

MARK COLE
Owner, Don's Specialty Meats – Scott, LA

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Date: October 13, 2006
Location: Don's Specialty Meats – Scott, LA
Interviewer: Amy Evans
Length: 40 minutes
Project: Southern Boudin Trail - Louisiana

[Begin Mark Cole]

00:00:02

Amy Evans: This is Amy Evans for the Southern Foodways Alliance and it is Friday, October 13th 2006. I'm in Scott, Louisiana, at Don's Specialty Meats with Mr. Cole. Mr. Cole, would you please state your name and your birth date for the record please, sir?

00:00:17

Mark Cole: Mark Aubrey Cole, September 29, 1962.

00:00:21

AE: And how long have you—you're the proprietor here, the owner of Don's Specialty Meats, is that right?

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MC: That's right.

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AE: How long have you owned Don's Specialty Meats?

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MC: We—we'll be in our fourteenth year in business this—we have a Scott—Scott location over here, which at you're at right now, that's been in business for right at a year. We opened over here right off of I-10, Exit 97 and have another business in Carencro [Louisiana] by the Old Evangeline Downs [race track] that I've been having for fourteen years.

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AE: And who is Don?

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MC: Me and Don Menard went in business fourteen years ago, yeah—in business; he was from the Carencro/Cankton area. He knew—**[Phone Rings]**.

[Short pause]

00:01:14

AE: Testing—okay, we're back.

00:01:16

MC: Me and Don Menard went in business fourteen years ago. He knew—he knew pretty much about the business, specialty meats, and boudin. I put up the money to get started, and he stayed about two-and-a-half, three years and went to open a big grocery store. And I just stayed in my location and my—my business has been increasing ever since—been real good, very happy with the business.

00:01:43

AE: May I ask what the name of his grocery store is that he opened?

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MC: His? Don's Country Mart in Carencro.

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AE: So when you opened the business, he had the knowledge of—of the specialty meats are and then you were like the financial backer and you went in together?

00:02:01

MC: Yes.

00:02:02

AE: So did he grow up doing that kind of thing?

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MC: Yeah, he grew up in that area. I had—a friend of mine—that's how I really met Don; he had a grocery store of specialty meats in the Lafayette area, and I'd always go around and mess around with them and help them with different things in the meat department. And that's how I met Don over there and he was—wanted to open—after he left that business, wanted to open another store for his uncle. And he wasn't doing anything at the time, and I asked him to go in business with me and he did, and we had a very successful business.

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AE: What were you doing before the meat business?

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MC: I was in the car business for—for twelve years.

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AE: And where are you from, exactly?

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MC: From Lafayette [Louisiana].

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AE: So what is it about this area that demands so many specialty meat markets?

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MC: The culture of the people over here are—boudin and cracklings is a big drawing card for the—for this area, as far as people just eat it every day for breakfast, lunch, or supper. I mean we open at six o'clock in the morning, and a lot of people either pick it up for breakfast or the pick it up to bring to customers early in the morning, and people come by and eat it all day long. We're open 'til seven o'clock [at night] over here, and we sell a lot of cold and frozen boudin. As far as, you know, people traveling, we have a lot of people traveling that stop to get boudin to go—especially over here on I-10. We roughly probably sell anywhere from 10 to 11,000 pounds a week between the two stores of boudin.

00:03:46

AE: So when you went in the business with Don did you just—you must have known that it was a good business decision to get into the meat business.

00:03:53

MC: Yes. And then ever since I say the last number of years it's—it's really picked up a whole lot. The Carencro store is probably—has an increase of about 15 to 20-percent every year, which you know has grown. We're right off of I-49, and we have people traveling that stop there. The

[newer] Scott location has been real, real good; it took off way faster than we thought it would—would have took off. And they [at the Scott location] just accelerated from there and surpassed the Carencro location that we've been having for fourteen years. And it's—it's really done well.

00:04:33

AE: So the Carencro location, that—for the record—is just a little bit north of Lafayette?

00:04:39

MC: It's about—about six miles north of Lafayette on I-49, which is about eight miles from this—eight to ten miles from this location.

00:04:50

AE: What made you choose Scott to open the second location?

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MC: The Scott area—especially being right off of I-10. I know all the traffic on I-10 and the car count is about 80 to 90,000 cars a day on I-10, and this Scott area has just really built up fast. We have a hotel going up next door; we have the new Harley [Davidson motorcycle] shop next door, plus a bunch of other businesses around this area and it's just—the population of the Scott area is also picked up but especially the highway traffic. People on the I-10—traveling is a good part of my business over here.

00:05:34

AE: Now in Scott I know there are a couple other specialty meat places that have boudin. Did you see that as competition or did you—were you really confident that being here on the Interstate was—was your thing?

00:05:44

MC: No, being on the Interstate was being a big part of it. Exposure and visibility is a big part of it. When people pass and see your business and your location every time they pass on I-10—and I have billboards also but on my—on my building. You know, I have big signs and—and it's very visible to see and the Scott area is also—turn off this thing?

00:06:18

AE: Uh-hmm. [*Short pause*] Okay, we're back

00:06:21

MC: The Scott area right here, especially by this exit is just—it's the first stop right before Lafayette and they just have a lot of people stopping in this area. My closest competition is probably The Best Stop, which is probably two miles—two or three miles away from me off of Highway 93, and they have enough business for, you know, both stores. They were happy when I came because they said they had too much business, so I'm—I'm happy to be here and, you know, happy to be in business here.

00:06:57

AE: What do you think it is about this—this establishment, Don's Specialty Meats, that's different from everybody else?

00:07:05

MC: We have a nice new facility, always have a clean store, inside and out, the—my old store in Carencro is a clean facility. I mean it's just—I like to keep a spotless store and, you know, keep people when they sit and they see something clean, you know, it makes them happy. And the quality of your meat and being consistent—consistency as far as your boudin, cracklings, you know, keeping it the same all the time, your same recipe and doing the meats and, you know, doing everything the same has a lot to do with it.

00:07:47

AE: And now can we talk about your boudin? Is that Don's recipe that you're making?

00:07:53

MC: Yes, it's a mixture of—of Don's recipe and my butcher over there, Jimmy Guidry, that we have. It's, you know, mainly pork. You have some pork liver, and you've got rice and seasonings.

00:08:11

AE: Can you describe your boudin, like the—the texture and the flavor?

00:08:14

MC: It's—it's a real meaty boudin; it has a lot of meat in it. The rice is not over-powering the meat and it's a good seasoning—seasoned well.

00:08:27

AE: As in pretty spicy?

00:08:28

MC: Not too spicy but it's spicy enough.

00:08:31

AE: So what would you say makes a good boudin?

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MC: A consistent boudin, you know, makes—we have two people that make it here. It's mainly the—the—a consistency that, you know, is the same all the time. You don't want somebody coming in one week and they say, you know, your boudin is this way and then your boudin is this way another week. You know, it's—all the seasons are measured and we put, like I said, you have the meat, onions, bell peppers, and garlic; you've got parsley, your red pepper, black pepper and salt, seasonings, a little bit of pork liver and like keeping your consistency of your—doing it the same way all the time has a lot to do with it.

00:09:18

AE: How would you describe the—the packing of the boudin and the casing? Was it like a tight packing or—?

00:09:24

MC: It's tight but it's not too tight because when it—when it cooks—when you heat it up in the—in the boiling water it—it tightens up your casing. As far as—it's not packed when you—when you make it. It's not tight—tight but it's—you want—you don't want it too tight because it will bust the casing, yeah.

00:09:45

AE: Now I mentioned earlier before we started recording that I was up in Mamou and—and places up there in more rural areas. Do you think there's a difference between the boudin up there and down here near Lafayette?

00:09:54

MC: Yeah, most definite; it's just—it's not a whole lot different, but there is a difference. The difference around this area from here you go to Jennings [Louisiana], it's a different boudin. If you eat boudin in Baton Rouge, it's a different boudin. It's a commercial boudin, and there's a homemade boudin. Ours is what we call the best homemade boudin over here. The commercial boudin is made a lot cheaper, you know, different things in there as far as the meat-wise. And, you know, they put more rice in it, which they sell at a lot of commercial places. Ours we—ours is a homemade boudin like old mom and pop used to make at their house with our boucherie [family or community hog slaughtering tradition] or something like that—that is a good boudin that—that everybody enjoys.

00:10:48

AE: So can you talk a little bit more about those differences, though? Is it just in like maybe where and how they're getting their meat, or is it a difference in spice and flavor or what?

00:10:57

MC: I think it's a little bit between the meat and the spice and flavor. As far as the seasonings, the seasonings are probably varies of—if somebody likes it hot or mild. But as far as the meat, a

lot of people put in commercial boudin you—you don't put the best quality of meat that you can get, you know, and it's—it's not quite the same.

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AE: May I ask where you're getting your meat?

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MC: Most of our meat comes from Prejean's Wholesale Meats in the Carencro area and we've been—they've been supplying us for the last fourteen years and, like I said, if you have one thing and it's going well, just keep it the same.

00:11:42

AE: Do you have an idea about the history of boudin and where it came from and when it originated?

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MC: It's—I'm sure it originated—I mean with the Cajuns down here, basically; as far as when it originated, I'm sure at least you know 80—80 years ago. When all these people—when they would have a boucherie and kill their pigs, and they would have all their family; back then they used intestines, you know, to stuff—stuff the boudin and it's been going around a long time.

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AE: Have you experienced a boucherie yourself?

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MC: Yes, plenty of times; back when I was either younger growing up and going to, you know, somebody's house that—that had it or going to the boucherie in St. Martinville, they do all that over there.

00:12:37

AE: What do you think about that—that tradition in the Cajun culture?

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MC: It—it—that's something in the Cajun—that we—that we honor and treasure because we the only ones around here that do it, as far as the tradition that goes on right now as far—and then we celebrate it basically every year by having a [community] boucherie in this area.

00:13:03

AE: When you were growing up, did your family ever have a boucherie of their own or anything like that?

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MC: Not really of our own, but you know going to different people's houses—friends of mine; they had—you know, they had things like this. As far as doing it on our own, we never really did it on our own, you know. We grew cattle. I mean had cattle and stuff. But as far as pigs, we had pigs but we never had really our own boucherie.

00:13:33

AE: When you were growing up in Lafayette, where did you like to go get your—your boudin?

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MC: Growing up we—I used to go with my grandfather and—to Abbeville to Clemons, which they sold red boudin and white boudin—white boudin is the regular boudin that we sell now; blood boudin had—you would have pork blood in the boudin and only a slaughterhouse would make that and they—they still—I think they still can make, if it's a slaughterhouse, but it's very uncommon these days. And the taste was a little bit different but it—it wasn't bad at all.

00:14:17

AE: Can you describe the taste?

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MC: It's basically the same; it—it was reddish. It made your casing reddish. It just had maybe a little harsher kick to it, I guess but I mean it wasn't bad at all.

00:14:37

AE: Well and with the boucheries and making boudin being a tradition, a Cajun tradition in the area, and it being more or less a product of—of wanting to use the whole pig and then now with your Don's Specialty Meats here on the Interstate and the amount of boudin that's going through these doors, what is it about boudin that keeps people coming back?

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MC: They just love to eat it. It's just a common tradition for people around here—people that come over here and Scott are probably 60—70-percent of my business, it's highway traffic. I have a lot of local people that eat it and like I said, morning, noon, and—and supper. But as far as traveling people, they can't get it every day; and when they come by, they'll load their ice

chest you know—buy five, ten, to fifty pounds at a time. A lot of people coming in from Houston that's originally from this area and Mississippi and Florida, but the majority of the people, I guess, are from Texas—a lot of black people and white people, both, that grew up on boudin and cracklings but—and they just keep coming back because they enjoy the boudin that we make—homemade boudin. And they tell their family members about it and, you know, it goes on from there.

00:16:00

AE: How often do you eat boudin?

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MC: I like to try it about once a week just to make sure that, you know, the flavor and the consistency is staying the same, so about once a week I'll try a piece.

00:16:16

AE: And here at Don's Specialty Meats you're making it every day?

00:16:19

MC: Make it every day, anywhere from 800 to 1,000 to 1,200 to 1,400 pounds a day. So we make probably, like I said, 7,000 pounds here and 5,000 to 6,000 pounds at the other store every day except Sundays. **[Phone Rings]** We don't make boudin on Sundays, so the—the boudin, we—we package it every day. We put some in the freezer every day. We sell it out—we sell out the freeze every day in five-pound boxes, as well as cold and hot.

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AE: Do you ship at all?

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MC: Yeah, we ship just about every—we ship out boudin, cracklings, and specialty meats.

00:17:06

AE: Would you say that boudin and cracklings are your top sellers, or is that just what you kind of are known for?

00:17:13

MC: We're known for that—known for the best homemade boudin and cracklings. That's our—really our two top-sellers. Meat is another big seller, as far as selling to local people and traveling people, again. We specialize in stuffing de-boned chickens. That's the boneless chicken that's stuffed with various—of cornbread dressing, cornbread with crabmeat, rice dressing, with like—with the pork sausage. Those—those chickens, we sell plenty of those, you know, for the traveling people that come by and stop by. And some people buy eight or ten of them, you know, and put them in their freezer and—and have them for—whenever they're ready to cook. We sell a lot—a lot of the de-boned chickens—again, de-boned turkeys, which is done the same way.

[Phone Rings] Marinated pork—like people that cook jambalayas make their own fresh sausage. We make five different kinds of fresh sausage, four different kinds of smoked sausage, pork roasts, you know, beef roasts, pork ribs, stuffed briskets, a lot—everything along that line in the meat department.

00:18:34

AE: Now some of the places that I've visited in the more rural areas do a lot of custom processing. Do you do any of that here?

00:18:40

MC: Not really custom—more or less the people that do custom have slaughterhouses. As far as ours, everything is done in the back—you know, by the butchers. The preparation, as far as deboning all the chickens and getting the meats ready, you know—the boudin but all of it is done here at—at the store locally.

00:19:03

AE: But so like if you had a local person in Scott who had shot a deer in hunting season, could they bring it in and you make deer sausage for them?

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MC: Yeah, we have in the past. In the past 13 years. This last year we didn't do much deer. In the past we did plenty deer. You know, anywhere from 200 to 300 deer a season. Since we opened this second location, we—we just been busy with our own, you know—doing our own meats and boudin, cracklings. It's just picked up so much we don't have time to do the deer like we used to do.

00:19:44

AE: And a lot of people seem to be of the opinion that is really—[boudin] sells more in the winter than in the summer, but you seem to have a pretty constantly revolving door here.

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MC: Yes. As far as the winter and the summer, these days it don't really matter. Boudin sells 365 days a year. [*Phone Rings*] As far as right now, the—the summertime, I hate to see what the wintertime is going to be because we're going to be a lot busier, you know. It just—more the—more work to—to do. But as far as summertime and wintertime, it's very, very close as far as the boudin coming—coming through in and out of the store.

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AE: So how have you enjoyed being in the meat business, since you came from being in the car business?

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MC: It's been—it's been a little change. I always wanted to do something for my own, and I'm glad I did. I'm very happy with my business, and I got good people working for me. They take care of my business when I'm not here—good people in the meat department, people that run the store for me—so I'm very happy with—with the business I have and very happy I'm—I went into the business.

00:20:55

AE: What do you think the future of Don's Specialty Meats is?

00:21:00

MC: I'd like to open another store in the Broussard area—as far as catching people off of Highway 90 in the Broussard area, which is a very populated area. Growing big in the—in the Lafayette area and that probably will be next location that I'd like to—to build at.

00:21:19

AE: And back to the boudin, do you have an opinion about the rice and the rice that you put in it and the consistency of it when it's cooked?

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MC: As far as the rice, we never change—the same rice company since we opened. Like I said, everything is consistency; if it's working, don't change it. So the—as far as the rice, it's all Louisiana-grown from right in the Crowley area, the rice that we get and we use the same—like I said, the same company for fourteen years because the product they have is—is a good product and it's—the—the rice that we cook every day I mean is—is measured to, you know, the same with the water and so it should be the same all—you know, all the time.

00:22:11

AE: Uh-hmm. How would you describe boudin to someone who has never had it before?

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MC: People that haven't—haven't never tried it, we—over here, if they want one, we give them a sample piece—the same thing with the cracklings. As far as describing it, it's—it's kind of like—you've got to tell them it's like a sausage in a casing; it's not really a sausage but it's—it's, like you can say almost a rice dressing in a casing, as far as the meat in your rice, you know—as far as the way it looks and the way it tastes is different but we—we like to give everybody a piece to try, if you have never tried it when they come in the door.

00:22:58

AE: And in your store here you have, in addition to your specialty meats, you have a little bit of a grocery section. Are there other things that you specialize in? It looks like you have a lot of things specific to Louisiana.

00:23:08

MC: We like to carry some novelties from Louisiana. I'm a big LSU [Louisiana State University] fan. We—we have a lot of LSU business that comes in—going to the football game and people passing that or LSU fans and we have different things—novelties having to deal with LSU. Every home game we have, you know, hundreds of people that stop in at the store on Saturday morning going to the LSU game, and we also—on Sundays—people going back home to Texas or, you know, headed back east stop by and pick up boudin and meats and stuff headed back home. We have other Louisiana novelties, as far as in the store, that travelers would pick up that—you know, coffee mugs and, you know, key chains and different things, as far as that line. We have a full grocery store, as far as you can pick up all your basic items, and if you're cooking something out—having a cookout, we have plenty of that. The majority of our stuff is the—the meats; right now we're selling—as far as the meats and boudin and cracklings, we have a frozen section. We sell a lot of stuffed breads. A stuffed bread is a—a dough stuffed with ground meat and sausage, which really sells well. We handle crawfish, alligator, shrimp—so we have a little bit of seafood for the traveling people that can't get that kind of—those kinds of items. But most of it is in the specialty meats, as far as the de-boned chickens and turkeys and, you know, people buying rib-eyes and T-bones and, you know, things along that line—freshly smoked sausage, the kind that we—we have that they can't get anywhere else.

00:25:11

AE: Do you have a family of your own?

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MC: Yes, I have a boy that's 14 [Brandon] and my daughter [Lauren] is 8; and I have a wife of ten years [JoAnn].

00:25:26

AE: And is your son at all interested in the business?

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MC: Yes, he—he is. He like—he comes—my—my daughter comes around, more especially, on Sundays, when we serve the lunches on Sunday. She likes to come and help and either help them in the front of the register, or help them in the back. But he—he's involved in football right now, so he don't come as much—as he would like to but he—he likes to be involved with it.

00:25:51

AE: Do you hope that they'll be involved and—and work with you?

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MC: Yes, very much so. It would be a help, and it would be an asset, you know, to the business overall.

00:26:00

AE: What would you like people to know about Don's Specialty Meats, if they've never been here before?

00:26:05

MC: As far as Don's Specialty Meats, we're known for the best homemade boudin, cracklings—we have a nice new facility here on I-10 in Scott, which is a very, very clean store as far as appearance inside and out, very friendly employees working, great [*short pause*] can I turn it off a minute? What are we on—what question?

00:26:44

AE: What you'd like people to know about Don's Specialty Meats?

00:26:48

MC: The friendly people that work for me. Like I said, the cleanliness of the store, the product—have a very consistent product, as far as the boudin and cracklings, as far as the specialty meats, you know—everything done like one certain way and not—not doing it different ways as far as, you know, making it the same way all the time—the consistency of it. And just overall—.

00:27:29

AE: If I could take a minute to go back a little bit because I'm looking at your security cameras here and the pictures of the other parts of your facility. And you were talking about commercial boudin and really, when you were talking about that, if I remember, you were talking about the quality of the meat. But in your operation here how—how do you process that quantity of boudin in a day?

00:27:51

MC: It starts early in the morning. My main market manager, Jimmy [Guidry], him and his wife both work for me over here. He runs—he more or less runs the—the store and he helps out with the other store, also. They come—they come to work six days a week, and they come to work at four o'clock in the morning. I come the other day at four o'clock in the morning and get things started. We start with putting the boudin on at four o'clock in the morning every day. As far as getting that ready, the preparation of it starts right after that—as far as getting the boudin ready for the—for the next day, you know, cutting the meat up and processing it and getting everything ready. We put the beef jerky on. Also we—we sell a lot of beef jerky, which is common around this area and it really sells well—put that on early in the smoker, four o'clock every morning, unless he cooks sausage—smoked sausage. We just put it on early in the morning also and then start putting the cracklings on, and we cook cracklings every day except Sunday. As far as pre-cooking them, we have a process when we cook the cracklings. They take anywhere from 45—50 minutes the first time, and then we take them out and let them cool off and then that keeps going on. We cook in two different pots, six days a week from four o'clock in the morning usually 'til four or five o'clock that afternoon. We sell a lot of cracklings every day. As far as the cracklings, you start off with a—a box weight of about 50 to 55 pounds. You take that and you cut your cracklings up, as far as cutting them in cubes. They're all cut by hand; we cut them with the saw, and then they're cut by hand. Those are cut every day over here in preparation for getting them ready to put in the pot when—when they're cooked. Like I said, they start off with about 50—55 pounds. By the time it's cooked, by the time all your grease is cooked out from your fat, you end up with probably about 13 to 14 pounds of cooked cracklings out of a box of cracklings. Like I said, we cook 24 to 30 boxes a day, probably, and sell anywhere from 20 to 24 boxes every day of cracklings. Cracklings are a big seller, just like the—the boudin.

00:30:45

AE: Now Jimmy, who makes your boudin, is that something he knew how to do, or is that something he was trained in?

00:30:51

MC: He's been in the meat business for about 20—26 years. His brother, Roy, works with me also in the Carencro location. They both been with me for a total of about twenty years. Well as far as—Jimmy has been in the meat business, he been working with—for me for—for thirteen years, and his brother has been working for me about six to eight years and they—his—their other brother opened the Carencro store with me, which he works at another business now. And their—their whole family has been in the meat business and slaughterhouse business. They—they very much know how to prepare any kind of meat and—that you need.

00:31:44

AE: Do you think that there is anything about boudin that is specific to the person who makes it?

00:31:48

MC: Yes, because every—everybody has a different idea, I guess, about making boudin, as far as the way they like it. I've tasted boudin from probably 30 different places and not everybody's boudin is the same. It varies from people putting a lot of—lot of rice, people like use—we put a lot of meat in our boudin. The spice is always, you know, trying to be consistent with the—the same spices, the same seasonings, which has a lot to do with it. You don't want to eat it one time

and it be mild and the next time it will be real hot. So as far as that everybody—everybody's boudin is, it—there's a difference in it. It just depends what—what you like in—in boudin.

00:32:50

AE: And I've heard of people talking about making crawfish boudin and things like that. What do you think about that?

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MC: It's all right. I mean I've tasted it. We never really made it over here this far. It was mainly made because of people, I guess, during Lent, people in South Louisiana all—mostly all Catholics and they didn't eat boudin on Friday because of the—the meat situation. And right now we don't see that hindering our business as far as eating—people not eating meat on Fridays. I mean we sell seafood over here in the deli on Fridays, but as far as people not eating meat on Fridays it's—there's so many younger people these days that really don't follow the—really rules of the Catholic Church like they used to like older people do, basically.

00:33:48

AE: Do you think that you can call crawfish boudin boudin, if it doesn't have the hog liver in it?

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MC: It's—I mean it's got rice instead of the—the pork meat; you have crawfish in it and I mean it's going to be like a crawfish Etouffee in a casing, basically. That's basically what it is, as far as the—it's a good—it's a good flavor and a good taste. You just—different and the—the cost of it cost you more to make than pork boudin, so you got to sell it for you almost twice or three times the amount. Unless you don't put much crawfish in it because the price of crawfish right now,

it's not crawfish season and the price of crawfish are about \$15.99 a pound right now versus your—your pork that you would put in there, you know. It would cost you—you know a dollar ninety-nine to two-fifty a pound.

00:34:42

AE: How much do you sell a pound of boudin for?

00:34:44

MC: The boudin is \$2.99 a pound; it's two links to a pound. We sell it, like I said, cold—we sell it, you know, frozen and put in five-pound boxes also, and I think it's sixteen dollars for a five-pound box.

00:35:02

AE: Do you sell hot boudin?

00:35:02

MC: We sell plenty of hot boudin. We have a lot of people that come in bring it to customers in the oil field business or people—lot of people bring their automobile dealerships that—the wholesalers and—but a lot of the oil field business, people bringing it to their customers, people in the drug industry bringing it to doctors and nurses when they go visit them, you know, trying to help their business out by bringing them product but they—we sell it anywhere from, you know, people buying one link to—to five links to, you know—we package it in five-pound boxes cold—I mean hot and, you know, people buy two or three boxes at a time to bring to the customers.

00:35:52

AE: And tell me about this t-shirt that your employees are wearing that says “Got boudin?” on the front of it.

00:35:56

MC: “Got boudin?” started, I guess, probably about ten years ago—just a different way of letting the employees wear shirts. Just an idea that came up, as far as emphasizing, you know, you see “Got milk?” and different things like that and just decided, you know, to put something different and put “Got boudin?” We have “Eat more boudin” also on t-shirts, and we sell probably 20 to 30 shirts, probably, a week of tourists or people from out of town, even local people that, you know, come by and like the idea of the t-shirt and—and like wearing the t-shirt.

00:36:42

AE: Do you have a lot of folks who come through here—traveling through—who have never had boudin before?

00:36:46

MC: Yeah, there’s—there’s—every once in a while you’ll get some—I guess older people traveling from either California up that way traveling across the United States, headed across down south and they—people pronounce different things different ways and have a hard time pronouncing boudin the correct—the correct way and that—they come in and want to know what—what’s in the boudin, what’s—what it’s all about. And we like to give them a piece and let them try it, and the majority of them really enjoy it and—and take some home with them.

00:37:28

AE: Now are you in the eating the casing school or the—the sucking out of the casing school?

00:37:33

MC: I don't mind—I mean I've—I've eat it—I've eaten it before and it's—it's not bad for you, but as far as sucking it out, most of the time; and if there's a piece of casing in there, it don't bother me.

00:37:49

AE: Is there anything that I haven't asked you that you'd like to be sure to mention about your business here or boudin in general?

00:37:55

MC: I think you covered most of it, as far as the aspects of our business here. Like I said, the Scott location right off of I-10, the visibility of this location, and the location of it has helped my business a whole lot, as far as people traveling on—on the interstate on I-10, knowing where you're at after them passing it up or, you know, seeing it on billboards. As far as that and people coming in and, like I said, boudin—cracklings especially—meat is the biggest part of the business as far as the—having the best homemade boudin and cracklings. It's—boudin in this area is really going well—cracklings also. The de-boned chickens and freshly smoked sausage that I mentioned are real big sellers, and I hope it continues the way it's going because it's really going well right now.

00:39:00

AE: Do a lot of people come in and call you Don? **[Laughs]**

00:39:03

MC: Some people do—a lot of people in Carencro because I was in Carencro for thirteen years and a lot of people would—would call me—excuse me—would call me Don, and it didn't bother me, you know. People knew I owned the business and stuff like that and it—it didn't bother me at all. And I just—I go along with the program.

00:39:27

AE: What does your former business partner think about his name being in this new business?

00:39:33

MC: Well I mean, I don't think it bothers him at all; I mean from where their store is in Carencro to where mine is is probably, you know, two or three miles apart, and I don't even think they sell boudin cracklings over there. They're a big grocery store for the area of Carencro, and my business and his business is two separate businesses. And he's a Parish President in St. Andrew Parish now, so I mean he's in there but not as much as he was and—but their business is good and my business is good, so there's plenty of business for everybody, and I have no negatives to say about anybody's business. You know, I—I do my thing and they do their thing.

00:40:21

AE: Well Mr. Cole, I sure appreciate you taking the time to sit with me this morning. I've enjoyed talking to you.

00:40:25

MC: Well you're welcome, and I hope everything goes well for you in your—at school.

00:40:33

AE: Thank you.

00:40:34

[End Mark Cole]