

**Matt and Sheila Neal**  
**Neal's Deli - Carrboro, North Carolina**

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Location: Neal home, Carrboro, North Carolina  
Interviewer: Sara Camp Arnold  
Transcription: Shelley Chance, ProDocs  
Length: fifty-seven minutes  
Project: Carrboro Farmers' Market

**[Begin Matt & Sheila Neal-1 Interview]**

**00:00:00**

**Sara Camp Arnold:** Okay; so this is Sara Camp Arnold for the Southern Foodways Alliance on September 15, 2011. And if you two could introduce—introduce yourselves and tell me who you are?

**00:00:16**

**Sheila Neal:** I'm Sheila Neal, and I was born in High Point, North Carolina, on January 24, 1971.

**00:00:26**

**Matt Neal:** Hey; I'm Matt Neal, and I was born in Durham, North Carolina, in July 1971.

**00:00:35**

**SCA:** Okay; and what is your business?

**00:00:37**

**MN:** We own Neal's Deli in Carrboro, North Carolina.

**00:00:42**

**SCA:** Okay; and then Sheila you were also?

**00:00:46**

**SN:** The manager of the Carrboro Farmers' Market for several years.

**00:00:49**

**SCA:** Can you tell me the dates of that?

**00:00:51**

**SN:** Yeah; from April 2004 until December of 2007.

**00:01:01**

**SCA:** Okay; and we'll come back to that later. Why don't you tell me a little bit—we'll start with Sheila—about your relationship with food growing up? Did your parents cook, or anything like that?

**00:01:14**

**SN:** My parents did cook. We had a good balance of my mom cooking at home and going out to eat. I would say that we went out to eat at least once a week, and we didn't do fast food. Not that we *never* did fast food, but when we went out to eat, we went out to like a family restaurant in High Point or Greensboro or even Winston. And I feel like my parents really taught me how to go out and eat, or dine—that's always been important to our family.

**00:01:47**

My grandmothers are the ones who really influenced me with food. One grandmother who lived right up the street from me always had a garden, and she was more of a homey Southern cooking—chicken-fried steak with fried zucchini and squash. We always had long, cooked green beans. And she cooked out of her garden.

00:02:11

My other grandmother, ironically enough, lived on a farm, but lo and behold, she did not garden. People brought her vegetables and fruit and hogs—or I should say hams—all year long. And she was more of what I—her—her style of cooking was more of what I call “Southern lady” style of cooking—chicken salad, country ham biscuits, but they weren't really biscuits. They were what she called “angel rolls.” I never remember big pieces of meat at her table. It was casseroles, lots of fruit, homemade jams, with the yeast rolls—which are the angel rolls—on the table, sugar cake from Dewey’s in Winston-Salem—it was a big thing, and creamed corn at Christmas. She always—she had two deep freezers where she always prepped corn and froze it, and then we would have creamed corn on Christmas.

00:03:15

So those were kind of my—I would say my food influences growing up.

00:03:24

**SCA:** All right, thanks; and Matt, what about you?

00:03:27

**MN:** Well, I grew up in the restaurant business, because my parents [Moreton Neal and the late Bill Neal] started a French restaurant when I was about five years old, and we lived upstairs, and that was called Restaurant La Residence. And that was in Chatham County. It’s still around—although it’s not in my parents’ hands anymore—in Chapel Hill. So it’s—it’s been around forever. It was successful enough to stay alive. **[Laughs]**

00:03:55

And so, but my dad was from the Gaffney/Blacksburg/Grover area, and his family were farmers who became mill workers. And then my mother was from a family of lawyers and engineers and in Brookhaven, Mississippi—Southwest Mississippi. [*Editor's note: Gaffney, SC, Blacksburg, SC, and Grover, NC, are three small towns right around the North Carolina-South Carolina border between Spartanburg, SC, and Gastonia, NC, along what is now interstate 85.*]

00:04:16

So—so between my father's kind of country-cooking family background and then my mother's a little bit more aristocratic, New Orleans-influenced, you know, Southern Mississippi eating styles, down there when we visited, and the restaurant that I grew up in, there was a lot of food around—it's just one big blur of food. I feel like my life is and has been for a long time. I've always been a big eater. I'm slowing down a little bit now.

00:04:54

But and then my dad started Crook's Corner—or bought Crook's—took over Crook's Corner in the early '80s, and he was the chef there and wrote a book called *Bill Neal's Southern Cooking* in the '80s, and so that was a big thing. For a long time I ate at Crook's every night when—when I lived with my dad when I was a teenager and he was cheffing all day and all night every day. So that was the food that I consumed a lot of.

00:05:24

**SCA:** What might he fix for you? Like, would you sit up at the bar and he would fix it for you?

00:05:28

**MN:** Yeah; I usually got burgers. I might get—they don't do this anymore, but they used to do a big bowl of collards that had little—they call them Indian cornmeal dumplings, in collards. And

so that was really good, and I would often get a bowl of that and I usually got a burger. But—but yeah; I would eat anything—anything you'd put in front of me. But yeah; the collards were really good, and gosh, I don't know. Everything was really good at that restaurant, and I ate at the bar all the time. But you know, I was a teenager, so I ate a lot of burgers.

**00:06:04**

**SN:** Would Madeline and Elliott eat anything he put in front of them?

**00:06:07**

**MN:** Yeah; yeah they were pretty—they were always pretty good. I think they went through phases a couple of times for a little while where they got—might have gotten picky for a minute or two.

**00:06:15**

**SCA:** This is your sister and brother?

**00:06:16**

**MN:** Yeah; I have younger siblings who are involved in various ways with either restaurants or eating.

**00:06:27**

**SN:** I think that's important. Elliott works in a restaurant.

**00:06:29**

**MN:** Well my brother, my younger brother is—tends to do wine and wait-service, usually the front of the house hospitality guy, Elliott Neal. And then my sister, Madeline Neal, actually works in nutrition. And she goes out into rural areas and works with families that she gets set up with by grade schools in North Carolina, and they work on health and lifestyle and stuff.

**00:06:55**

**[End Matt & Sheila Neal-1; Begin Matt & Sheila Neal-2—child was crying]**

**00:00:01**

**MN:** Yeah; so he (John Currence) was at Crook's working for my dad when I was in high school, and then Robert Stehling, who also won a James Beard Award and is in Charleston—at the Hominy Grill—both those guys were at—I'm not sure if they were there at the same time, but when I was a teenager and I would wash dishes at Crook's, those guys came through there.

**00:00:24**

**SCA:** Okay; so was Currence an undergrad at Carolina when he was—or he had—?

**00:00:29**

**MN:** I think so; I'm pretty sure he was like nineteen or twenty, and he was an undergrad.

**[Child coughing from his bedroom]**

**00:00:35**

**SCA:** I didn't know if you want me to—do you think he's—?

00:00:40

**SN:** He was sick last week and—as you know we had to reschedule—and the residual cough.

00:00:46

**SCA:** Okay.

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**MN:** You want to give it another shot?

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**SCA:** Yeah; let's keep going.

00:00:53

**MN:** Let's do it. [*Laughs*]

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**SCA:** Okay; so let's go back to—and we can go out of order that's fine, because I can string things back in a different order afterwards. While you were talking about it, then, let's maybe talk about you're in high school and you're—you said you're washing dishes some, and John Currence and Robert Stehling are coming through there?

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**MN:** Uh-hm; okay, all right.

00:01:16

**SCA:** So did you work there regularly as a dishwasher?

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**MN:** Yeah; I did. I was living with my dad. My brother and sister were so young that they lived with my mom, and then I was a teenager, so it seemed—and his lifestyle sort of matched an older kid's better, so I stayed with my dad most days out of the week while he was running Crook's Corner and being a chef there. And then if I ever got in trouble I couldn't be grounded because he wasn't there; he was at the restaurant. So I had to wash dishes at Crook's.

**00:01:48**

So I would wash dishes at Crook's with all these older guys, and it was kind of fun and exciting to be there, even though it was a punishment, and sometimes it, you know, was kind of grueling. But it was kind of cool, because I met a lot of cool older guys who worked hard and learned under my dad who went on to become successful in their own right and who are doing well today. So I'm kind of proud that I knew them back when, and that they worked under my dad. And at first, Robert Stehling was there, and he's a really successful chef at Hominy Grill in Charleston, South Carolina. And that was—he was—he was intimidating to me. I mean, you know, he was a young man, but I was a young teenager. So he did really well and kind of blossomed working for my father, and went on to do great things.

**00:02:39**

And then a few years later, I think I was—I might have been a bus boy at this point; I think I moved up from dishwasher to bus boy, but John Currence came through when he was—I believe he was an undergrad at Carolina. Both of them were I think—and came into the restaurant business. And—and so he was there for a while. And he rose up I think from like bus boy to kitchen manager pretty fast.

**00:03:06**

And—and so then years later, I see these guys just doing really well in other parts of the South, and it's really exciting and been fun to see that happen and to have seen them come in, you know, at the very beginning of their careers.

**00:03:24**

**SCA:** So at this point in your teenage years, did you see yourself going into the restaurant business?

**00:03:30**

**MN:** No; I always thought it was something that I could do if I needed work. I could probably get some hours here and there, but I always thought I would do something else. And I looked into and tried out a million things, but all those things just never really captured my attention for very long.

**00:03:56**

**SCA:** And then Sheila, did you know that you wanted to be in the restaurant business?

**00:04:02**

**SN:** Uh, well, no, not as a child, not as a teenager. By my junior year of college I had gotten a job at Lex Alexander's Wellspring Grocery, which got purchased by Whole Foods right at the time I was coming on. So I liked food a lot, but also just really needed a job that summer. And I guess that was kind of providential. And I stayed on there when I graduated from college, because at that point I just wanted to open a coffee house, because that was like so cool in 1992,

'93. And—but I quickly realized that that probably was a fad—although it really ended up not being, because they're still around today [*Laughs*] around here. But I wanted to open a restaurant at that point and so I stayed on at Whole Foods and I managed the café, which was called Penguins.

**00:05:06**

And I remember distinctly asking Mary Rocap, who managed the kitchen there and she had cooked for a long time, I was like, “What’s American food?” And I was really perplexed by that; I was like, “What is American food? Because there’s French food and Italian food and German food and Polish food—it goes on and on and on?” “And it made her pause for a bit. She’s like, “Well, I guess—” and this is—I probably asked that question in 1996, and I was doing a small stint actually making sandwiches. It was like, “I want to do something in the kitchen,” because I had been managing the café. So one day a week a fellow named Matt Steigerwald—who actually owns a restaurant in Iowa—what’s the name of his restaurant? I can't think of Matt’s restaurant.

**00:05:54**

**MN:** I don’t know the name of it. [*Editor’s Note: Matt Steigerwald is the chef/owner of the Lincoln Café in Mount Vernon, IA.*]

**00:05:55**

**SN:** Anyway, he’s an awesome cook. He worked at Magnolia Grill for years, and all around. Anyway, he actually taught me how to make sandwiches, which is just really funny—and now I’m making sandwiches for a living. I just realized this the other day when Matt and I became

friends on Facebook. **[Laughs]** I was like, “Oh my god; that’s when I met Matt!”—  
Steigerwald—not Matt, you know, my husband.

**00:06:15**

So anyway, Mary Rocap, my former boss, was really stumped by that. She was like,  
“Well, I guess, you know, there’s like regional food in America.” So remember this is 1996—

**00:06:24**

**MN:** Yeah; America is so big.

**00:06:25**

**SN:** —and it hadn’t, you know I mean I guess—you know *[Bill Neal’s] Southern Cooking* had  
been out, and Alice Waters was going strong at Chez Panisse, but there really wasn’t this, you  
know—and Alfred Portale had done Gotham Bar and Grill, you know, I mean like there was—  
there was this push for American food, but it hadn’t really been defined yet. And I think it’s very  
interesting how it seems like American food now is really being defined by farmers. That’s really  
where America has like taken hold, is by, like, what these farmers have been growing, the whole  
farm-to-fork, farm-to-table movement; that seems to really be defining American cooking. And  
maybe, you know, it always has in Europe, because they’ve always cooked with the seasons. But  
it seems like in the U.S. it’s way more focused on the farmers.

**00:07:14**

And I mean, Carlo Petrini, when he came here came to the Triangle in 1997, I mean he  
was impressed by our Farmers’ Markets. I mean, he really thought that that was something  
America was doing really well. I mean, they have open-air markets in Europe, but the farmers’  
markets in particular—I remember him saying that he was—really impressed by it, and I think

that has played a big role in food. [*Editor's note: Carlo Petrini is the founder of Slow Food International.*] But I digressed; you were asking me how did I get into food.

**00:07:40**

I just decided that I wanted to open a restaurant at that point, and then I started working in the front of house. And then I traveled to Europe, because I was like, “Everybody, you know, who knows about food goes to Europe,” so I traveled by myself for three months. And I decided—I got—I ended up baking for six months, and then I got into culinary school, and then I deferred. I was like you know I really should cook in a kitchen before I go to culinary school, right? So I worked with Silvia Pahola, who is a sous chef at Lantern now. I worked for her at Acme, and that’s where I met Andrea [Reusing] and her brother Brendan. And I did that for a year and then I went to culinary school, because I really felt like I should be a chef/owner of a restaurant. I didn't just want to be a chef of somebody else’s restaurant. I really wanted to chef/own.

**00:08:23**

**SCA:** Right.

**00:08:23**

**SN:** And then I just worked my way through restaurants, you know—quite a few, and then I opened my own.

**00:08:32**

**SCA:** So at what point did y’all meet in all of this?

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**SN:** At Acme. *[Laughs]*

00:08:36

**MN:** Acme Restaurant, which Kevin Callaghan owns; that—Silvia Pahola—

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**SCA:** Tell us a little bit about—

00:08:43

**MN:** —it's a teeny little restaurant in downtown Carrboro. It's right across—around the corner from us, from Neal's Deli, and it's on Main Street in Carrboro. And it's a really cute little restaurant and it—he's kind of into American food. That's kind of his theme, actually. He doesn't really try to be Southern or even regional so much, you know. He—

00:09:06

**SN:** That's the first I had had Cincinnati chili.

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**MN:** Yeah; we did basically—

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**SN:** They did a great lunch, Cincinnati chili on noodles, on spaghetti—what? I had never heard of that before.

**00:09:13**

**MN:** Yeah; I didn't know what that was.

**00:09:14**

**SN:** That's American food.

**00:09:15**

**MN:** But they did a good job of all that stuff. But Silvia was the chef there, and Sheila got a job working for Sheila—for Silvia.

**00:09:22**

**SN:** God bless her; she hired me.

**00:09:25**

**MN:** So Silvia came to North Carolina from Austria—

**00:09:27**

**SN:** Well, this is interesting, too.

**00:09:29**

**MN:** —for love, and she worked at Crook's Corner, and that's how I got to know her. And then she ended up being the chef at Acme Restaurant, working for Kevin Callaghan, who was also another Crook's alumnus. And then—

**00:09:46**

**SN:** That's right.

**00:09:47**

**SCA:** Who was the—was the love an owner/chef—?

**00:09:53**

**SN:** Oh, Silvia.

**00:09:55**

**MN:** Oh she—no, her love was not a restaurant person, who—her love did—yeah; they are not together, but the two of them did make a match with us.

**00:10:04**

**SN:** But Pam worked in restaurants all the time.

**00:10:06**

**MN:** That's true. So Silvia became the chef at Acme for Kevin, and then Sheila Dalton [Neal] got a job cooking for Silvia in the kitchen there, and then—and I got to know her there. And then Silvia and her then-partner, Pam, set me and Sheila up.

**00:10:32**

**SCA:** Okay.

**00:10:34**

**MN:** So I used to come visit her in the kitchen there, yeah.

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**SCA:** So at this point you weren't—you weren't working at Acme?

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**MN:** I never did work there.

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**SCA:** Okay; so—

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**MN:** I don't know where I was working. I was—

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**SN:** You were working at Henry's.

00:10:44

**MN:** I was working at Henry's Bistro and Margaret's Cantina and—yeah.

00:10:49

**SCA:** In the meantime, had you left? Besides finishing high school in Vermont, had you left

North Carolina?

00:10:54

**MN:** I came back—let's see; I came—I went to Winston-Salem to School of the Arts—North Carolina School of the Arts in Winston-Salem two years, came back here. My father was sick, and I didn't really quite know how I was going to deal with that, and what I was going to do next. Came back here; he passed away. I moved into his house, which is actually where we're—we're sitting in his house right now. Lived here for a couple of years, lost—tried a few different things; eventually went back to art school again a couple of times in Savannah, and then at a really wonderful place, small classical studio in Southern Pines called Mims Studios, for Jeffrey Mims. And in the meantime, I just had a million different little restaurant jobs that was—they were not linear progressive. They just were just jobs that paid the bills, and while I attempted to be an artist or a—whatever else I was attempting to be here and there.

**00:11:59**

And so I totally took the restaurant business for granted, and totally did not, like, build any kind of logical sequence of experience or anything like that. In fact, I probably forgot—every time I got a new job, I probably forgot more and more **[Laughs]** and acquired more and more bad habits. And eventually I became like a kind of—had a decent bartending gig at a couple of places like Crook's Corner and Orange County Social Club. And as a bartender, that's how I had really gotten to know Sheila when she was a line cook.

**00:12:28**

Line cooks need good bartenders, and I was good enough that she got to know who I was. But so yeah; so—yeah, eventually I was a bartender, because that actually paid enough money to live. And that was when I really forgot just about everything I'd ever learned in the kitchen, while Sheila was learning everything about being in a kitchen at that time.

**00:12:53**

**SCA:** Wow. Well, Sheila, tell me how you became the manager of the Carrboro Farmers' Market. We're fast-forwarding a little bit.

**00:12:59**

**SN:** Yeah; well, I was working at Lantern Restaurant, and I went and purchased produce. I went and purchased produce on Saturday mornings at the Farmers' Market. And that was one of my jobs. I was a—I was a prep manager in the kitchen during the day, and on the weekends I actually managed the floor when Andrea had her first child.

**00:13:20**

But so on Saturday mornings before I came in for the actual floor shift, I would run to the Market. And I got to know a lot of farmers that way: like, I would just go get everything they needed and they wanted from the Market, I would just go get. I loved that. And so a woman that I was friends with was actually recommended—she was a Saturday manager at the Market, and she recommended that I apply for their mid-week Market position.

**00:13:46**

And I was kind of feeling like I wanted a change in pace, and so I applied, and I got it. And at that point, the Market was in transition. They knew that they needed some very directed growth and they knew—as farmers—"they" being the board of directors—the farmers knew that they had a limited amount of time to do their business growth as a Market. So they were looking for a permanent Market manager or full-time Market manager. And so I had—

**00:14:15**

**SCA:** And they had not had that before?

**00:14:17**

**SN:** They had not had that before.

**00:14:18**

**SCA:** Wow.

**00:14:19**

**SN:** And that year that I came on, they hired a mid-week Market manager because they were doing a Wednesday Market, and a Thursday Market at Southern Village. And that was kind of an experiment. And they're still doing it, but I think it's not as much part of the Farmers'—like the Carrboro Market—kind of its own thing now.

**00:14:37**

Anyway, that's how I got to know those farmers, by doing the shopping for the restaurant; and, you know, obviously got to know the farmers and got to know a lot about the produce, and I had a lot of customer service experience, you know, working the front of the house, and so it—. That's how I got the job.

**00:14:59**

**SCA:** So the Market at that point had been going twenty-five years with no full-time manager?

**00:15:05**

**SN:** Yeah. And in fact, when it started, one of the farmers used to go around and manage it. Like, they would collect the daily fees. I mean it was very basic, like basically collect the fees and make the deposit and that was pretty much what it was. But now there's like so much

communication with customers; there's signage, and now there's e-mail and Twitter and blah, blah, blah, you know, and Facebook, and keeping everything up.

**00:15:29**

**MN:** And just traffic.

**00:15:30**

**SN:** I mean it's—it's a huge—

**00:15:32**

**MN:** It's busy.

**00:15:33**

**SN:** —busy Market.

**00:15:35**

**SCA:** So tell me some things that happened at the Market, maybe some structural things while you were the—the manager.

**00:15:44**

**SN:** Well, I was able—on a real financial end of things, I ended up learning QuickBooks of all things, and I put all their books in QuickBooks; that never happened before. Some other structural things, we had been doing recipes at the Market, and that kept going. Special events, we kind of expanded those. We did a fundraiser for, oh, I'm trying—the New Orleans Farm—the

New Orleans Farmers'—Crescent City Farmers' Market. I'm so sorry; forgive me guys. Darlene, if you're still working there—.

**00:16:22**

And we did—after Katrina, we did a fundraiser, and so we had all these different chefs from restaurants make gumbo, and we sold it and folks took it home and, you know, froze it. I mean, people bought tons. That was really fun. So we started—structurally we started to make some connections with other Markets around the country, really kind of solidified ourselves as a Market that was, you know, growing and had a direction and was committed to—. Our farmers are the ones who sell the produce, so the customers can ask the farmers directly, you know, what—“How did you grow this? Are there any chemicals in your soil?” You know, things like that, really building that relationship. Expanded—

**00:17:05**

**MN:** The Wednesday Market may not—I don't know that it changed structurally, but it certainly got busier.

**00:17:09**

**SN:** It got busier.

**00:17:12**

**MN:** Grew.

**00:17:12**

**SN:** I would say during my tenure—I wouldn't say I did anything really structurally to help that, but there was probably just consistency.

**00:17:20**

**MN:** Maybe it was just time and consistency or something, but I used to go—because it was dead, so it was really easy to shop. And now I go and [*Laughs*] I have to be ready for it.

**00:17:30**

**SN:** Yeah; I would say our—our website, you know, took on more. We upgraded that while I was there and that was—things move a little slower with the Market, but that was a really good thing. I think just having a full-time manager was a huge structural leap. I basically set the agenda for the board meetings, you know, with the input obviously of the board. And I think that just got—gave some structure to the business aspect. It was—

**00:17:58**

**MN:** They had some getting caught up to do.

**00:18:00**

**SN:** Yeah; yeah. We tried—we, you know, dealt with our tax status: you know, could we be a nonprofit? And so we spent a lot of time working on that, and that was another kind of structural thing.

**00:18:17**

**SCA:** Right; can you tell me—I know that the Market gets—I know it's been four years since you've been the manager. The Market gets lots of applications every year from new farmers and vendors. Can you tell me a little bit about what you were looking for when you were choosing farmers and vendors?

**00:18:32**

**SN:** Diversity of product—that was the big thing. We didn't need somebody who only grew zucchini, tomatoes, and eggplant. We had plenty—and cucumbers; we had plenty of those. So we were looking for folks who raised meat. That was a big thing while I was there. We—oh, that was another structure thing. We had the meat laws [*Laughs*], and we had all these bylaws that went—I guess they weren't a bylaw, but rules that went into place concerning who could sell meat at the Market. You know, there is in North Carolina—you can slaughter a certain number of birds, and it was just like getting up to code, really.

**00:19:11**

So that really grew, and we were looking for more meat producers, because that really was diverse. Looking for more artisan producers; that's really grown at the Market. But we were trying to diversify our prepared foods. You know, we got folks in like April McGreger, the Farmer's Daughter.

**00:19:32**

**MN:** Can I interrupt about the artisan food thing?

**00:19:34**

**SCA:** Yeah.

**00:19:35**

**MN:** When I first started going to the Market on my own as a young adult, there were a lot of artisan food makers. And there were a lot of farmers who grew stuff and sold produce, but they also had food items that they sold. And this was probably in the early '90s. And at some point—who was it who came?

**00:19:54**

**SCA:** It was less regulated at this point.

**00:19:55**

**SN:** That's right.

**00:19:57**

**MN:** It was a lot less regulated, and at some point, some—some, I don't know if it was the County or State or what it was, but some kind of inspector came through and kind of shut a lot of that down, and really like we lost a lot of stuff. There were people who had biscuits and fried apple pies and salmon cake biscuits—

**00:20:14**

**SN:** That they fried there, right? I mean they fried the pies there.

**00:20:18**

**MN:** Some of the people fried stuff there, and—and goat cheese, and peanut butter cookies, and all this stuff that you'd go there and get that was really good. And that all got shut down in the '90s at some point, and then in order to bring back a lot of that stuff—. Or not bring back that stuff, but bring back, you know, some prepared food, some artisan food products that aren't really what they had twenty years ago, but they're great, maybe they're better, but—. But for that to come back, it had to come back as a legitimate, codified, inspected, regulated industry.

**00:20:59**

**SCA:** It's more regulated?

**00:21:00**

**SN:** Way more regulated; yeah.

**00:21:02**

**MN:** Yeah.

**00:21:04**

**SN:** I did spend a lot—I sat in on a home health inspection with one of our vendors who did a lot of vegan things, and she was a baker. I will say this; with the artisan food producers or prepared food producers, at the end of my time at the Market—and you see it way more now—you are finding more of those vendors who use the other farmers' products. That wasn't happening as much. The—you know, people, some of the prepared food vendors were going to the cheapest places to get their ingredients, and not buying from other farmers. Now, some did, obviously, but you will—the—. You know, like I'm thinking about April again; I mean it's just

like tons of the fruit. I mean, she buys right there at the Market, you know, and that—that was a big turning point, I think. And—and there's the demand for that. It's—it's expected in our community that you would do that.

**00:22:05**

So I think, you know, and—and folks like Chicken Bridge Bakery and Sari Sari Sweets, I mean they're using—I'm sure I'm forgetting somebody, but—that was a big turn in a good direction.

**00:22:17**

**MN:** We do these events with the Farmers' Market where we come and do—we just did one last weekend—where we come and give people samples of things that we've made from produce, you know, that we get at the Market in order to help people—it helps advertise us, but it helps advertise the Market. But what it does, it gives people a concrete example of something that they could, you know, they look at our pickled okra, and they say “Yeah; that guy right next to us—”

**00:22:46**

**SN:** Which we're eating right now.

**00:22:47**

**SCA:** Yes.

**00:22:48**

**SN:** It's good.

00:22:47

**MN:** “—you know has the okra, so now we can—we know we can do that, because Matt said the recipe was really easy.”

00:22:53

**SCA:** And that was okra that you had gotten at the Market.

00:22:57

**MN:** Yeah; and so—so—

00:22:58

**SN:** And so many people hadn't tried okra before.

00:23:01

**MN:** Well, that's true; it's kind of fun and interesting to watch a big line of people go through, and when you're handing stuff out at a demonstration at the Market, to watch people, you know, react before and after they've tried something.

00:23:13

**SN:** Do you know where they were from? Was it—

00:23:14

**MN:** They were from all over. They were from all over. There were definitely some people who live in North Carolina now, who, you know, weren't here a few years ago. There's a lot of those, but there were [*Laughs*]—but there—

00:23:31

**SCA:** That's a very diplomatic way. [*Laughs*]

00:23:34

**MN:** But there are definitely a lot of people who never had okra, and they never had—or they never had pickled okra, and they weren't sure they wanted to try it. And I told quite a number of people who came through that line, I said, "If you are at the Market, trying food from the Market, and you live in North Carolina, and it's September, you probably should try some okra one way or the other." And a lot of them did say, "Well, okay; you're right. I'm at the Farmers' Market; it's September. You're handing it out. I should give it a chance."

00:24:05

**SN:** Why are people so freaked about okra?

00:24:07

**MN:** They're scared of slime.

00:24:08

**SN:** Is it because it's slimy?

00:24:09

**MN:** People are afraid of food, you know, with any kind of quality other than, you know, a crunchy or, you know, fluffy texture, or anything outside of the really basic sensation for them.

00:24:21

**SN:** I've had some pickled okra that's slimy. This is nowhere even close.

00:24:23

**SCA:** This is not slimy, and it's got a crunch.

00:24:26

**SN:** Yeah.

00:24:28

**MN:** You're—yeah, you're right; I mean I think—

00:24:30

**SN:** I mean I got a jar somewhere, like at a little store, you know, outside of Kernersville, and I opened it up and—

00:24:34

**MN:** Talk O' Texas is slimier than this, but it's not that slimy.

00:24:35

**SN:** It's slimy, but it's not as slimy as this other—. I couldn't even do it. I mean, it was just like mush and slime. I was like, "No; I can't do that." These are great.

00:24:44

**MN:** Well, thank you.

**00:24:44**

**SN:** You're welcome. [Laughs]

**00:24:45**

**MN:** They're easy. But—I kind of got off track. We were talking about people at the Market eating food—. Oh, the reason—I was talking about all these—I was talking about doing that demonstration, because Kelly Clark, who organized the demo where all the chefs came—yeah, Kelly Clark is great and she's helped out a lot with the Market as a volunteer the whole time. Kelly Clark is the one who made Sheila Neal become the manager, and I—I think of Sheila as a gateway manager. She—she kind of helped—she was willing to take on the job and deal with the changes that needed to be made in order for the Market to be able to get ready to make a lot of big new steps that happened when she left to join me to make Neal's Deli.

**00:25:45**

But Kelly was walking around going, “These chefs make this stuff, and isn't it fun to like, you know, try the stuff they make for the Market? And you can do it too. And you can, you know, isn't it fun to, you know, see a chef and then like, you know, spy on them when they're at the Market and see what they're getting? Beause they're probably getting something good.”

**00:26:02**

Well, I always like to spy on the farmers as they trade and buy stuff from each other, because I always find it really interesting. It's like, so and so grows this, that, and the other. They've got just about anything they could, you know, possibly deal with, but they still are buying from or trading with somebody else a couple of booths down. So that's fun, because I

mean, between Sheila working there, and our restaurant, and everything else, and going there for years—

**00:26:33**

**SN:** Well, but this is the interesting thing. The theme this year was American food, right?

**00:26:36**

**SCA:** Right.

**00:26:36**

**MN:** Oh yeah, right; yeah we were talking about American food.

**00:26:38**

**SCA:** “All-American appetizers.”

**00:26:39**

**MN:** Yeah; “All-American appetizer”—and that just kind of blew my mind. That was so wide open, I didn’t know what to do. *[Laughs]*

**00:26:45**

**SN:** Right; so one person comes through, and it’s Seth Kingsbury from Pazzo, and he’s like, “I’m doing pimento cheese.” And then Amy Tournquist was like—from Watts Grocery—

**00:26:52**

**MN:** Watts Grocery, who worked for my dad at Crook’s in the ’80s.

00:26:55

**SN:** Oh that's right—was like, “I'm going to do deviled eggs.” And—and I—Matt and I had already discussed we were going to do pickles and they were like, “Pickled okra.”

00:27:01

**MN:** Pickled what?

00:27:03

**SN:** So we told them—

00:27:03

**MN:** I was looking around, and I was like, “Pickled red peppers? pickled tomatoes?” It's, you know—I was looking at what they had at the Market, and I was just going, “You know, a lot of this stuff is kind of, you know, so moisture-based, you know, it'll kind of collapse. What am I going to pickle?” And so when they did—they chose to do the pickled—the deviled eggs and the pimento cheese then because I think that's because of my dad's influence on me when I was growing up and the food we—they did at Crook's that I ate every day, you know, the—the next thing on that plate should be pickled okra, in my mind. And—and so—I don't know if you thought of it or I did, but I was like “Okay, great, perfect.” There's tons of okra and it's really great right now, this year, because it's so hot and sunny all year long and everything—it likes that; it's been really good this year.

00:27:54

So then what happened was Kelly actually did do a little kind of quote from *Bill Neal's Southern Cooking* and printed it out, where he talked about his sort of Southern hors d'oeuvre platter that tied those three things together.

00:28:12

**SN:** Because we had to convince Kelly that pickled okra would be enough.

00:28:14

**MN:** Oh yeah; that's right, yeah, yeah, yeah. She's not—

00:28:17

**SN:** She's like, "I'm just afraid it's not going to be—"

00:28:19

**MN:** "—oh, it's too—it's too rare and too particular—"

00:28:22

**SN:** "—too esoteric, and—"

00:28:23

**MN:** "—and you know, people aren't going to go for it." And I said, "You know what?" I said to her the same thing I ended up saying, but I was a little—I was—I was a little more probably magnanimous in explaining it to the customers walking through the line. Because I wouldn't want to, you know—because I'm, you know, yelling at strangers so I want to make it really

jovial. But with Kelly she—she raised that question and I said, “You know, Kelly—” I was—I was befuddled by her reaction—I said, “You know Kelly—” I was concerned; I said, “Kelly, it’s okra, and it’s September, and it’s pickled okra, and it’s good, and people who are at the Market and they’re going to try these other things, this just you know—they just—people just need to get over it and try this stuff!” **[Laughs]** I mean you know they—they really do. I just—people are just—they’ve become afraid of things, and they need to start being unafraid with the food that’s around them.

00:29:20

**SCA:** And you had some pleasantly surprised reactions?

00:29:23

**MN:** Start living and eating! Yeah. That—almost everybody was positive. There were these two women who tried it and then they were—they were, “Nah, I’m not so sure I like it.” You know, the first thing they said, they—they kind of scrunched up their faces and they said, “It’s *interesting*,” after they tried it. And I said, “You know what?”

00:29:37

**SN:** It’s so good.

00:29:39

**MN:** “I’m not asking you any more questions. You can go now. **[Laughs]** Then you, the next person in line, I’m ready to ask you some questions and talk to you.” But if you’re—if you’re

going to try pickled okra at the Market in the height of okra season and all—and all you can give me is that it's interesting—. It *is* interesting, but it's also really good.

**00:30:01**

**SCA:** It's really good. Well, let's talk about how you got the Deli started.

**00:30:09**

**MN:** The Deli started—somehow I had this idea that something like Neal's Deli was a good idea to start, and—and I started—and Sheila and I had bounced around a bunch of ideas together over the years. And—and I don't know exactly what—I can't remember.

**00:30:28**

**SN:** You wanted a sandwich shop.

**00:30:30**

**MN:** I wanted a sandwich shop.

**00:30:32**

**SN:** Scotty wanted you to call it Matt's Meat Hole.

**00:30:33**

**MN:** I know—I know yeah; a friend—our builder, Scott, friend, Scott McLean said, “Matt's Meat Hole, the Brine Room, you gotta do it.” And I said, “You know, I just really don't see this being reality, but I like your enthusiasm.”

**00:30:50**

And then, I guess we were just—you know, in—in our area we were really lucky to have a lot of really good places to eat dinner, but I really got kind of bored and frustrated with our lunch options. And there's so many things that led us to this, and I guess I knew that I didn't really want a fine-dining restaurant that my family ran, you know, that was open at—primarily doing business at night, and, you know, a little more upscale or whatever. I did learn that from growing up in the restaurant business. And I'm glad we don't do that. I'm glad we do what we do. We serve a lot of everyday people who come, some of them every day, and—and—and it's a really diverse mix of ages, and—everything else that you would mix up in people.

**00:31:43**

And but—but yeah; it was—there was a dearth of—there was an abundance of nice dinner places, that we had, you know, kind of come up working in a lot of them, or were friends with people who had, and all that, but the lunch thing was a little rare around here. And—and so yeah.

**00:32:12**

**SCA:** Well, tell me how you got the spot that you did and what—it's kind of an interesting spot where you're located, and it brings in a pretty diverse group?

**00:32:24**

**MN:** Yeah; it's quite a little location.

**00:32:26**

**SN:** Well, Matt—I was willing to—I was willing to go to Durham. I was like, "Let's go to Durham. There's more space and more people; let's do it."

00:32:32

**MN:** We looked in Carrboro. We looked hard for about a year, and at the time nobody was moving. And Carrboro is small; Carrboro is a small town and small neighborhood.

00:32:41

**SN:** We really held out for Carrboro, mainly because Matt really wanted to work where he lived. Matt does not like to drive. And it's funny that you end up doing so many deliveries now, right? But Matt did not want to drive to another town to work in. He really wanted to work in his community.

00:32:58

**MN:** Right; my—

00:32:59

**SCA:** And we're now sitting half a mile from the Deli, if that.

00:33:03

**MN:** Maybe.

00:33:03

**SN:** If that; I know—I know.

00:33:04

**SCA:** A third of a mile maybe.

**00:33:06**

**SN:** Yeah.

**00:33:06**

**MN:** Yeah.

**00:33:08**

**SN:** So we really held out, and—

**00:33:11**

**MN:** We—I want to say that I really wanted a place that not only would we not be driving all the time to get to, but that a lot of other people wouldn't have to drive. You know, we thought about going into RTP—the Research Triangle Park—and being close to a bunch of big office buildings and saying, “We'll bring them some food that they really can't get there.” And that would have been kind of cool to offer the food we do to those people. It probably would do well, but—

**00:33:40**

**SN:** It probably would have fit our lifestyle better, too, having two small children, and—.

**00:33:45**

**MN:** Well, it might—you know; we could have probably just done weekday lunches and, you know, never been open on weekends and holidays.

**00:33:51**

**SN:** Well, that part of our lifestyle I should say; yeah.

**00:33:55**

**MN:** *But* I really just didn't want a place that everybody in the world who ever went there had to get into a car to be, you know—I really wanted it to be in the middle of a community, and—

**00:34:04**

**SCA:** And a walkable community?

**00:34:05**

**MN:** Yeah; yeah.

**00:34:07**

**SN:** You know the only, drawback is—

**00:34:08**

**MN:** We almost put it out there.

**00:34:10**

**SN:** —Carrboro doesn't have—still is kind of a bedroom community.

**00:34:14**

**MN:** Oh yeah; it definitely is.

**00:34:15**

**SN:** I would say that is the only drawback. Most people don't work in Carrboro, so I am so grateful that we have stayed in business, you know, during this odd economic time that we opened. It's a real testament. I was thinking about it today, it's a real testament to the commitment of the community to support a small business, because you know a lot of people—and we have a lot of people who work for the University, and that is, you know, huge. But—

**00:34:40**

**MN:** Yeah; well Carrboro is a little town, and it's conjoined—

**00:34:41**

**SN:** Tiny.

**00:34:43**

**MN:** —to Chapel Hill, which is a slightly larger town, and it's a college town. I mean, we're only a few blocks away from the middle of Chapel Hill and the middle of campus.

**00:34:51**

**SN:** Campus; yeah.

**00:34:52**

**MN:** But a lot of people get stuck over there all day long, and we're open for breakfast and lunch. Our busiest day by far is Saturday, and that's when the Carrboro Farmers' Market is open

and when a lot of people have the day off. And our second busiest day of the week usually is a holiday, you know like a Monday holiday where people have time to goof off and hang out in Carrboro. Otherwise a lot of people get stuck somewhere in RTP or campus working, so—. So we have some sort of built-in challenges, but—

**00:35:16**

**SN:** But the spot we got, the—the coffee shop next door, Open Eye, was trying to put a bakery in there and it just kind of fell through, and that had been their former space. They were tiny. And they moved two doors down to a much larger space, which suits them well. And they were trying to get this bakery going, and it just didn't happen. And so, we just happened to have the right timing of it, and it is a little kind of shotgun spot, and—

**00:35:46**

**MN:** It's a little under 700 square feet.

**00:35:48**

**SN:** It's kind of crazy—

**00:35:51**

**MN:** Including the bathroom and the kitchen and the—

**00:35:55**

**SN:** It's tiny for the amount of food we push out of there, so—. But yeah; it's—it's a totally diverse group of you know customers, regular Carrboro folks, folks from Chapel Hill come in, folks from Fearington Village, which is south of town, come up; yeah—it's different mix.

**00:36:19**

**SCA:** So tell, for people who don't know, what your specialties are.

**00:36:25**

**SN:** Right; so we make our own pastrami and corned beef, and that's kind of our hallmark. We get antibiotic- and hormone-free meat from a company called Meyer Natural Beef out of Iowa that Cliff's Meat Market—which is catty-corner from us—generously brings in for us. [*Editor's note: Meyer Natural Angus company headquarters is in Colorado. It was founded by a rancher from Montana and sources beef from ranches in Montana, Missouri, and Colorado.*] And I think this is a key story. There is a large company called Buckhead Beef—and I'm saying this. And they used to be our meat purveyor, and they have great beef. And two months after we had opened, they just decided they didn't want to do business with us anymore. They were upping their minimums and we were definitely meeting the minimums, but there was—we did not have a very good sales rep. He never came by, never checked in; and it was kind of devastating to me, because Buckhead, around here, is where everybody got their beef, and we were getting Niman Ranch beef through them. And I was like, “Dude; what are you thinking? Why are you cutting us off?”

**00:37:23**

And the best thing happened from that. We are so tiny that half—we have a reach-in; we don't even have a walk-in—half of our reach-in is full of brining and curing meat. And we would

have to store meat as well, because we would get, you know, cases in every week, or couple of times a week.

**00:37:43**

Now, when Buckhead dropped us we immediately went to Cliff's—

**00:37:46**

**MN:** We walked across the street and talked to Cliff, and Cliff's Meat Market, and they saved us.

**00:37:55**

**SN:** They saved us. They were like, "We'll get it in for you. We'll store it. We'll sell you a case or two at a time." And if they had not done that, there's no way we would have been able to keep up with our production.

**00:38:05**

**MN:** No; we certainly would have changed what we did.

**00:38:08**

**SN:** So they get an order in once a week, and we can pick up the cases. How many cases do we go through now? We go through three to four cases a week.

**00:38:16**

**MN:** Easy, yeah.

**00:38:16**

**SN:** Easy, three to four cases of beef—and how much does a case weigh—180 pounds, no?  
Yeah.

**00:38:22**

**MN:** No, no; a case is like about eighty pounds.

**00:38:25**

**SN:** Eighty pounds; like eighty pounds. So what's that—eighty times four? Over 300 pounds of brisket—and we use the brisket.

**00:38:30**

**MN:** Whole brisket.

**00:38:30**

**SN:** Whole briskets. But that is—that is a great spirit of Carrboro, and when people talk about doing business in Carrboro, or doing business locally, I'm like, "That's why." That's why, because there are not many other places that would do that for you. Also Latta's Egg Ranch in Hillsborough, they come, they still come by once a week. And we get a case and a half of eggs, which isn't that much. We don't have any more room to store—

**00:38:57**

**MN:** They walk in, and then we ask them to break a case for us, and then they walk out into the truck, and then they break a case for us.

**00:39:04**

**SN:** [Laughs] You know, I mean, we are tiny, and we have—and having vendors like that who work with us is—

**00:39:09**

**MN:** Between them and the people—

**00:39:10**

**SN:** —it saved our business.

**00:39:12**

**MN:** —in the Farmers' Market, yeah—.

**00:39:12**

**SN:** Definitely.

**00:39:13**

**MN:** And we make the pastrami, and that enables us to, you know, put the meat on the plate, and then we can get a lot of really good vegetables from the Farmers' Market to put on the plate next to it.

**00:39:25**

**SN:** Yeah; that's one of the best dishes, that's—I think that's our hallmark dish at the Deli is the pastrami plate. You can also do a corned beef plate—but it's a portion of our pastrami or corned beef.

00:39:33

**MN:** It's a meat and two—

00:39:35

**SN:** It's a meat and two instead of a meat and three.

00:39:35

**MN:** —plus a pickle.

00:39:36

**SN:** Maybe we should make it a meat and three.

00:39:39

**MN:** Well we can. Well I do; sometimes people just want you know—

00:39:41

**SN:** Half, half, half, yeah, third, third, third.

00:39:45

**MN:** This, that, and the other.

00:39:45

**SN:** But we always, in our case, it's not a typical deli case, except for we always have a creamy coleslaw and an oil-and-vinegar potato salad, and then we have—

**00:39:53**

**MN:** Everything in between that probably reflects the season—

**00:39:59**

**SN:** Like today—. Right, we have—usually have some sort of bean salad. Well, today we have roasted broad—slow-roasted broad beans, and the broad beans—were these from Kathy and Mike?

**00:40:09**

**MN:** Well actually I got half of them from Perry-winkle Farm and then half of them from Brinkley Farm.

**00:40:16**

**SN:** Brinkley's. And we have watermelon salad with mint, lime, cayenne, and mint.

**00:40:25**

**MN:** And I got those from Stanley Hughes this time.

**00:40:29**

**SN:** Yeah.

**00:40:29**

**MN:** What a great year for watermelons.

**00:40:32**

**SN:** Yeah; *really* good.

**00:40:32**

**MN:** All this heat has just—

**00:40:34**

**SCA:** And they're going a long time.

**00:40:35**

**MN:** Oh yeah.

**00:40:35**

**SN:** Yes! Super long.

**00:40:37**

**MN:** Well, just everything got big and grew and if you could water it, it would grow, because there was so much sun and heat and it would turn super-sweet. Great, amazing tomatoes— they're on their way out—but tomatoes, melons, peppers—

**00:40:53**

**SN:** We had—

**00:40:54**

**MN:** —just outrageous this year.

**00:40:54**

**SN:** —we had okra and tomatoes, and that sells really well. And we also had these long stewed yellow waxed beans, and that was a—a hit. I noticed that there were still—there's still—there's still beans coming. Obviously we had broad beans, and you got more yellow wax beans, and—

**00:41:09**

**MN:** I have; we need to use those tomorrow.

**00:41:12**

**SN:** But it's really fun to think of sides that complement, you know, the pastrami and corned beef, and—yeah. I would say that the pastrami plate is like the—that represents what we do. And then we have—we do breakfast also at the Deli. We thought there was a real need for a good biscuit on this side of the county. And so kind of, we do these pastrami biscuits that are really, really good. And I think it's funny, because we make all this pastrami, and I grew up eating, obviously, country ham biscuits. And it's very similar; I mean you've got cured, salty meat. And the sweetness in—so *I* grew up with sugar-cured hams, which are still salty, but they have a little bit of sweetness to them; that's just what my dad's family always got. And the pastrami has brown sugar in it, and it caramelizes as it slow roasts, and it's really great with these buttery biscuits that we make. It's just delicious.

**00:42:17**

So I would say that's the other thing that's kind of a hallmark of what we do.

**00:42:24**

**SCA:** Well, let's see—what else. This has been—we've covered a lot. I mean maybe you could tell me—oh, what were you going to say?

**00:42:33**

**MN:** We were supposed to talk about the Farmers' Market and our relationship to that, right?

**00:42:37**

**SCA:** No; do you want to talk—I mean you—you started to tell me a little. Why don't we talk a little more about that 'cause I—I see you guys there a lot. And I assume it's for—

**00:42:46**

**MN:** I guess we have talked a lot about it, though.

**00:42:49**

**SN:** No; we talked about the Market a lot.

**00:42:51**

**SCA:** It's come up a lot, which is great—which is great. I mean, that's okay, but I—I see you guys there a lot, and I assume it's for personal and for the restaurant.

**00:42:58**

**MN:** Yeah.

**00:42:58**

**SN:** Yeah; I haven't been as much. I've been working. I'm kind of tied to the line a little bit more. It's been hard to find line cooks—it's amazing. And I don't go as much, but yeah, I mean we definitely—we—we participate in a “community-supported bread,” which is like a CSA, but it's community-supported bread. Our friends at Chicken Bridge Bakery make this really awesome wood-fired bread. They built this beautiful cob oven, and it is such—it's given me such pleasure to eat that on Wednesday nights. We pick it up on Wednesdays, and I love it when they do it. They did this fennel-infused boule, and it was just *delicious*. I mean it was just—so great.

**00:43:42**

**SCA:** And then, was Monica at Lantern yet when you were there?

**00:43:46**

**SN:** No. Well, that's the funny thing. So Monica and Leslie Heintzman started Sari Sari Sweets, my first year at the Market. And I was actually pregnant, and Monica had just had her first child, so we kind of—and we were near each other a lot. And I got to know Monica then. And then she took the pastry chef job at Lantern. And so we have—our kids are—we actually joke and say they have a bromance going on. They really enjoy each other. They're very close in age, and they really enjoy each other, and—and we just kind of stayed in the same kind of business and kid circles. So I don't know when Monica started at Lantern—2006, '07—'06, '07. Anyway, and she's still there, and of course she does amazing pastries. And that's another story, but—

**00:44:34**

**SCA:** Did you have anything else you wanted to say about the Market?

**00:44:38**

**MN:** No; I just—actually I was just kind of—I just wanted to make sure that I wasn't—I'd be happy to talk about it and answer any questions, but I just—I just wanted to make sure that—.

**[Laughs]**

**00:44:51**

**SCA:** I've seen you—I've seen you eating some hotdogs at the Market.

**00:44:54**

**MN:** Occasionally—I usually get the lamb dog. Every—every couple of weeks, I'll get a lamb dog from The Pig. And I usually don't get the pork hotdog, although those are really good. But you know, we sell hotdogs at our place, and every now and then I have to try them at my place, so—but yeah, the lamb dog—because I don't ever eat lamb anywhere, ever. Unless maybe it's at some kind of Indian restaurant, maybe. But yeah; I'll get the lamb dog from The Pig at the Market. That's—that's pretty good.

**00:45:26**

**SCA:** Well what else—is there anything that you guys wanted to talk about—and it could be about the restaurant, about the Market, anything that—that I didn't ask you?

**00:45:35**

**SN:** Well, I wanted to say one more thing about the Market—or maybe two quick things. One is most people probably know this by now if they're familiar with the Carrboro Market, but, you know, it was started by—out of an initiative where Bill Dow was a fellow at the School of Public

Health at UNC. And I just think that, you know, he realized that he didn't want to practice medicine to keep people healthy; he wanted to farm. And that was the way to make an impact on helping people be healthy.

**00:46:05**

I bring that up because I think it's a testament to—or testimony—to our community. Because the University has a unique relationship to our area, and there's just no way to say that it doesn't have any influence. The—the people that go to UNC, the people who teach at UNC, the people who work at UNC—not just faculty but, you know, the other folks, it all comes together, and I've talked about this a lot when I gave talks when I was the Market manager to other Markets. It's one of the things that I did was that it was just a—you know, why did the Carrboro Market thrive so much? Well, it is a unique mix of the people who are down here: really talented farmers who were on it, and—and an environment that people are willing to pay a little bit more for their food, because they know the person who grew it.

**00:47:11**

And there's a connection there that can't be found in the supermarket. And this is what I'll say about the Carrboro Market is that in the Carrboro Market's bylaws/rules—I always get bylaws/rules confused; it's the rules—the farmer or a family member or one of the owners of the business unit has to be there to sell. Other Markets do not hold that rule, and I understand all the reasons behind it. This is not a judgment thing, but let me just say what it does, is it creates this unique relationship between the farm and their customers. And it—that can't be—

**00:47:52**

**MN:** It's a kind of a bond.

**00:47:52**

**SN:** —it's invaluable. And it—it has cultivated—I think it has cultivated a whole community and culture of folks who care about what they eat, care about the people who grow it, care about their environment, and care about their bodies and what they're eating, and—and then the byproduct of that is what we've done as a restaurant, and other restaurants in our area. It has just spawned so much good business, from a business of—you know, a group of farmers coming together and having a business.

**00:48:27**

**MN:** And the Carrboro Farmers' Market also—a lot of Farmers' Market can do this—is a really great place for people to—they might have been you know some kind of student at UNC, and—and they come to college here at Chapel Hill. And then they discover that what they really want to do is, you know, work outside with their hands and do their own thing. And they can be right next to somebody like Brinkley Farm, and Michael Brinkley, and he's, you know, whatever—fourth generation—

**00:49:01**

**SN:** —generation farmer, yeah.

**00:49:01**

**MN:** —hundred year old farm. You know, so they could both—it's a great venue for both people—

**00:49:07**

**SN:** That is so interesting here; yeah.

**00:49:07**

**MN:** —to—types of—both established family farms and novices, if—if they can get in and do a good job, you know, and—and find a niche for them all to complement each other.

**00:49:24**

**SN:** Yeah; yeah it's—it's—that was one of the—yeah, yeah.

**00:49:33**

**SCA:** Well, thank you so much. Was there anything else that either of you—? Okay; thank you.

**00:49:39**

**MN:** Thank you.

**00:49:41**

**SN:** Thank you.

**00:49:41**

**[End Matt & Sheila Neal-2 Interview]**