



# Chipotle Founder Is Opening Robot Restaurants With Meat-Free Food

By Dennis Limmer

Steve Ells, Chipotle's founder and ex-CEO, is set to launch a new venture named Kernel in early 2024. Ells plans to open the first new meat-free robot restaurant location in Manhattan, followed by around a dozen more across New York.

Kernel's business model can be compared to competitors like Dig and Little Beet.

Arlene Spiegel, an expert who advises restaurant, retail, and food businesses based in New York, explained that Kernel will do a lot of its food preparation elsewhere. After that, the food will be sent to the Kernel stores "for final assembly and sale to customers."

Spiegel compared Kernel's plan to use a lot of automated machines in its operation to "a makeshift factory, almost like the Willy Wonka of takeout foods."

Spiegel stated that all the food given out at the store will have controlled portions, and the process will be fully automated. This

means machines will be doing a lot of the work.

The system is also set up to work well with all ordering platforms, making it quick and easy for customers to pick up their orders or have them delivered.

To differentiate itself and provide a visual experience, Kernel's stores will have an additional special feature. Customers will have the opportunity to see how the automated kitchen prepares their food. ●

