

Area hospitals deploy MooBella ice cream machines

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MooBella Inc., a Taunton company that has developed a "make-your-own" ice cream machine, said it has now deployed its machines at nine New England hospitals, including Boston Medical Center, UMass Medical Center, North Shore Medical Center, and South Shore Medical Center.

According to MooBella, its multi-patented technology allows consumers to buy fresh, hard-scoop ice cream that is made in about 40 seconds. During that time, a machine about the size of a refrigerator mixes, aerates, and flash-freezes liquid ingredients into ice cream, previous Globe coverage has noted.

According to the company, its machine is good way to target locations where fresh ice cream has rarely been available. MooBella sees a primary customer group as food-service companies that operate food courts in hospitals and college campuses, among other places.

MooBella has spent several years developing its ice cream prototype. Last fall, after the company said it had secured \$18 million in venture funding, a MooBella official said the hope was to have a hundred of the machines deployed by the end of 2009 or the early part of this year.

The company's May 6 press release included a statement from Dave Peters, MooBella's vice president for marketing and sales, who said: "Hospital food service executives have been very responsive to the MooBella Ice Creamery. They like the wide variety MooBella offers in such a small space and they appreciate that MooBella is great tasting, all natural, and contains significantly less fat and calories than competitive brands. In addition, they appreciate that the Ice Creamery is easy for consumers to use and for employees to clean and maintain."