



"No man is born into the world whose work is not born with him."

— James Russell Lowell writing in 1843



Master of flavor

Chef Adrian Mota continues to wow customers with the memorable flavor combinations he creates while running the in-store kitchen at Ranch Foods Direct on Fillmore.

WHAT DREW YOU TO FOOD AND COOKING?

I love cooking because I enjoy eating it! But also my mom passed on when I was seven years old, and my dad was always working, so I became the designated cook. It started by necessity but then it turned into a craft, a skill and later a profession.

WAS FARMING IN YOUR BACKGROUND?

Yes, a lot of farming. My family raised horses and cattle in Mexico along with our own pigs, chickens and goats. We basically grew all of our vegetables and harvested them ourselves. I grew up close to the ocean so we had a lot of fresh seafood too.



THE WINNING TOUCH: Chef Adrian Mota has finished in the top two for two years running at the annual Chef Showcase competition, a charity event that raises funds for Rocky Mountain Health Care Service. The first time around he made creamy seafood risotto, a nod to his childhood spent near the sea. At the most recent event, he earned another medal with his beef demi-glaze short ribs in a red wine reduction with creamy white truffle mashed potatoes and roasted asparagus. For him, the delicious food isn't the main point; being part of the fundraising effort is. "I just like being out in the community and helping out in whatever way I can," he says.

TELL US MORE ABOUT YOUR CAREER: When I was seventeen, I started in the kitchen industry working in different facilities and hotels. I worked at Liberty Heights retirement resort, where we would make 1,500 meals a day. The last four years I learned to install and repair kitchen equipment like stoves and gas ranges. I got tired of trying to get maintenance for the equipment so I learned to do it myself. When I came to Ranch Foods, I was ready to do something different, which started by learning more about meat cutting. Then I got the opportunity to take over the kitchen. It's been great. I've had a lot

of new experiences making the soups, which are very popular, curing bacon and things like that. We try to provide something for every taste and honor our customers' requests.

MOST REQUESTED ITEMS?

Smoked pork enchiladas, beef stroganoff, take-and-bake queso, and pre-seasoned carnita meat

DID YOU KNOW? Globally up to 87 percent of wetlands have been drained and two-thirds of large rivers have been dammed or diverted. Since 1992, the area of earth covered by urban pavement has doubled.

On the High Plains of Kansas, underground supplies of precious fossilized water have declined by 2.8 to 3 feet in some parts of the Ogallala Aquifer in just the last year. “Recharge is no longer occurring,” Ranch Foods Direct owner Mike Callicrate told the Kansas Abroad study group pictured at right. “If our local groundwater management districts aren’t in charge of ensuring recharge is happening then who is?”

WHAT’S MIKE’S SOLUTION? Stop recruiting large dairies and feedyards that put pressure on the region to grow high water use feed crops like corn and alfalfa, switch to non-irrigated crops like wheat and barley, and, even better, convert more of the plains back to grasslands for raising livestock. Decentralize food production into smaller more diverse farming operations and encourage development of local and regional food systems with cooperatively run marketplaces owned by growers and artisan food producers.



Studying abroad... in their own backyard

The idea of studying abroad evokes images of exotic locales and cultures, but a new summer course at the University of Kansas is applying that same concept to exploring the unique places and people of rural Kansas. KU’s inaugural Kansas Abroad study program made a stop at Callicrate Cattle Company in June, led by Paul Stock, whose family has roots in southern Missouri. He grew up in St. Louis but ended up attending Colorado State University for his undergraduate degree after looking for a sociology program that incorporated elements of environmental and rural study. At the time, the term “rural sociologist” didn’t appeal to him, but that changed after he spent time overseas and observed the innovative work being done by rural sociologists in other countries. Now he embraces the term while placing his academic focus on how farmers adjust to global economic pressures and what inspires their care and concern for the environment.

On the 15-day roadtrip across Kansas, he and fellow environmental studies faculty member and permaculture instructor Amber Thumann challenged six students from Kansas, New Mexico, Florida and Missouri to explore the question, *what is the state’s environmental future?* They met with local change-makers and entrepreneurs while aiming to develop greater cultural awareness of rural Kansas. The group visited many historically and ecologically important sites, including Nicodemus, the oldest black settlement west of the Mississippi — now a national historical site — and a new reservoir under construction near Hays. They also toured agriculturally significant developments like the new Hilmar cheese plant in Dodge City, which has attracted at least four or five large-scale dairies to expand in the region. The group now plans to hold a fall seminar that will allow each of the students to make individual research presentations on what they learned. “It won’t necessarily offer a solution,” Stock said, “but it will be our answer to where things stand right now.”

New store updates



Above, Saanen goats at the Westcliffe dairy

GOAT MILK: Ranch Foods Direct now carries goat milk from the Wheeler goat dairy at Westcliffe, in two flavors, regular and chocolate (\$8.79 for 32 oz; \$12.79 for a half gallon.) The goats are a labor of love for Jerome and Ann Wheeler, who operate the creamery with no outside employees.

PICKLES: Crunchy pickled cauliflower is the newest addition from local pickling company Moon Peppers, \$8.59 per jar.

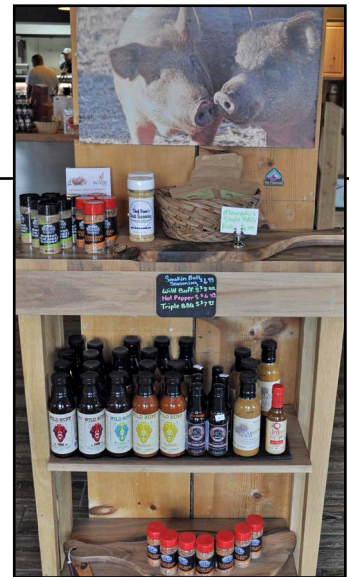
PRODUCE: Jenn Panariso, owner of One Eleven Neighborhood Farm, is returning for the season with plans to set up a Saturday farm stand at Fillmore neighbor Colorado Coffee Merchants and drop off any excess produce for Ranch Foods Direct customers to enjoy later that same day.



ALL NEW SPICE

RUBS: Look for special store displays featuring exclusive custom-made spice rubs created by Gather Food Studio and Spice Shop in Old Colorado City.

The first new blend of the summer is Memphis BBQ Rub (\$6 a bag.) Stay tuned for new spice combinations and recipes published monthly on Substack by Indy food editor Matt Schipner, author of the popular Side Dish column. Below, from the first installment of his collaboration with Gather, a simple easy-to-make sauce that keeps meat moist and imparts rich flavor.



Easy mop sauce

2 tbsp brown sugar
2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
2 tbsp Dijon-style mustard

Simmer in small saucepan until sugar is dissolved. Allow to cool. Use a small mop brush to apply to meat during the grilling or smoking process.



MEAT & GREET AT PEAK TO PLAINS FOOD HUB LOCAL VENDOR MARKET

Every second Saturday at the Food Hub
4635 Town Center Drive, Colorado Springs, CO, 80916
Saturday, July 8th, 2023, from 10AM to 2PM
Building community around local food

- Free samples
- Soap making class
- Burgers and Brats for sale
- Special Guest: Freelance Food and Drink Journalist Matthew Schniper

Come participate in a fun, interactive soap making demonstration with Blake Byers, owner of Clean RD, at the next Food Hub vendor "meat-and-greet" on July 8.



Printed and distributed by:



Natural Meat Market

Two retail locations in Colorado Springs!

Flagship store: 1228 E. Fillmore
719-623-2980

Food hub: 4635 Town Center Drive
719-559-0873

Retail hours at both locations:
Monday through Saturday 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Shop online. Shipping available.
www.ranchfoodsdirect.com



Sweet summer idea: iced chocolate

Ranch Foods Direct carries locally made chocolate bark (\$10.29 per bag) and hot cocoa mixes (\$10.69 per jar) from local chocolate shop and French patisserie Cocoa Chemistry located at 109 N. Tejon downtown. Sam Lang is co-owner and resident chocolatier extraordinaire.

WHAT MAKES YOUR CHOCOLATE SPECIAL? We use French chocolate. It comes in little coins and we temper it to make our own creations. It's really high in cocoa butter which is why it has a smooth creamy texture and tastes so good.

WHY IS RANCH FOODS DIRECT A GOOD FIT FOR YOUR PRODUCTS? It's a collection of all the best local stuff. The meat's the best anywhere around. But even if you don't eat a lot of meat, there's lots of other local products to enjoy. It's a place that attracts people looking to find local items and support the community.

HOW TO MAKE ICED HOT CHOCOLATE

Combine milk and cocoa as directed and freeze in an ice cube tray overnight. Prepare cocoa mix as directed and pour over cubes.

