

Food for Thought

People · Products · Purpose

September 2023

Dogged devotion

Ranch Foods Direct customer George Jordan searched out the highest quality meat to make his creative line of healthy dog treats.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR COMPANY: “I started doing Paws & Us in 2020 just before the pandemic kicked in. I ended up

shipping my orders until the farmers markets came back online in 2021, and I’ve been doing farmers markets since then. When I started the business, I went looking for someone who had meat without all of the chemical treatments — just straight up meat — and RFD was the only place I could find that had it. So I’ve been going there ever since. I couldn’t have the business I have without it.”

WHAT DO YOU LIKE ABOUT RFD?

“Everything. The people are great, just helpful as they can be. The meats are always good and fresh and I know where everything comes from. Plus the store carries yak, duck and other meats. Whenever I’m in there, I get tendons for my own dogs and meat for making them dogfood. I have two Colorado Mountain dogs plus seven puppies that are currently driving me nuts... in a good way. (laughs)”



“All societies, from the simplest to the most sophisticated, engage in the production and distribution of new wealth that originates from farms, forests, earth and seas.”

— Charles Walters,
The Nature of Wealth

From yak snacks to chew cakes to donuts and dinner paws, Paws & Us provides pet treats in a wide variety of shapes, colors and flavors. Find a list of the latest offerings on Facebook or call owner George Jordan at (719) 755-7043.

WHAT’S BEEN THE RESPONSE FROM CUSTOMERS? “People are looking for something more natural for their dogs, so the more natural you can make it the better. We don’t want our pets around for a couple of years; the longer we can have them with us the better off we are. This is just me doing my part to see that they stay around longer. People say you’re spoiling your pet. I tell people it’s excessively appreciating. They do a lot for us. They calm our nerves when we have rough days. They listen to our bad jokes and never complain about how we dress.”

PARTING MESSAGE? “My grandson said it best. He said, pappa, if you wouldn’t eat it, why would you let your dog eat it? It took a five-year-old to say it, but I’ve stuck with that philosophy ever since.”

Couple transforms cottage into oasis of tastiness



David Cook and Cortney Smith have created a foodie paradise at 2011 W. Colorado Avenue. Outside the cottage, clusters of green grapes dangle from vines and inside the front doorway fresh herbs cascade from a living wall. One room inside is devoted entirely to a dazzling array of spices. "We want to be different, and we want to be inspiring the minute you step into the store," David says. The couple opened Gather Food Studio as a place to offer cooking classes but eventually expanded it into a spice shop and gourmet food emporium. During their travels, David and Cortney look for unique regional products they can introduce to Colorado Springs, such as hand-milled grits from Mississippi and hand-pollinated vanilla from Madagascar. They first became connected with Ranch Foods Direct founder Mike Callicrate when he and David were featured together on the same segment of the State of the Plate Podcast hosted by local food writer Matt Schniper. "It's so impressive what Mike's done," David says. That led to a collaboration in which Gather creates original recipes and customized spice blends for RFD customers sourced directly from their extensive pantry. It's a working relationship built on mutual respect for family owned companies that care about their products, do things right and refuse to cut corners.

WHAT'S A PRODUCT YOU'VE USED IN A RECENT COOKING CLASS? Ground pork for a kid's class where we taught them how to make Asian dumplings.

PARTING MESSAGE? Don't you want to give your money to someone who cares about what they're doing and advocates for your best interests?



SPICE ADVICE: Grocery store spices are typically 3 to 7 years old by the time you buy them. Even with good quality dried herbs and spices, Cortney suggests they be replaced after one year since they begin to degrade once exposed to air. Also, consider sourcing organic. "No one thinks about where their spices are grown, but it's important because the roots and soils absorb minerals and other pollutants, and there could be contaminated water to think about as well," she says.



Customer Snapshots

NAME: Manuel Labbe

OCCUPATION: Retired after 40 years as a meat cutter with King Soopers

HOW MANY YEARS HAVE YOU BEEN SHOPPING AT RFD?

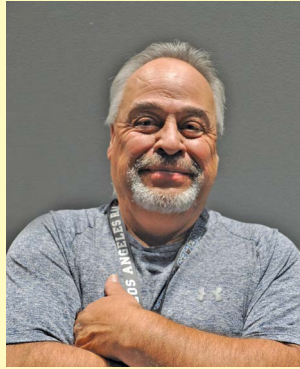
Probably about 7 or 8 years. My friend Roger used to work there (before retiring.) I used to work with Roger at King Soopers before that.

FAVORITE PRODUCTS: I like the dog food, bones and beef broth. And the Italian sausage. And I like the steaks, too, especially when I can get the Wagyu steaks. I like the operation overall. I like the meat. It's a little higher price but it's better quality.

WHAT DOES AN ARTISAN BUTCHER SHOP LIKE RFD OFFER THAT YOU CAN'T GET FROM MAINSTREAM GROCERS?

Quality of product. At the big companies, in their meat departments now, you ask them about a meat cut, they don't know, because all they do is mark the package. You ask them, what's in here for stew? They don't know. At Ranch Foods Direct they've got experience in how to cut, how to break down, how to work with primals and what the individual cuts are, and you can ask them about it. The big stores don't have that anymore.

PARTING MESSAGE? Keep supporting the little guy.



NAME: Peter Christensen

OCCUPATION: Air Force Reserves supporting U.S. Space Force

FAVORITE PRODUCTS:

I'm partial to tri-tip, but my wife's favorite cut — she's from South America — is either the skirt steak or the picanha or the coulotte steak. Picanha and tri tip are similar, but they each have their own character. Both come out of the South American Argentinian tradition and lend themselves to a hot, quick cook. If you were out on the range and you wanted something to eat, you could get a quick little fire going, get a nice brown crust on the meat, slice some off with some salt and the flavor was phenomenal. Another favorite of mine is the linguisa (sausage). When I first moved here I couldn't find it anywhere, until I went to Ranch Foods Direct.

EARLY FOOD MEMORIES? I grew up on the Central Coast of California in the town of Santa Maria. All day everyday we were cooking live fire, red oak, open pit, mostly tri-tip, chicken quarters, pork ribs and linguisa, stuff like that.

WHY SHOP RFD? I would say the average price across all the meat is around \$10 a pound, and at first that seemed a little high, but since then things have changed. Everybody else's prices went up, but not Ranch Foods Direct. In fact, the prices on the ground beef actually dropped, as if to prove a point, like, *hey, we've got you. We're affordable, and we're not raising our prices.* Then there's the quality. I have bought some of the Wagyu beef, and it's not \$30 a pound like I've paid in the past. It is so reasonably priced! The Ranch Foods Direct quality is so good that you can't ruin it (by overcooking it), there's just no way you can mess it up.



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3RD ANNUAL

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COFFEE - LOCAL VENDORS - COMMUNITY

Stop by and visit the Ranch Foods Direct booth

ONE ELEVEN
Neighborhood Farm

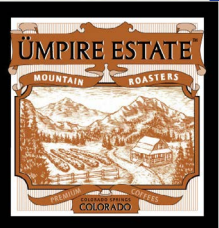


9AM - 1PM

16 SEPT

JOIN US!

302 E FILLMORE ST
COLORADO SPRINGS



"Summer means happy times and good sunshine."

Brian Wilson

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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:
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Shop online. Shipping available.
www.ranchfoodsdirect.com

