



TWO CUSTOMERS checking out the vegetable section of Cost-U-Less retail store. (Picture by Sharon Harding.)

High standards at Cost-U-less

NORTH AMERICAN-BASED retailer Cost-U-Less threw open its doors yesterday for the first time in Barbados, welcoming the families of employees and members of the media during a soft opening and tour of the facility.

Workers, suppliers and contractors were busy applying last-minute touches as they got ready for today's official opening of the retail warehouse club-style store.

Tom Kallio, vice-president of operations and general manager, said that a lot of careful planning had gone into the design and construction of the \$30 million facility at Welches, St Thomas,

adding that it had implemented measures to counter high operational costs.

"We are pretty excited to be in the Barbados market," he said.

"A lot of work has gone into developing every aspect of the building. We have an extremely high standard . . . We looked at our operational costs very carefully and right now we are using 60 per cent lighting. We can run 30 per cent lighting when we are ready or take it up to 100 per cent . . . We spent a lot of time to ensure that we can keep our utility bills down."

Kallio said Cost-U-Less was also working to become fully compliant with the recently proclaimed **Safety**

And Health At Work Act.

"We have set high standards and we have partnered with the Barbados Employers' Confederation because we can't keep up with everything on our own."

He said that another objective of yesterday's soft opening was to give staff the opportunity to become comfortable in their new role.

Cost-U-Less officially opens today with a neighbourhood car park party. The international chain retailer offers customers a variety of produce, household and office items, clothing and electronics. (MM)

Former marine offers to house Garcia

THERE HAS BEEN a place for Raul Garcia, should he be released, for more than two years.

At least that's according to Alex Mitchell, president of the Coalition of Unified Parties, who contested the St Michael South seat in Thursday's general election.

"When this issue began a couple of years ago, I went on **Barbados Free Press** and offered to take Garcia in and that offer stands today," Mitchell said on Thursday, adding that Garcia's family had contacted him.

He said attorney at law David Comissiong was not involved at that time and he did not make contact with him subsequently, so the attorney was unaware of the offer. However, after reading that Garcia had won his case and an "elderly couple" was to take him in, he felt he had to speak up.

"That elderly couple is not equipped to deal with Garcia, but I am a retired United States marine. I don't drink, I don't smoke, I don't use drugs and I have the time to keep him," he said.

Mitchell said he did not perceive Garcia to be any threat and would be happy to house him in an apartment in Rockley, Christ Church. He said that if he, as a marine, was not allowed to house Garcia, then the next best bet was to "release him in international waters to his family".

Mitchell also chastised Prime Minister Freundel Stuart for mentioning in one of his platform speeches that he was "going to let the prisoners free" but not doing it. (CA)

Fogging this week

SIX PARISHES WILL be fogged next week when the Ministry of Health continues its programme to rid the island of the aedes egypti mosquito.

Fogging starts on Monday in St Philip districts including Rock Hall, Harlington, Kirtons and surrounding areas; and on Tuesday the team from the Vector Control Unit will go to St George, fogging Drax Hall Tenantry, Malverton, Bydes Mill and other districts.

On Wednesday, the team will go to Christ Church, followed by St James and St Peter on Thursday, and St Michael on Friday.

All fogging runs from 4:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. Residents with respiratory problems should protect themselves from inhaling the fumes. (BGIS)

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