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MAK'S EATERY READY FOR TAKE OFF; Restaurant is just one of a number of additions at Chandler Executive Airport.

A healthy business

One of the nation's largest distributors of animal health products is consolidating Tulare and Fresno operations into a new warehouse in Visalia.

Walco International has signed a lease to occupy 68,000 square feet in a warehouse owned by **The Allen Group**, a major commercial developer.

"Visalia provides a strategic location for the distribution of our products throughout the West Coast," said Mark Gray, vice president of operations for Walco.

The warehouse is near Visalia's airport, but is only a small part of The Allen Group's presence in the San Joaquin Valley. The company has developed about 2 million square feet of industrial and commercial property in Visalia, where it has the 480-acre Midstate 99 Distribution Center.

VF Corp, one of the world's largest clothing companies, announced plans to operate a 1 million-square-foot warehouse at Midstate 99.

The Allen Group also has the 700-acre International Trade and Transportation Center in Shafter, which is home to a 1.7 million-square-foot distribution center, and recently bought 107 acres next to Meadows Field Airport in Bakersfield, where it plans offices and stores, said Jon Cross, a company spokesman.

That adds up to a lot of land to develop, but Cross said businesses are seeking out space in the Valley because they want out of congested and expensive real estate in the Los Angeles and San Francisco regions.

The Allen Group is developing a total of 8,000 acres in the United States, including 6,000 acres near Dallas, Texas. It also will be a partner with BNSF railway in an industrial park project in Texas.

All this from a company started by Richard Allen in Visalia after he sold a cup-manufacturing business.

www.allengroup.com

