com.

About GEN Restaurant Group, Inc.

GEN Restaurant Group (Nasdaq: GENK) owns and operates GEN Korean BBQ, a full-service Korean BBQ dining concept with 50+ locations across the United States. The Company is engaged in expanding its brand through retail, consumer packaged goods, and experiential channels.

Forward-Looking Statements

This press release contains forward-looking statements. Forward-looking statements may be identified by the use of words such as “believe,” “intend,” “expect,” “will,” “may,” and other similar words or expressions that predict or indicate future events. All statements that are not statements of historical fact are forward-looking statements, including any statements regarding our strategy, future operations, and growth prospects, including expectation relating to the Company’s CPG division, any statements regarding future revenue or revenue growth, any projections regarding the number of locations carrying our CPG products, any statements of belief or expectation, and any statements of assumptions underlying any of the foregoing or other future events. Forward-looking statements are based on current information available at the time the statements are made and on management’s reasonable belief or expectations with respect to future events, and are subject to risks and uncertainties, many of which are beyond the Company’s control, that could cause actual performance or results to differ materially from the belief or expectations expressed in or suggested by the forward-looking statements. Additional factors or events that could cause actual results to differ may also emerge from time to time, and it is not possible for the Company to predict all of them. Forward-looking statements speak only as of the date on which they are made, and the Company undertakes no obligation to update any forward-looking statement to reflect future events, developments or otherwise, except as may be required by applicable law. Investors are referred to the Company’s Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2025, and in our subsequent filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission (“SEC”), which are available on the SEC’s website at www.sec.gov, for additional information regarding the risks and uncertainties that may cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed in any forward-looking statement. We undertake no obligation to update any forward-looking statements to reflect future events or circumstances, new information, or the occurrence of unanticipated events, except as required by law.

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