

## Vermont Folklife Center Audio Log

**Project:** Archie Green Project

**Interviewer:** Andy Kolovos

**Interviewee:** Joshua Gibbs

**Interviewee Contact:**

**Location:** Mad River Food Hub, Waitsfield, VT

**Date:** 7 May 2015

**Length:** 01:03:31

**Recording Format:** Digital

**Accession:** au2015-1013

**Collection:** vfc2014-0005

**Indexer:** Shannon Esrich

Time	Content	Keyword 1
START-00:00:46	Introductions.	Introduction
00:00:46-00:03:49	Grew up in northern New Jersey, moved to Essex Junction VT in high school. Stayed around Burlington after high school, attended culinary school at NECI, worked as in Boston for very high-end restaurants. Moved back to southern Vermont, taught at NECI for about 10 years. Moved into current job last July, skills really fit the hub's needs very well.	Childhood, culinary school, New England Culinary Institute (NECI), education, institution
00:03:49-00:06:15	List of previous restaurant jobs. Aside about types of cooking and flavor profiles.	Career, cuisine, flavor profile
00:06:15-00:10:27	Motivations for becoming chef and instructor. Gives him chance to be a chef during the day instead of at night like at restaurants. Being instructor also gives him more time for family and friends. As culinary student, thought being professional chef would be easier, but is always very difficult work. Being instructor was like having 2 jobs, cooking and serving during the day and grading papers at night, but learned a lot and met many good people. Details about NECI campus, course schedules, and constant change in professional kitchens.	Education, career, chef

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00:10:27-00:12:37	Aside about skills it takes to be successful chef.	Skills, chef
00:12:37-00:15:20	At NECI taught business classes, butchering. The food hub is very specialized in meat inspection and processing, very important to keeping food safe. Having knowledge of food safety, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), meat skills made him great candidate for job. Felt comfortable almost immediately aside from employee transitions within the hub. Job responsibilities fit like a glove to his skills and enjoys learning on the job.	Institution, New England Culinary Institute (NECI), processing, food safety, Food Safety and Inspection Service, meat
00:15:20-00:19:03	Mad River Food Hub is an L3C (low-profit, limited liability company), between non- and for-profit company. A for-profit company with a social mission. Hub opened November 2011. Food hubs gaining popularity nationwide, 7-8 in VT. They are central places of aggregation for food products, where food producers and processors can share at least one aspect of the food system. Mad River in particular tries to be a business incubator, looks for small-scale producers with dream to build local business of value added foods using local ingredients. Not just collecting and redistributing foods, have equipment to transform foods and turn into new products with people's own label on it. Likes the model, likes to say people graduate from the hub. Having your own facility to start a business can be very expensive, so the hub helps people start out with just patience and hard work. Need some insurance, business plan, and fairly good understanding of food safety, but with hard work and research try to make hub accessible and keep rates to 15% of producers' revenue.	L3C, aggregation, producers, processing, distributor, local, value added, business model
00:19:03-00:20:36	"Graduates" of the Hub include Vermont Bean Crafters, still use hub sometimes because moving into new facility but are growing fantastically. Screamin' Ridge Farm, Joe's Soups are other graduates, distribute to upper scale markets like Healthy Living, City Market, Hunger Mountain Co-op. Joe still works in hub but working on moving into his own facility. Also host Vermont Salumi, they have their own plant for raw products but hub has	Producers, Vermont Bean Crafters, Screamin' Ridge Farm, Joe's Soups, retail outlets, Healthy Living, City Market, Hunger Mountain Co-op, Vermont Salumi, processing

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	only inspected dry curing facility for meats to make charcuterie, salami, etc. Only place in VT that does it.	
00:20:36-00:21:30	Aside about personal relationships among people working in Vermont's food system, all people Joshua knows and Andy interviewed.	Aside, relationships
00:21:30-00:25:12	"I think our main focus is on processing, on incubating those businesses and getting them to where they need to be. Because without the processing, we would just be another distributor, and that's not what we're looking to be. We definitely are interested in staying local, small-scale. We're not interested in attracting large corporations into our freezer or storage units." Want to maintain facility for local producers. Without processing, don't have need for storage, and without processing, don't have need for distribution, hence cyclical logo of the hub. Distribution is important though, have 2 drivers, which is an increase from 1 in the last year. As producers start to scale up, they look outside the hub for more distribution options because need more deliveries, so by necessity do more deliveries for smaller scale producers. Many people go to Black River Produce after the hub, which Joshua thinks is great. Other distributors too pick up from the hub.	Processing, producers, distributor, local, business model, storage, Black River Produce
00:25:12-00:28:18	Hub primarily interested in USDA product, so mostly meat products but can also do vegetables. Vermont Bean Crafters is a vegan company, for example of certification. Hub can make sausage, dry cured products, but also fully cooked meat products like Joe's Soup. Lots of work to earn certifications, need HACCP plans for every process, and usually every product. Have up to 10 plans currently. Bacon jam company starting soon, will likely need new plan. HACCP: Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point. Developed by food safety scientist for NASA in 1980s to keep astronauts safe in space from food borne illness. Adapted by USDA's FSIS around 1995 to keep food and in particular meats safer on the market. Since inception, has drastically reduced number of food borne illness outbreaks in US by 2/3s. HACCP for	Institution, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), producer, Vermont Bean Crafters, Joe's Soups, processing, Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS), poultry, meat

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	anything that contains meat, poultry, and sometimes eggs. Everything intended for wholesale or released into commerce must be inspected. VT has helped in being somewhat lenient with farmers and creating some exceptions to national and federal laws. Want to keep agriculture as vital part of VT economy, want to help farmers. Example: Small-scale chicken farmers can sell certain amount of product at farmers markets that are uninspected. Overall, inspection is good though.	
00:25:12-00:33:35	HACCP based on food safety science. "The burden is on the producer – or the plant, I should say – to provide a plan and to research and know about the different hazards that are associated with the process that you're doing." Starts when meat enters facility and ends when final product leaves/is delivered to consumers/retailers. Break that whole process down into steps of activities and safety procedures. Uses making sausage as example of step-by-step process. Look for forms of biological, physical, and chemical contamination, the likelihood of their occurrence, and evidence of your decision. USDA puts burden of proof on plant, even though they already know, to make sure people making the food know too. Decisions and reasoning vary based on individual make processes. Hub does food safety plans for their producers, very daunting to write on your own.	Producer, processing, food safety, institution, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), meat
00:33:35-00:35:36	Get meat from range of slaughterhouses, currently 3 regularly. Hub wants to service to farmers who want to do more of the meat processing themselves. Example, Artisan Meats of Vermont is two brothers who butcher their own animals, but who now butcher for others and do co-packing for other farmers' products. They serve small-scale customers throughout VT, pack according to customers' decisions, and put that farm's label on it.	Meat, processing, producer, Artisan Meats of Vermont
00:35:36-00:39:37	Slaughterhouse must be USDA or Vermont state inspected. USDA product can be sold across state lines. Can't turn state inspected into USDA inspected, but can do the reverse. State inspection must be equal to federal inspection, so all federal regulations apply to state inspection as well. USDA	Institution, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), inspection, food safety

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	<p>hires out state inspectors as USDA inspectors, so VT they are the same people. Not like that in all states, and not all states have their own meat inspection services. No cost to USDA inspection, paid by taxes. Slaughterhouse may not get USDA inspected if don't need to be, if really small scale and only serve local clients wouldn't need federal inspection. State is also usually better working with and coaching plant managers, while USDA may not teach and will only give evaluation. Develop good personal relationship with regulators and inspectors, teaches you a lot.</p>	
00:39:37-00:42:25	<p>Joshua is general manager at Hub, takes care of most of the finances. Have facilities and operation supervisor who does much of grunt work. 2 drivers, also help with cleaning. Joshua leads staff, keeps everyone on task, organizes distribution, program routes and GPS systems, and communicates with clients about distribution. Loves that hub takes distribution service very seriously, very client-centric. "It's our mission to serve the local clients and the businesses that are processing here, as well as our just purely distribution customers." Joshua works as plant manger, does food safety plans, talks with different clients to arrange for equipment repairs, or helping out himself. Jack-of-all-trades, maintenance, management, finance, and human resources.</p>	Responsibilities, employees, distributor, finances, producer
00:42:25-00:44:30	<p>Producers who are inspected have strict set of hours when they can operate based on 8 hours of paid-for production, anything more producers must pay out of pocket. Non-inspected producers can come in any time, but preferable to work when staff is in, so 7-5 Monday through Friday. Tries to get people not to work on weekends, but producers can work with storage and non-production related tasks after hours. Some producers obtain trustee status, in which Joshua feels comfortable trusting them to complete tasks completely or correctly without his being there.</p>	Producer, processing, relationships
00:44:30-00:48:53	<p>Details of typical day for Joshua. Arrives just before 7am, immediately gets day's distribution in order. Does load checks for drivers, sends them off.</p>	Responsibilities, schedule, processing, United States

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	<p>Tries to organize routes efficiently but with customers in mind. Does preoperational checks for sanitation, checks each room and all pieces of equipment for cleanliness and function. Processors arrive, unload, and start production. Throughout day, talks with storage clients to make their products available, figure out storage locations and timing. Watches progress of delivery trucks, stays visible in processing rooms to help and make sure everything stays sanitary. Enters invoices, pays bills, always looking to buy something for the hub. Growing now, have some extra money, so starting to reinvest in the hub. Have adequate facility, but can expand. Getting new requests for processes they can't efficiently do yet, like a smoking facility for smoked fish and meats. Curing facility is new, was big first reinvestment. Had to upgrade some of existing systems like drying rooms, will start again in several days. Also upgraded from state to USDA inspection for cured meats, many higher end customers outside the state so became necessary to sell outside of VT. Helps clean up and shut down everything at end of the day.</p>	<p>Department of Agriculture (USDA), inspection, distributor, producer, finances</p>
<p>00:48:53-00:51:10</p>	<p>Delivery routes go to Burlington twice a week, several routes in Mad River Valley, Waitsfield, Warren, East Warren, Montpelier, Barre, Waterbury, Shelburne, Winooski, and West Lebanon. Mostly distribute to upper scale groceries, Healthy Living, City Market, some to Lawson's Finest Liquids which is in incredibly high demand currently. April fairly quiet, ski resorts close so no big distributions there. Mad River Valley dependent on those businesses, and take vacations when ski resorts close.</p>	<p>Distributor, consumer, retail outlet, Healthy Living, City Market, producer, Lawson's Finest Liquids</p>
<p>00:51:10-00:57:17</p>	<p>Producers who inquire usually have dream product that they want to make because friends tell them they do it really well. Ask about knowledge of food safety requirements, hub offers to help them. Good to see people come in with base business plan, getting started but also short-term future of business, figuring out customer base. Then people start to realize how hard it is to start and get product to market. Often a disconnect there. Very few</p>	<p>Producer, business plan, processing, finances</p>

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	<p>people do the work to finally get started at the hub. Can put a lot of effort into developing their business, but never pans out and work goes to waste for that business. Can be frustrating, but still learning through each process so okay. Will point people to others to help them create a business plan, but hub is just a facility to get a product to market, won't do it for the producer. Aside about producer who wanted to make the product for her, but hub doesn't do that and not the client the hub wants. Some of earliest producers just getting to success. Not always because of processes, just because of money. Need equipment, loans, grants, and need to get everything to work together.</p>	
00:57:17-00:59:22	<p>Favorite part of job is being with the food, seeing success of clients, talking to the farmers, even those who just use cooler storage. Seasonality of products and facility uses is great. "It's a great thing to see people growing into this new resurgence of local food and better food, and they go hand in hand. Local food does not always make it better; I mean, in other words, place doesn't necessarily dictate quality. But, generally a carrot that's picked yesterday up the road is going to taste better than a carrot that's been sitting in cold storage for a month and half before it even hits the grocery store shelf." Seeing successful clients is great. Example, Artisan Meats of Vermont growing with own label but also co-packing. They are developing new recipes, and is exciting and fun to see. Speaks to his background as a chef, keeps the job interesting. Also knows were Lawson's is kept!</p>	<p>Seasonality, local, success, producer, Artisan Meats of Vermont, processing, Lawson's Finest Liquids</p>
00:59:22-01:00:59	<p>Wants to see hub expand. Wants it primarily to exist in 20 years, but should also expand. Wants more and different types of producers and products. Wants to reach more people who have the dream, need the facility, and are almost ready to go. "Being at this food hub is like being on the heartbeat of all of it; I'm talking to farmers, but I'm also talking to the wholesale buyers at the grocery stores, and the producers. It's really fantastic; I see it from all aspects. I see all aspects of food and food production from where I'm sitting</p>	<p>Future, producers, distributor, retail outlet, system</p>

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	now, and I just absolutely love it. And it helps me rest easy knowing I'm doing something that's pretty socially responsible, too."	
01:00:59-END.	"Keep eating local food, but look for the better quality local food too because there's some junk out there." Short history of the building's uses prior to the hub. Robin Morris started and owns food hub. Took 1.5 years to build and get building up to standards, makes enough to be sustainable and reinvest into food hub but not highly profitable, but doesn't want or need to be.	Conclusion, local, success