

The Dynamic Donut Duo with Amie Anderson & Jamie Krake

David Crabill: Welcome to the Forrager podcast, where I talk with cottage, food entrepreneurs, about their strategies for running a food business from home. I'm David Crabill, and today I am talking with Amie and Jamie, Amie Anderson and Jamie Krake live in Ypsilanti, Michigan, and sell donuts with their cottage food business. It's a good day donuts.

This dynamic couple have quite the interesting startup journey. they actually started making donuts to gear up for the launch of a full-on cafe. And then this little thing called the pandemic hits, throwing a huge wrench into their plans. But despite that their new home-based donut business really took off during the pandemic. And they haven't looked back since then, Amie and Jamie started this business to have fun and to spread joy to their local community.

And you will see that that's certainly evident in all aspects of their business. In this episode, you'll hear how they have grown this into a very serious business all while sticking true to their core values.

in my previous episode, episode 51, You might recall that I shared the top eight traits of successful cottage food entrepreneurs. And if you pay attention, as you listen to this episode, you'll notice that together, Amie and Jamie leverage every single one of those top eight traits.

All right. With that, let's jump right into this.

Welcome to the show. Amie and Jamie. Nice to have you here.

[00:01:29] **Jamie Krake:** Thanks for having us.

[00:01:31] **David Crabill:** So can you take me back to when you started this? I know you started it, I think at the beginning of 2020, how did this whole uh, business get started.

[00:01:39] **Amie Anderson:** we really started thinking about this in um, late You know, Jamie and I, at that point we'd been married for like, I don't know, about 10 years we have two elementary school children had full-time jobs and

also we're helping, like our parents are starting to get to that age where they were aging.

So we had lots of things pulling us in different directions. But the one thing we were really, we thought we were kind of missing in our life was things that we were passionate about, you know, like hobbies or we didn't really have that. We were just kinda going through the motions.

Um, We had a little bit of I guess, like a struggle in our family. My dad did get really sick and he was a chef and had to retire a little earlier than expected. Um, we along, you know, so

together, the three of us had plans to run a diner, a seasonally. Operating diner. So it would operate just during the summer months.

[00:02:36] **Jamie Krake:** It was at a camp ground too. So as the story evolves, that's an important, but right before the pandemic started.

[00:02:43] **Amie Anderson:** So we thought, so our plan was, you know, he was on the road to recovery. We were hoping he'd be healthy. Some by summer of 2020, and together, the three of us, Jamie has a pretty extensive food service management background.

Together we would start, you know, we would start this, this diner, and I really, really wanted to make donuts for, for the diner. I thought it would be just a great thing to do um, who doesn't love a donut? I certainly love donuts. And the one problem was is that I had never made a donut before, and either no one, none of us were really bakers or donut makers.

So we had to begin practicing in our home.

[00:03:24] **David Crabill:** So let's back up a little bit. Cause I mean, you said that Jamie had food service experience and I'm just trying to get a sense for, like, it seemed like kind of a very elaborate plan to like start this food business out of nothing.

[00:03:36] **Jamie Krake:** no, there was nothing elaborate about it. It was a fly by the seat of our pants decision that you know, we had been seasonals at this campground for quite a number of years and saw a lot of people come and go from there and decided. At some point that if there was ever an opportunity

that, that we might consider running the cafe, that Bob would be the lead person.

And we would sort of help him from the background and uh, that opportunity presented itself around the same time that Amie's dad got sick

[00:04:03] **Amie Anderson:** So I think I am known for making very complicated decisions really quickly

[00:04:13] **Jamie Krake:** she makes the decisions and the rest of us are left to pick up the pieces and figure it out.

[00:04:16] **Amie Anderson:** Definitely jump in feet first and then, try to sort the details after, and this was no exception.

[00:04:24] **David Crabill:** idea. And it came, you know, this opportunity came in front of you and you know, what was it like trying to get that cafe off the ground? I know it's a pretty complex and interesting story.

[00:04:36] **Jamie Krake:** well, we're going to let's let's stick, we'll get to that in a second, I think. But so the pandemic hit in the process of us trying to get the cafe off the ground, figure out what our menu was going to be. And there was a lot of back and forth with whether the diner was going to open or whether it wasn't due to due to COVID throughout the course of time.

in the meantime we continue to practice donuts decided that we. Couldn't eat another donut by herself. And if we were going to continue making donuts, we should just try to sell them, which is, which is what we ended up doing under the, under the cottage food law. Right. little, did we know that the pandemic COVID pandemic was going to come and get in the midst of all of this and it would blow up our donut business and we would hit the ground running with that.

which we did um, well, continuing to still have the cafe diner sort of on the back burner, trying to work on that menu and, you know, sort of figure out what we were going to do with that. We did end up opening that diner.

But being that it was in a, in a campground, in the middle of a pandemic, it was not very successful, successful for us.

So we decided not to keep running with something that wasn't going to work out for us when the donut business was going incredibly well. So we stuck with donuts and we went all in on donuts.

[00:05:49] **David Crabill:** Yeah. So I know you, you know, this definitely went in a direction you weren't expecting. Cause you thought you're going to make, start this diner that sold all sorts of things. You end up starting a business that sells mostly donuts. But I just interested, before we get into the whole donut business, like, what was that opening day like when you actually opened up the cafe? I know it was postponed a lot, but you did open it and it looked like you sold quite a lot of different things.

[00:06:14] **Jamie Krake:** Yeah, we did. And had the pandemic, not as sort of got in the way, it would have been, well, we opened 4th of July weekend.

[00:06:22] **Amie Anderson:** Yeah. I would say it was very chaotic in one of the things we learned from that experience. And I think is what will, what, why we're treading very lightly at our next steps out of the cottage food industry was we walked into a building with that was extremely not cared for, I guess, to say lightly.

So, so the night before opening my dad and a friend of his were, were replacing a water heater till about three o'clock in the morning

[00:06:51] **Jamie Krake:** so that we could open up the next day

[00:06:53] **Amie Anderson:** six o'clock the next morning. So, so we had like multiple equipment failures and just really had to put a lot of, a lot of time and energy into getting the facility to a place that could even, you know, be successful.

[00:07:12] **Jamie Krake:** So, yeah, and it was on one of their busiest weekends. It was one of the first weekends. I think that people were coming out. They were, they were open Um, It was very, very busy. We did well that first weekend, but it was chaotic. It was extremely chaotic.

[00:07:27] **David Crabill:** Yeah, I know you did well. Cause I saw that you had actually a couple employees, even that, that helped you out that first weekend. So you're definitely selling things, but I also am interested in, like, you put so much time and effort and energy into trying to formulate this cafe

idea and, you know, unbeknownst to you, this donut idea would kind of take it over, but like how hard was it to actually step away from that idea and decide, you know, this is not the right direction. Considering you invested so much time and effort into that idea.

[00:07:56] **Jamie Krake:** I think by the time we got to the point of making a decision let the cafe go. We were all burnt out. I mean, I think the unknowns with COVID really took its toll on us as well as a campground environment. And it was just, it was, it was hard, you know, it

[00:08:10] **Amie Anderson:** was just really, you know, the struggle with equipment maintenance with, with the landlords, all of that really made it a very, very easy, I think decision for us. And just as I said, as I said earlier, which probably isn't the most strategic business thinking, I I'm, I'm definitely one to jump in with both feet and that also that also could mean closing that door very quickly. So for me it was very much about.

Okay, this is not working and this is awful. like, how do we turn this around? like, what are the next steps to be successful in? And we knew that, like we had this really loyal, amazing donut community, you know, in, our home base sort of where we live in Washtenaw county, Michigan.

So Ann Arbor and Ypsilanti area, we knew that we had loyal customers, that we had a loyal following there. And it was very easy for me to just go back to that because you know, Our reason for doing this was, was for joy to have joy in our lives. Like we had, you know, we have full-time jobs, we weren't, this wasn't about making money.

This wasn't, I don't need this business to pay my mortgage. I need this business to get to fulfill my passion.

[00:09:29] **Jamie Krake:** Yeah. It's been a, it's been a hard couple of years for everybody, but we've had some with Amie's dad's, you know, health issues. She also lost her mom, which I think she'll tell you a little bit more about that

[00:09:41] **Amie Anderson:** Yeah 3 weeks before we were supposed to open, my mom died very unexpectedly.

[00:09:44] **Jamie Krake:** We had that thrown in there um, and it's just been hard, you know, and I think, you know, I jokingly all along I've said that donut

saved my life. But really it kind of did. I mean, it really, it really kept me going. It gave us a lot of, a lot of fun and a lot of enjoyment in, in a situation where there, there was, that was lacking certainly throughout the last couple of years.

[00:10:06] **David Crabill:** Yeah, that's certainly very apparent in like everything that I've seen about your business and from the very name, you know, it's a good day donuts. And you know, you have right plastered on the front of your website, spreading joy, spreading, cozy. can you talk a little bit more about how that mission has played out with your business and your customers?

[00:10:26] **Amie Anderson:** You know, I guess like, just like I said, in the most simple aspect, I think getting donuts delivered right to your door it's always just super fun and we really want, you know, to continue to spread that joy. Like, kids see even, you know, kids are in their pajamas looking out the window you know, just jumping up and down, super excited to see you. Um, We've, we've transitioned

to pop up, pop up

[00:10:53] **Amie Anderson:** In-person pop ups and to the farmer's market. And as we, as our business has grown, we've really looked to expand what that means in terms of spreading joy. And part of that is like creating a sustainable community. And we really try to support our other farmer market vendors use and highlight their products and you know, make our donuts from as many locally sourced ingredients as we can.

[00:11:18] **Jamie Krake:** So we sell donuts, but I also like to say that, you know, we, we also sell fun, right? Like we, we try to have fun themes around our donuts. We don't, you know, we, we make some pretty fun flavors too, but we try to put a theme around most of our donut uh, weekly offerings. We did a series of themes based off of Christmas movies over the holiday season that we did.

So that was, that was a lot of fun, but yeah, we, we, we try to put a fun theme around most of the donut offerings that we have.

[00:11:44] **David Crabill:** Yeah, I noticed that there's just fun in all aspects of your business. Like it's not just the donuts, but you sell other things with your business. And even things like, you know, it was a fad a year ago, but like the hot cocoa bombs, it looked like he had a lot of fun with those. And even the

naming of your marshmallows uh, you just like, there's a lot of creativity in your business. Can you talk about what you've created?

[00:12:08] **Jamie Krake:** Sure. So Coco bombs were kind of you know, that went viral and we didn't really want to get into the cocoa bomb business. Cause donuts were sort of our thing, but that was another Aime thing our customers kept asking. And then finally,

[00:12:20] **Amie Anderson:** Someone said online like who locally makes these? And I was like, oh, we do, but we didn't have like molds or we had never made a hot cocoa bomb before. And she was like, what are you talking about? I was like, oh, we can do this no problem. If it's

[00:12:35] **Jamie Krake:** 1500 cocoa bombs later last year. Yeah, that, that was quite the adventure, but we, we offered cocoa bombs again this year. We didn't sell quite as many, but it was still a popular item. And again, like with our cocoa bombs too, I think the reason those have gone so well is we make our marshmallows from scratch.

We make everything from scratch that we can sprinkles are hard to make from scratch, but if we can make it from scratch, we certainly do from salted caramel to our edible cookie dough and everything, you know, marshmallows, everything in between.

[00:13:04] **David Crabill:** I did notice that you said you locally source a lot of ingredients and you also make things from home as much as you can, but that you also use a distributor for some items. Can you talk a little bit more about that?

[00:13:17] **Amie Anderson:** Sure. We don't anymore. so that's a fun fact and that's, I think it really attests to how, how our business is growing. So again when we first, when we first started in late 20, 19, early 2020, our focus was to, was to make a cafe and we didn't have the equipment or staff, anything to make donuts and large quantities from scratch.

So we started using, uh, we used a premade donut and made toppings in like the stuff on top of it. Once we did, once that cafe ended and we decided to go full in on the donut business, I mean, the only way to truly do that is to make everything from scratch. So we transitioned, we purchased commercial grade fryers for that could be used inside our home.

We have a ginormous, what does it mean 20 quart mixer so we, so we took the time to invest in the equipment that we needed to create the donut. And it's really essentially like the donut that I always had envisioned, but we couldn't go, we couldn't do that at the time, but yeah, so now we don't, we don't utilize a distributor for anything, except for like, obviously like flour and sugar and whatnot. but now everything is made from scratch in house

[00:14:28] **David Crabill:** So be you still do use a distributor for certain ingredients. Like what was the process like for finding a distributor? Was that Jamie's food service experience coming into play?

[00:14:37] **Jamie Krake:** a little bit. We had, you know, having a small restaurant environment, we had to find a distributor that could meet our small order minimums and our order ordering days. So we use GFS and we use us foods and we sort of partnered with both of them to meet the need of what we were looking for.

Once we transitioned away from that, we found that restaurant Depot was a better source for us. Prices were better. It seemed to have more of what we were looking for in terms of ingredients

[00:15:07] **Amie Anderson:** and it's right down the street from our house. It's definitely convenient.

[00:15:11] **David Crabill:** Alright. So you invested in a lot of equipment. I mean like, how should all this cost, cause I've seen in a picture you had like racks behind you as well. You said you got your mixer, you've got these fryers. Like what did you actually invest money wise into this.

[00:15:27] **Jamie Krake:** That's a hard to say because some of the, some of the equipment came from the work that we did on getting the cafe ready to open. I mean, because we sourced a lot of it from online auctions. We got a lot, a lot of things that were used less than \$2,500 total. And that includes the mixer. The 20 quart mixer

[00:15:44] **Amie Anderson:** was really expensive. And again, it's, it's always about like reinvesting in your business

[00:15:50] **Jamie Krake:** or you find yourself in the middle of making pączkis on Fat Tuesday and realize that your, your fryers and your mixture that you have, isn't going to cut it. So you go out and buy one at eight o'clock

[00:16:01] **Amie Anderson:** that's exactly what happened. And we had to like, you know, we live in Michigan, so it was very cold, very icy. And we had this like enormously heavy mixer in which Jamie and I who are, you know, just average

[00:16:15] **Jamie Krake:** We are trying to push this thing through the snow up, our steps on the sheet tray to get it in the house.

[00:16:22] **Amie Anderson:** Yeah. So, so learn from us and prepare ahead of time. But, but again, no, we, we really just gradually, you know, added equipment. Again, just reinvested when we could, I think that, at least with, with our, with our core donut operation, we didn't really dip into like our personal savings or anything like that. It really all came from money we had made from, from our business and just continued to reinvest.

[00:16:48] **David Crabill:** Okay. So let's go back to when you got this at business off the ground, because I know you're testing it in early 20, 20 before the pandemic take me through, you know, the pandemic hit and what happened, what was the trajectory of your business like?

[00:17:02] **Amie Anderson:** Oh, my gosh. Well, I think the pandemic hit and we, you know, like I said, we had, like, we have little kids, we, um, you know, we have a daughter that was in preschool. We had a you know, an older son, and our life was just like, everybody everything stopped. It was, it was crazy.

And so we, we hit pause on the donut business for a little bit. We didn't know what to do. We needed to get our own affairs in order and figure out how we are managing all the pieces of our life. And then, you know, we're like, well, here we are. We're, we're ordering everything delivery.

Maybe other people want some things delivered and

[00:17:38] **Jamie Krake:** Think the biggest, yeah, the biggest change that we made from when, before pandemic to after was we were doing in person knock on the door, they open the door, we hand you the donuts. They pay us at that point.

once the pandemic hit, we transitioned from that to, okay, now you're going to place your order online and we're going to drop it off in your doorstep, and we're going to ring your doorbell and we're going to go away. So I think that was the, one of the biggest changes is that we no longer saw those customers face to face.

And there are still some of our customers that are regulars that we haven't seen in person. They just continue to place orders with us.

[00:18:11] **Amie Anderson:** And so it just became I guess like Flushing out like the details of that delivery method. Right. Um, leave it on your doorstep.

Like, will you actually get it? Did we accidentally deliver to the wrong house? Will your dog eat these donuts? Like all real life situations that happened.

so there was this other challenges transitioning um, But we had a lot of time on our hands.

[00:18:35] **David Crabill:** And did the pandemic bring just the influx of interested customers.

[00:18:40] **Amie Anderson:** I think so. Yeah. I think people, people were, again, you know, looking for various things to be delivered. Um, We live in a really, I think our community in whole really supports local businesses. We have a really good community of moms too, that really support each other to support each other's businesses. So I think that really, really helped us,

[00:19:07] **Jamie Krake:** All along, even before the pandemic we have, our customer base has always been like our customers have always been really loyal. when Amy's mom died, our customers really uh, supported us in a way that I think for both of us was completely unexpected.

we had opened the cafe at that point. We were still doing deliveries and still doing Donuts via other methods

[00:19:25] **Amie Anderson:** and um, yeah, it was father's day weekend. And um, yeah, we were really, I didn't know. Like, do we cancel all the orders? You know, I felt really, really bad canceling on father's day weekend, but in the same, in the same regard, like there was no, our family was, you know, just crushed.

It was like, that was very unexpected and we have children. so we had, we had to cancel and I felt so bad. And so many of our customers, you know, we just had, like people say, oh, don't refund our, you know, don't refund our money. Like here, we want to, we want you to go out and do something fun with your kids or do something like this, or it's no, you know, don't worry about it.

It's no problem. Like nobody, like nobody complained. Which I think was, you know, it was not what we were expecting.

[00:20:15] **David Crabill:** Um, so can you share a little bit about these donuts? What makes them so special or so unique? What kind of flavors do you offer?

[00:20:24] **Jamie Krake:** I think probably one of our more popular flavors is the hot cocoa or anything with marshmallow on it. Like if you put marshmallow on a donut and it's homemade people are gonna gravitate to it. Other popular fun flavors have been our unicorn donut, which is a swirly color, colorful, glitter donut. That pretty much anybody loves with a birthday cake icing on it. It's pretty delicious.

[00:20:45] **Amie Anderson:** Anything with edible cookie dough, people, people really like that. We also, again, we mentioned we live in an area adjacent to Ann Arbor, Michigan. so we do a good business for the University of Michigan students um, parents order donuts to surprise their kids. Um, so we do, you know, various themes of maize and blue, and those are always popular.

[00:21:08] **Jamie Krake:** we partnered with a local individual that did a custom cookie cutter for us in the shape of our iconic Ypsilanti water tower. we do rice krispie treats and marshmallows in the shape of that water tower. And that is really popular with the Eastern Michigan university students.

And the Ypsilanti. Crowd as a whole really likes that once we do a cinnamon sea salt rice krispie treat, and then we do a cinnamon marshmallow with that one,

[00:21:30] **Amie Anderson:** we also offer vegan donuts, which you know, it's many, many places do not offer vegan donuts. So that's a great option for people that are vegan.

[00:21:41] **Jamie Krake:** yeah, that was our number one other than gluten-free gluten-free and vegan. That was always requested. So eventually Amie said, we just need to figure this out.

[00:21:48] **Amie Anderson:** our son loves the vegan donuts, even though he is, he is not vegan. but he says the vegan donuts are better than our traditional donuts and specifically we have one where there's an Oreo inside So that one is very popular. And you can get it vegan or traditional,

[00:22:05] **David Crabill:** Was it difficult to convert your recipe into a vegan?

[00:22:11] **Amie Anderson:** Yes.

[00:22:11] **Jamie Krake:** Although, ironically, the best recipe that we, that we found was written on a card that came out of your grandmas recipe sack.

[00:22:20] **Amie Anderson:** And it was like, yeah, when I was going through my mom's things, we found a recipe for like a sweet dough that didn't use um, any eggs or butter or anything. And, you know, I think that that recipe really was created at a time when, you know, money was tight.

My grandma had seven kids. That sort of situation, certainly not because she was vegan. And I was like, wait a minute,

[00:22:46] **Jamie Krake:** this is vegan. And it was delicious. It was absolutely delicious. And it was better than any recipe we had tried

[00:22:51] **Amie Anderson:** up to that point. We switched it a little bit instead of, I think her recipe called for water. We do use almond milk in it instead. But yeah, we definitely had some, some vegan donut fails for sure. Yeah.

[00:23:07] **Jamie Krake:** So if we were going to make a vegan donut, cause neither one of us are vegan. Neither of our kids are vegan. If we were going to make a vegan donut, we wanted it to be something that was going to be delicious. And it certainly is delicious.

[00:23:17] **David Crabill:** I also saw, in addition to this flavors, you have celebration boards. Can you talk a little bit about those?

[00:23:24] **Amie Anderson:** Yeah, I think this really stemmed out of our wanting to spread some joy. So we, we often get birthday party requests, like birthday requests and we did one day. We ask the parents, like, what is this for? I think it was for like a fifth birthday party. What does she like?

And you know, of course it's like rainbows and sparkles and all that, all that jazz because what five-year-old girl, you know, it's just really common with five year old girls. And so we, so we created the donuts and I was like, wait a minute, Jamie. Let's like, let's like, make this into a shape for her.

At first we tried a five and it's not, it's not look well, it's not look good. It was a disaster. And then we made it into a rainbow. And when we, and when Jamie delivered it, like the girl was just, she was

[00:24:12] **Jamie Krake:** excited. She was so excited. And our six year old saw that and said, how come I can't have one of those from my birthdays?

And it was at that point that, between the excitement between the five-year-old and the excitement between our six year old, that we realized that we needed to offer that on a, on a regular basis.

[00:24:28] **David Crabill:** Now, you mentioned that, you know, you do a lot for U of M and you also are, you know, marketing to the Ann Arbor community. I noticed you do delivery for free to your own, city and Ann Arbor. And then you only charge like \$5. If you're going further from that, I was surprised to see that you offer that free delivery.

Why did you decide to offer free delivery?

[00:24:52] **Amie Anderson:** That's a, that's a um, that's a point of contention.

[00:24:56] **Jamie Krake:** Yeah. I, Amie wants to continue the free delivery, whereas I would rather figure out how we can um, you know, gas isn't getting any cheaper. Our, our customer base is growing. So our delivery area is growing. Certainly something that we're considering addressing at some point, but I don't know. I don't know if we will or not.

[00:25:14] **Amie Anderson:** I got, it was a matter of just jumping in. We didn't have a strategy back then, and then, you know, to be, to be completely honest during the pandemic, especially I loved those hours by myself. In the car. Like I

am an introvert, I need time alone. And I was forced in my house with my wife, my kids for however long.

It was way too long. And so that time that I had delivering donuts, I generally, if it's a huge, like on the weekends if we have a big delivery order, usually I'm the Amie me will be the one. Does most of the deliveries and unless we have to split up,

[00:25:57] **Jamie Krake:** then I'll pick up some odds and ends the ones that are outliers.

[00:25:59] **Amie Anderson:** Um, But yeah, so I, so to me like that, that time wasn't really worked or effort, but rather an ability for me to kind of regroup myself and get and get some free time. So, I never looked at it as like something I would charge for, because it was, it was really a benefit to me. But, but as we look, as we look strategically, as, as we know everything, the cost of gas is, is really going up in price.

We may have to reevaluate that, and we have slightly in that we do charge a delivery fee, again it's \$5 for U of M campus deliveries, just because it takes. Some extra time to connect with students. Like if they're living in a dorm, we can't just leave them outside the door. And we actually have to text the student and get ahold of them. And sometimes they are hard to get in touch with.

[00:26:56] **David Crabill:** And you said that you both work full-time jobs. Is that still the case?

It is not.

[00:27:02] **Jamie Krake:** So we had a transition in our life in the summer and I am no longer working. I am now sort of all in with this donuts business and taking care of both kids getting them to and from school. We've had some transition back to virtual learning that, that I've dealt with. So I've had that thrown in there. when I lost my job, eventually we were able to transition into more of a pop-up, you know, farmer's market. another one of Amie's sort of let let's just do.

This was a purchase of a vintage camper in 1969, Keystone camper that is currently sitting in a lot about 45 minutes away. And we haven't touched it

since we bought it, but we hope to have that, renovated, um, and to be able to use. For our, for our pop-ups, in our events come spring.

[00:27:49] **Amie Anderson:** I mean, we couldn't have maintained the amount of energy we were putting forward our initial first year. Um, I think it was. Unsustainable.

so we did it, we managed to do it, we survived, but it wouldn't, it certainly would not have, been a great way of life. We couldn't have continued to manage full-time jobs with the business

[00:28:14] **Jamie Krake:** and to continue to grow, we would have had to start saying no at some point which Amie's not very good at

[00:28:19] **Amie Anderson:** no. And so, so yeah, and we like, we really, over the summer, we didn't do like a ton of deliveries cause we, we did the farmer's market instead.

And so we wouldn't have been able to do like the farmer's market weekly. If Jamie was working still, it would have just been too much, too hectic in our lives I think. Right.

[00:28:39] **David Crabill:** Yeah, So you said that you've done popups now and you have this farmer's market. How has it been selling in person at events?

[00:28:47] **Amie Anderson:** it's fun. It was,

[00:28:48] **Jamie Krake:** you know, it was, it's nice to see people again. You know, we started when we started everything, when we had that in-person communication and we were seeing people, you know, kids were standing in front of us jumping up and down, taking the donuts. We were able to talk to people when the pandemic hit that went away. Literally knock on the door, ring the doorbell, leave them on the steps.

So it was really nice to get back. And, I don't know if Amie feels the same way, cause I'm usually the one that does the events, but I really like that in-person, you know, connection with people. It's a lot of.

[00:29:15] **Amie Anderson:** A little awkward when it comes to small talk. I do like it. I think like, especially like those first couple events, it was like, if I could I

would hug you. Thank you so much. Like, we were just really appreciative of your support.

[00:29:28] **David Crabill:** Did you find it was difficult to prepare for the markets and, have you figured out like how much to make, cause you know, with donuts, I don't feel like they'd have a great shelf life.

[00:29:40] **Jamie Krake:** They don't and, you know, if we don't sell donuts, then our kids and our close family end up getting them. But it is, that is one of the biggest challenges with a perishable product. You know, our donuts are okay for the next day. They're not the best. So trying to figure that out and navigate that it's certainly been challenging.

I think we've sort of managed to figure out a pattern, but it's so variable based on so many things, even from one side of town to the next type of venue some events are successful

at. Where others aren't it's just, sort of no rhyme or reason to the factors that we've taken into consideration, but I think we're getting better at it.

[00:30:20] **Amie Anderson:** Yeah. Yeah. We got, we got a decent sort of rhythm, like with the farmer's market. I think we kind of figured it out by the end of the season, but yeah, there was definitely some, you know, lost product. It's not, you know,

[00:30:33] **Jamie Krake:** weather has a huge impact on whether it's an indoor event or an outdoor event. We found that weather has a huge impact on whether people will come out.

[00:30:40] **Amie Anderson:** And you always, you know, you always run the risk. Like you're gonna sell out in 20 minutes an hour, or you're going to end up with extra product in like, how do you decide like that? What that, you know what that fine line is, what that number is for you. And I think it's a real, just like personal thought,

[00:31:00] **Jamie Krake:** like, what are, what are you, what loss are you willing to assume? And how much do you want to make today? You know with us, especially like, you know, we get up at three or four o'clock in the morning. So we have to decide in that moment, how much dough are we going to make?

What are we going to do? And like, I remember the weather, like if, you know, there's a storm that's going to roll through at the farmer's market. Probably not. A lot of people are going to show up at the farmer's market. So we really have to make those decisions quite early.

[00:31:23] **Amie Anderson:** And you just have to be, you have to be okay with it.

I think that's the biggest, like personally, just like being okay with whatever that outcome is. During December, we were signed up to do like a holiday market that was going to be outdoors. And it was on a Sunday, Saturday, the weather was awful here. Like it was snowing.

There was a close to like 60 to 70 mile per hour winds. And when we looked at the weather before we went to bed, or later in the evening on Saturday, they were still predicting like wind gusts and really bad weather for Sunday. So we you know, we had to cancel last minute for this event and it turned out to be a beautiful,

[00:32:05] **Jamie Krake:** it was sunshine. The weather was perfect.

[00:32:07] **Amie Anderson:** It's still a mission. It was still a Michigan day in December. But, it was decent weather. but we can't,

[00:32:13] **Jamie Krake:** Having a perishable product, you have to make a decision.

[00:32:15] **Amie Anderson:** You have to, you have to make that choice. And the donuts are not forgiving. The dough is not forgiving. We, so that's just how it went.

[00:32:24] **David Crabill:** What's the process like for making the dough, you said you wake up at 3:00 AM in the morning to start the process.

[00:32:29] **Jamie Krake:** a yeast based donut. So that, so that has to rise. And usually depending on how cold it is or the, you know, whether it's raining or whatever that takes about an hour to an hour and a half. Roll them out, cut them out and then let them rise again and then fry them.

Then they have to cool enough for us to be able to ice them. So we're usually done if everything goes well, depending on how many orders we have between seven 30 and eight, sometimes it's a little bit longer if we have a lot of orders, but it's usually about a five-hour process.

[00:32:57] **David Crabill:** And what is your pricing like? And how has your pricing changed over time?

[00:33:03] **Amie Anderson:** we've done very little pricing increase.

[00:33:05] **Jamie Krake:** We started off at \$12 when we first started \$12 for a half a dozen. We have increased to \$15 for a half dozen, but it stayed that price. Since the pandemic started, we didn't, we didn't incorporate the \$5 extended delivery fee. And then the, you know, the, the student delivery fee and that's another sort of point of contention, right?

\$15 for a half dozen donuts. like where are people's comfort levels in terms of paying for that, even though our flour prices have gone up, our sugar prices have gone up, everything has gone up oil. Oh my gosh. Oil is obnoxious. But yeah, everything has gone up in price. So yeah, that's certainly another one of those. Should we, or shouldn't we conversations that we continue to have,

[00:33:46] **David Crabill:** Do you find that a lot of customers are just more than happy to pay the price? Or do you get some resistance when new people come to the market and see your pricing.

[00:33:54] **Jamie Krake:** that's a mixed bag because the farmer's market draws a very diverse set of people, right? You, you get people from all walks of life, all demographics, all like, sort of it's just everywhere. So it just depends. I mean, there's some people that are, oh, you're not charging enough for your donuts, right.

\$5 for it, because at the farmer's market, we don't do them for that in the half dozen, we do them in a two pack. So we do two donuts for \$5, which is the same price that we would, you know, There's people that are like, you should charge more for that, or there's people out there that'll walk by and um, very angrily say, I'll give you 50 cents.

Right. So I think it just sorta depends.

[00:34:30] **Amie Anderson:** right. It's an equation. it's math. so you can't let um, you know, the naysayers right. Affect you, you really have to. And I think in addition to the equation, this is again where Jamie and I might, well, probably disagree is that we do, you do have to like, make sure that your product is at a price point that it's, that it's able to be sold, that people will buy it.

And so, so I don't know

If we increase our price what that would look like in terms of sales and I like, I think the price point that we're at now is a good one. Again, I think our biggest, what we're fighting against is, is truly the price of oil and packaging.

Yeah. I think we found, like, I feel like the price of packaging is kind of stabilized. We found decent packaging, but oil. Has just been increasing and we tried to use other oils and we had doughy donuts and people were complaining. It was not, nobody wants a doughy donut. It was really bad. So

[00:35:37] **Jamie Krake:** we really had to go back to that.

[00:35:39] **Amie Anderson:** So we can't, choose a different type of oil or a cheaper oil and still have our product turn out well, but it's, it's also difficult to add, I think the oil into like the equation, just because you know, when you think about like your flour, like, okay, I'm using four cups of flour, but oil like is in your fryer.

And so I don't think we know we haven't like calculated exactly how much oil we use per donut, just because it's like a, it's a harder thing. It's a harder thing to figure.

[00:36:13] **David Crabill:** So are you using restaurant Depot to source your oil?

[00:36:16] **Amie Anderson:** Yeah,

[00:36:17] **David Crabill:** And what about your packaging?

[00:36:20] **Jamie Krake:** Some from restaurant Depot and some from another provider that, another supplier that

we uh, the social media, like the cottage food groups have been pretty valuable in helping us sort of find out Where to source, like when our, when

our packaging wasn't available through GFS, where to source different packaging from where to source sprinkles, right?

Uh, that kind of thing where, in different like places and that we may not have discovered on our own without the support of those groups.

[00:36:46] **Amie Anderson:** I think the struggle was like the two packs of donuts, like the donuts that we sell at events, because like the smaller donut packaging was almost the same price as,

[00:36:57] **Jamie Krake:** and people want to see the donuts. So trying to figure out how they can see the donuts in the packaging. And so we

[00:37:03] **Amie Anderson:** started with the fancier, like, you know, box with like the clear, like you could see through, but now what we've went to, which is which works good. But probably not in the summer is that

we, we put the donuts you know, we just have donuts out for display and then have them in sort of like white. I forget what they're called. They're like the number three eco box. So it's just like, almost like a white carry out.

[00:37:28] **Jamie Krake:** Carry out sandwich box that you can't see through, but having the donuts out for display It has worked out fairly well. We're able to get these boxes without issue. There hasn't been a supplier issue for the most part, they're fairly inexpensive.

[00:37:40] **Amie Anderson:** But in the summer, in the farmer's market, when it's going to be really hot we'll have a problem with the donuts melting and we do already struggle with bees. So having the donuts completely out will, will make the bee issue worse. So I don't know what our, what, we don't have a plan. For that yet again, I like to think about things like

[00:38:02] **Jamie Krake:** at the last minute she'll come up with something and then we'll just have to figure it out.

[00:38:07] **Amie Anderson:** But I should, I should be better at that.

[00:38:10] **David Crabill:** So it sounds like there's some issues with heat in the summer. Add some complexity. What time of year do the donuts tend to sell best?

[00:38:18] **Amie Anderson:** Um, Well January is the worst. Everyone's on a diet right now.

So I think besides that, it's pretty, it's pretty, pretty consistent, pretty consistent. You know, I think also though we, right, like we control how much we want to sell, so we can, you know, you set those quantities, you set that expectation.

Um, but I think that we, we remain fairly consistent,

[00:38:43] **Jamie Krake:** right? We know what, how many donuts we can feasibly make without having to bring in somebody else to help us out. So we, we tend to keep it at that, that certain amount the day of year that we will sell the most I think this year will be similar to last year, which will be fat Tuesday.

That, that is a day last year that we did the most donuts or the most of the most fried dough items. that was what sort of pushed us into having to buy the 20 quart mixer. So

[00:39:09] **Amie Anderson:** um, in Michigan, there is a Polish donut that is traditionally ate on Fat Tuesday. It's called a pączki. I don't know,

[00:39:19] **Jamie Krake:** very dense donut typically filled with a variety of fillings

[00:39:24] **Amie Anderson:** in the, in very heavy dough. And so that's, so that's a big, that's a big day here in Michigan. And we will sell lots of donuts that day.

[00:39:35] **David Crabill:** So what have you done to promote your business? obviously have the, the popups and the markets. But have you done anything else? Like social media or.

[00:39:46] **Jamie Krake:** We have Facebook and Instagram that we post on. I think though, honestly, a large part of our marketing and especially early promoting was from other area businesses discovering us and helping us out. we've had some very strong supporters from the beginning that without them know, we wouldn't have gotten that early push for sure.

[00:40:04] **Amie Anderson:** Yeah, we were, we were at a local news channel. They do, it's called live in the G. Um, And I don't know that that brought in. A

ton of extra business, but definitely um, we had a local children's store bought our hot cocoa bombs from us last year. And, it gave them out as a black Friday promotion and that I think really, really skyrocketed our business, for sure.

We also, again, like, so we do pop-ups at a local um, bar, well york. It's called a York it's um, it's like a bar slash restaurant that used to be a wine store. They've kind of transitioned into this really awesome place that promotes many, local food startups. And that has really expanded.

[00:40:53] **Jamie Krake:** There's a coffee shop that we're regularly part of. So we've got, it's called Sweetwater. So the Sweetwaters little seedling and York yard um, definitely have been a big part of, especially our early success, I think in terms of marketing, getting word out there that

[00:41:06] **Amie Anderson:** helped. And just like, just customers like sharing, right?

Like we have one customer who shared our information to a U of M parents um, Facebook page. And that's really how we got, most of our U of M orders. So it's really just people word of mouth sharing and um, just wanting to support each other.

[00:41:26] **David Crabill:** So you'd say these opportunities with other businesses or like the TV spot. These are things that just kind of came to you. You weren't actually seeking them.

[00:41:34] **Amie Anderson:** No I don't think any of those opportunities were ones that we sought out. we certainly have like we have sought out, like we will, I'll ask anyone like, Hey, you want to do a pop-up?

But in those instances, oddly enough, the ones now that we're talking about it, I'm really taking the time to think about it. They came to us and um, and really were our most successful opportunities. But I, I, I do think like, yeah, like for someone who's interested in like starting to do a pop-up or you're starting in your cottage food business ask, what's the worst thing was someone gonna tell you no, You're going to get lots of no's.

Yeah. Like, someone's just gonna say, oh no, that's not going to work for us. Or it doesn't, fit our scope. I mean, we did a pop-up at a place and it just, wasn't a great mutual fit. And that's okay. Like it's fine. sorry. Move on.

[00:42:31] **Jamie Krake:** Go to the next one.

[00:42:33] **Amie Anderson:** I guess like you're always gonna have people that don't, you don't mesh with. That's not our customer base.

[00:42:40] **David Crabill:** I did want to ask about how you've showcased the pride movement in your business. You've certainly been very upfront about the fact that you're a lesbian couple that's right at the beginning of your Instagram description, And there's a rainbow on your logo and you've done pride theme donuts. Can you share a little bit about why it's so important for you to showcase that in your business and how it's affected your business?

[00:43:08] **Jamie Krake:** Yeah. I mean, we're, we're open in our lives with our kids and everybody around us, you know, Sense of community is important to us in general. And there are community and they've also been very supportive of us too.

[00:43:19] **Amie Anderson:** we live in a pretty progressive community. I think too, like we go back to what brought us here. What brought us this business is like a passion project. It was in, you know, we wanted to find joy for ourselves in like not like if I'm going to do something right, like I'm doing this thing. We, we, I think we share our lives very, very openly with our customer base and with our marketing, whether it be our kids or being a gay couple, like all of those things are, are pretty predominant because I guess, like, I think that when you look at your other like boxes in life, like, you know, you go to work you know, you have to be like professional and fit into your own.

Like, if this is my, this is my plan. Now this is my business. This is what I'm doing on my off hours for fun. Primarily like to get, I guess, some joy in my life. Like, I'm going to be me. I'm going to share like who I am, the things that are important to me um, with our customers. I think

[00:44:21] **Jamie Krake:** you know, it's, it's funny, like. It was that, and it's just part of who we are. But I like driving down the uh, black, that we haven't delivered you before and trying to guess which house it is based on what yard sign they might have or what flag they might have you flying out in there yard. You always

[00:44:37] **Amie Anderson:** know who we can generally tell. We can generally tell driving down a street, which customer of ours is who ordered right. it is a

joke between us, like, okay, you can't find the house well, well, what kind of signs are,

[00:44:52] **Jamie Krake:** look for the black lives matter sign, look for the, we believe in all love, right? Like we can usually tell if you can't figure it out

[00:45:01] **Amie Anderson:** like, is there a lot of bikes or like kid equipment all over the place? Like, And like, I know like just a few weeks ago there was one where I dropped off the donuts to the wrong house and I was like, I knew it. I could tell just walking up to that door, that this was not our customer, like their house.

Like when you could see in their little window, it was like perfectly clean with like white couches and like, just like no signs of kids. No signs of nothing really. It was like, yeah, I should have, I should have, trusted my gut on that one.

[00:45:33] **Jamie Krake:** we had a situation. Last year we were, we were featuring something, we call an F-bomb at a local business that we did that also likes to use that word in their, uh, the items they carry in their store and just in general, on their social media platform.

And we had a customer who had previously ordered from us reach out and say that they would never order again, based on the use of that uh, profanity.

So that was that I think that was one of our few encounters with someone that was a previous customer that didn't appreciate our approach to,

[00:46:03] **Amie Anderson:** uh, And that's okay. I mean, it's not okay. I was so upset. I want people to like me and I was, I was upset about that for sure. But then you know, like I said, I think it's, it's fine. Maybe, maybe I don't take it as seriously as I should take it.

I don't know, but, but I'm not going to do something, put all my free time into something that, that I can't like be myself in, you know, this is, this is for supposed to be a fun endeavor and to do that. Like I'm going to beat myself.

[00:46:39] **David Crabill:** Yeah, it's definitely interesting how, you know, you've for one niched down on just mostly selling donuts now, but you've also really focused on your ideal customer. You know, your marketing might not appeal to everybody, but it's appealing to the right customer for you, and I bet that that

has helped grow your business overall. What about as we look into the future, where do you expect this business to go? Or where do you want it to.

[00:47:06] **Jamie Krake:** Another ongoing topic of conversation. I mean, we've, we've maxed out what we can do in our, in our home kitchen. it's already taken over our formal dining room. we either need to start saying no more or we need to figure out what's next. I mean, we've looked into various commercial kitchen spaces in the area.

Being that we have a vegan offering there, you know, that, that makes it challenging because we want to keep our dedicated vegan fryer, Commercial kitchens don't support that. I dunno, we've looked at other, other businesses in the area to try to partner with them. Haven't been met with much success there.

That is something that's affordable for us. Right. Because I don't necessarily want to be in a position to pay money, to watch, you know, to sit there and watch dough rise. So I don't know, I don't, I don't really have an answer for that right now, but we know we need to do something other than the food truck.

Um, That's our short-term goal, I think, is getting that selling space ready to go. We won't be frying out of that food truck, but we want to be able to sell out

[00:48:02] **Amie Anderson:** very passively, considered like a brick and mortar space and it sounds great. But then it's also terrifying in the same respect.

And I think having an experience with the cafe as brief as it was, was a really great learning opportunity for us and a time to reflect, you know, what again is important for us and where we see this business going you know, a brick and mortar space means more time away from our kids. More time away

[00:48:34] **Jamie Krake:** It's hard to make donuts at three o'clock in the morning, you know, outside of your house. Right. And so yeah, that, that's certainly something to take into consideration.

[00:48:43] **Amie Anderson:** Yeah. So it's working for us. This is working for us. Certainly I'd love to have the space back in our home, but again, like we're lucky to have it to be able to have the space to do it. So we shouldn't complain too much about that.

[00:48:55] **Jamie Krake:** And there's something to be said for making donuts, you know, while your kids are sleeping, you know, they get up there's donuts ready.

They get to be taste testers. Right. They certainly been a big part of this. This journey with us and it's been, it's been good for them.

[00:49:06] **Amie Anderson:** We just, you know, we have the ability right now to, make it meet our own schedule. We don't have employees or, outside obligations or rent to pay. You know, we can, we can close down for a couple of weeks and you know, decide that you know, we're gonna take it slow for a few weeks because we have other priorities in our life right now.

And, taking that next step would put us in a spot that we'd have to really make a larger commitment that I don't think we're ready to make in our personal life.

[00:49:42] **David Crabill:** I did see that you have this trade up to a food truck campaign. How's that going?

It fizzled.

[00:49:49] **Jamie Krake:** Yeah, we were doing, we were going strong and we still have an open offer for a, we have a vegan wedding cake that we're um, still have an offer to trade up to. But it went strong for the first little bit. And even though we continued to try to, you know, I had signs up at the markets and, you know, continue to try to trade up. We kind of hit a, hit a wall with that.

[00:50:10] **Amie Anderson:** Again, it's just a matter of, I think it was just one of the things like we tried and just didn't have the energy to continue in marketing it well enough. Like, I think if we had me like done some Facebook lives. Like if we went like live, if we really had focused more in the marketing, I think.

It wouldn't have fizzled as it did. but we, we were just like super busy given up on it. Yeah. If

[00:50:36] **Jamie Krake:** somebody came up to us and offered to trade for a vegan wedding cake, that would be all right. not, not made by us, but we have an offer for a vegan wedding cake out there.

[00:50:47] **Amie Anderson:** So yeah. It's, I think it's a super fun idea. And I don't think we had the capacity to really, promote as much as we should.

[00:50:57] **David Crabill:** Well, Hey, that's what business is. Right. You throw a bunch of stuff at the wall and see what sticks and clearly some stuff has worked well and you've been doing quite well with your business and it sounds like it's working well for you and your kids. And so, why do you love running your business so.

[00:51:15] **Jamie Krake:** What's not fun about donuts. I mean, really, like, I don't know. It allows us uh, creativity that we wouldn't get elsewhere in our lives right now. No, donuts are fun.

[00:51:26] **Amie Anderson:** Yeah. And I, I think it's really a great lesson for our kids. I think that the ability for them to see, like, it's okay to take a risk, like you can like have an idea and throw it out there in the world.

Like what's the worst that can happen? personally that was something I was afraid of for a very long time in this experience has taught me that you have to start somewhere like the right, the first step is just starting. So I think that has been, that has been pretty awesome.

For our kids to witness, that type of growth for them to truly understand to what it means make money

[00:52:04] **Jamie Krake:** our, all this helps out at the markets. He comes with me and he helps me set up. He exchanges money with the customers. You know, he, you know, he makes change. He adds up, you know, he's been a part of everything.

[00:52:13] **Amie Anderson:** Like, in the most basic sense, like, like this thing equals this money, like these are the steps you do to get this money. I think previous to that, you know, it was all just sort of uh, like right. We go to work, money just comes in your bank account, like you pay for things. So I think it was like, I like being able to, for them to see that real-world example out of commerce .

[00:52:37] **David Crabill:** That's awesome. Well, it's really cool to see where your business has gone and how it's grown over time and, you know I'm looking forward to seeing where it will go in the future. So if people want to learn more about your business uh, how can they find you or how can they reach out?

[00:52:55] **Jamie Krake:** They can find us on Facebook and Instagram. @itsagoooddaydonuts. Um, We have a website as well. itsagoooddaycafe.com. sort of reluctant to get rid of the cafe at the end. Maybe one day we'll be able to bring that back to fruition, but we, we decided to go with that for now.

[00:53:10] **David Crabill:** Well, Thank you guys so much for coming on the show and sharing with us today.

[00:53:14] **Jamie Krake:** Thank you so much for having us. We really have.

[00:53:18] **David Crabill:** And that wraps up another episode of the Forrager podcast.

For more information about this episode, go to forrager.com/podcast/52

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Thanks for listening. And I'll see you in the next episode.