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'Soup Nazi' takes stock

By BRADEN KEIL

There's plenty of soup for you!

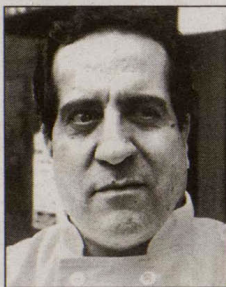
Surly soup chef Al Yeganeh, who became an unlikely celebrity as the inspiration of the "Soup Nazi" character in "Seinfeld," has turned his infamy into an international enterprise.

Yeganeh and his business partners are celebrating their first year after opening 18 Original Soup Man franchises, including seven in Manhattan, one each in Garden City, L.I., and Princeton, and others as far as St. Louis and Toronto.

Another spinoff spawned in the last 12 months is his line of grab-and-go retail soups sold in more than 2,000 grocery stores.

"Franchise growth has exceeded everyone's expectations," said company spokesman John Rarrick.

And according to recently installed company President Keith Lyon, the group plans to open 5,000 stores worldwide in the next seven years.



AL YEGANEH
Conquering the world.

The next New York City opening will be in Hanover Square, where Yeganeh will unveil a soup he's created for the Rangers hockey organization next month.

Yeganeh's original Soup Kitchen International on West 55th Street is not likely to reopen as a soup shop.

"It's yet to be determined. But one of the options is to turn it into a soup museum," said Rarrick. "It would be sort of an historical shrine to Al's career as a soup man."

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