

EPISODE 272**[INTRODUCTION]**

[00:00:19] AVH: Welcome, Paleo peeps, thank you for being here. You are listening to Paleo Magazine Radio and I'm your host, Ashleigh VanHouten. I got to say, one of the reoccurring themes that I notice in all of these interviews that I am so lucky to do for this podcast, with entrepreneurs and people who have created amazing products or services, this reoccurring theme seems to be that people are creating something that they personally needed and couldn't find. Some of the best products come from a personal need and recognizing that if they need something then probably other people do too.

Often, this need stems from a pretty incredible story. It's either a challenge, maybe a sickness or an accident or something significant in their lives or the lives of someone they loved that they had to work to overcome and they needed some help getting there. They couldn't find that help, maybe it didn't exist yet so they created it for themselves. I think that this is kind of a cool concept to internalize, that you have the power, if there's something that you need or that you want in the world and you're not getting it, you have the power to kind of create that for yourself and for other people.

I think that that's really inspiring and cool and speaking of inspiring and cool, one of these crazy stories belongs to the person I'm speaking with today, the cofounder of Paleo Pro. His name's Doug Smith. Doug was on a ski trip in, I think it was 2012, he'll tell you in the interview. He had a really bad car accident and that resulted in pretty severe injuries, he had to be medivacked out of Kurdistan where he was on a ski trip because he's basically I guess an adventurer, pretty crazy adventurer. He'll tell you about that too. You had to be medivacked to Dubai, eventually returning to California to recover.

As he was having this experience, this life altering injury, it kind of spurred him to think more seriously about what he's putting into his body, how he eats, how that helps him recover and eventually to develop some supplements that are essentially food or as close to real food as possible. But just more convenient.

That's how he started Paleo Pro with his cofounders in 2014. It started with a protein powder using grass fed pastured beef and egg protein, it has since expanded to offer bone broth, collagen powder, greens powder, fish oil, vitamin D, he actually has some brand new bars that are coming out among other products.

Doug is big on saying that supplements shouldn't really be the basis of your sort of health plan, supplements are supplementary, they are for if you can't eat real food, if you're on the go, if you need something that's a bit more convenient and I think that that's also good to pay attention to. That this is the guy whose livelihood is about selling supplements, telling you that you don't always need them. But look, if you do, let's have better options, right?

I think that that's a good way to look at it, I'm a big fan of that, I'm a big fan of good choices, striving for good choices instead of striving for perfection because none of us are ever going to get to perfection, let's just be real. Let's just do the best we can to make informed good decisions whenever we can.

Anyway, Doug and I talk about this amazing story that has and also some topics I don't think we've really covered before including, for instance the pros and cons of collagen as a protein source and if you guys know me at all, you know that I am a huge fan of collagen, I recommend it all the time, it's done so many good things for me. But, it is not necessarily a complete protein, it's not the only protein that you need and Doug does a really good job of kind of explaining the differences between like whey protein, collagen, plant protein, the different kinds of options and maybe what you need, maybe what you aren't getting depending on your goals and requirements.

I hope you enjoy the episode and as always, if you do, I would love for you to leave a nice rating and review on iTunes so that I can keep my job, you know? I need positive reinforcement or else I whiter and die like a flower in the dark, okay? At least give me some points for being poetic just then. And, you can get yourself a free cookbook if you leave a review in the form that is at the bottom of any episode show notes, there's a form there where you can leave a review and if I read it on air, you get a free cookbook, not bad, right?

Okay, that's my pitch and here is my interview with Paleo Pro cofounder, Doug Smith.

[CONVERSATION]

[0:04:39.6] DS: I guess my interest initially lied probably in college when I – some people go to college to get out of the house, which I did and usually partook in more drinking than I should have and I realized that I'm not 15 anymore and my body's affected by these things called food and that's kind of a first thing that happened and I think that's when I started realizing the power of food as being healing, as just as much as being toxic for you and kind of put me on this path of, I went to school for kinesiology and biology and chemistry and that's where my interest lies.

Pretty much lies to this day, kind of one of those science geeks that's interested in how something can affect biology or chemically how it affects our bodies. That's kind of how it started and then fast forward a few years, I had – I'm pretty active with the rock climbing, mountaineering, skiing, generally just being outside and trying to adventure as much as I can in the process of doing that. Unfortunately, sometimes you break some bonds and getting some accidents along the way.

I got into a pretty bad accident, I was a car accident, actually while traveling over in Kurdistan and I broke my back, I broke every rib, I broke my shoulder, smashed my face. Needless to say, I was a fairly injured human being and I think this was what really turned me on to ancestral eating, you know, paleo diet and kind of all the derivatives that come from it because I realized that food in itself was really inflaming and harboring my healing process.

To this day, how I eat, I mean, how I live my life, you know, consuming different products really allows me to be pain free or wakeup completely miserable. At the core, that's kind of why I was put on this path in 2003, 2004-ish, I started a company called True Nutrition, it was actually called True Protein back in the day and the idea of it was, to allow end users thought the internet to basically mix and match any type of protein, fat, fiber, carbohydrate, package it in any way they want, flavor it any way they want.

It was kind of for the nutrition geeks of the world. And that spawned a few other companies where we became a contract manufacturer where we ended up making many of the products

you see on shelves at whole foods or GNC or what have you. During that time, I realized that a paleo style of eating was really what was at least for myself, a powerful one.

You know, from the healing properties and allowing me to continue to have fun and adventure. We started a company called Paleo Pro, probably around five or six years ago and at the core of it was really just are protein powder and then we had some auxiliary products that kind of complimented that protein and since then, we always kind of have our ear to the ground on how we can create products that still fit within the "paleo lifestyle", it's really difficult because the paleo lifestyle's basically don't eat anything that comes packaged in a bag.

[0:08:00.0] AVH: Right.

[0:08:00.8] DS: You know, our whole sense is, we say this from day one is that if you can eat and get all of your nutrients through food, do it, you know? Dietary supplements, the root word is supplement and it means to supplement a good diet.

We look at it is we're in 2019, we're not running around in loin cloths with a spear, killing live animals, hunting and gathering, we have a different lifestyle now and –

[0:08:26.6] AVH: Plus, they're doing that but not everybody.

[0:08:29.2] DS: No, not everybody. You know, for us, sometimes life gets in the way, work gets in the way, family gets in the way, your objectives and goals get away and sometimes your options are limited as it comes to nutrition, where there's a Snickers bar that's in reach, there's a McDonalds that's in reach and for us, we wanted to create a product line that can help people in 2019 not people 10,000 years ago, basically lived a cleaner lifestyle.

Again, we always say, first and foremost food is important but again, we all have real lives and sometimes they're very busy lives and what we feel is we created a product line that fits that norm.

[0:09:11.6] AVH: Okay, I have a lot of questions already but I like that you touched on just sort of admitting the obvious here that a protein powder isn't exactly the most literal transformation,

what is paleo? But being aware that of course, we're not trying to emulate the exact lifestyle that maybe our Paleolithic ancestors lived and then I think we all need to, once we get over the excitement of learning about a lifestyle that's very helpful and makes us feel better, getting over the sort of dogma of having to I'll follow the same rules and follow them religiously and have more of a personalized nutrition interpretation of what paleo means to you.

And if that in general terms means eating real food as much as possible, eating less processed stuff as much as possible, getting outside and using your body and being in the sunshine and all of those things. If you are going to work out in the gym or if you're going to travel a lot and you want to have supplements and you want to have protein powder, yeah, get the least processed, highest quality ingredients, best protein powder that's going to make you feel the best and that's what it is.

Whether it's paleo or not, it doesn't matter, is it good for you and is it helping you achieve your goals, I think that's what is really the most important part of that.

[0:10:27.8] DS: Yeah, we kind of marry to that same thought, you know? I think how we look is, we want to live as natural in our habitat as possible but the reality is, the majority of what we do as humans is probably one of the most unnatural things. We have these little things at our hands that are computers that can take us anywhere in the world at a press of a button, we do — and it seems like things are getting more and more extreme where people want to do hundred mile marathons, these are unnatural things.

When you want to do these unnatural things, for whatever reasons, you know, to push yourself, to see how far you can go for your goals, sometimes you need to supplement with things that can help you kind of pursue those goals and how we look at it is that we are intelligent beings that do have a ton of science understanding how things can be manipulated and worked around to obtain those goals, to obtain better health.

We never want to replace the most important thing which is real food, you know? We always say it's best to eat happy plants and happy animals and that's your foundation. Everything else is kind of secondary.

[0:11:37.3] AVH: Yeah, that makes sense to me. I mean, if you want to work 80 hours a week of if you want to do a 200 mile race through the desert, that's your prerogative, crazy but hey, if you want to do it. Now we have the technology and the ability to kind of at least make educated decisions and support our goals the best way we can whether they're natural or healthy or not really.

Okay, I want to go back to your car accident though, because that's – it was a pretty transformative and pretty epic.

[0:12:05.7] DS: It was.

[0:12:06.9] AVH: Yeah, tell us more about, when did that happen and the healing process and all – everything about that kind of situation?

[0:12:15.2] DS: I was in Kurdistan which is below Kazakhstan and most people say I don't know where those are either, it's a little small country that used to be part of Russia before 1991 and at the base of it, part of the mountain range of the Himalaya is the Tien Shan mountain range and I was there for a trip to basically ski tour which is something I super enjoyed doing, I'm really into.

While I was over there, we got into a car accident and Kurdistan is I think they say, it's the seventh most poorest country of the world, out of thousands of countries that there is, it's definitely a place you do not want to get into a car accident. Long story short, myself and two other friends were medivacked to Dubai and then I was in Dubai for a while and finally, shipped back here.

Part of that process, although, that was a big learning experience physically because I had to really kind of bring myself back to life so to speak. I really had the fortunate opportunity to learn how sensitive my body is after that fact and actually about six, seven months later, I was in France in the alps and again, going on another ski trip and when you're in France, you eat a bunch of bread, you eat a bunch of cheese, that's what you do. I always knew I had issues with bread and I could do dairy but not a ton of it.

We landed and doing the French thing, we got Baguettes and she – I ate more than I should have. And that night, I had to a point where I couldn't even stand up, I was borderline crippled. My back was so inflamed, it was unbelievable and I kind of had this epiphanic moment which seems probably pretty obvious to everybody that it was the actual food I ate.

At that moment, I really started understanding like how wheat and yeast and lactose and cheese and different things and casing, how I'm not necessarily allergic to anything but definitely am sensitive to it. Now, all these injuries that are now healed, if I don't eat the right things, they become inflamed and can make movement very difficult.

In a nutshell, that's kind of where the discovery like came from initially and I always knew about the paleo diet, you know, 20 years ago in college, it was the warrior diet and I understood all the kind of "rules of it" and I kind of went back to it again just to be like, you know what? I need to clean things up here. I just want to see and I did so and it was pretty monumental.

[SPONSOR MESSAGE]

[0:15:01.7] AVH: Loyal listeners, I am interrupting this fantastic interview, if I say so myself. To tell you about show sponsor Jones Dairy Farm. They're a family owned business based in Wisconsin, they've been operating for 130 years so they know what they're doing and they're well known for their all natural sausage, dry aged center cut bacon and naturally smoked ham and Canadian bacon.

They're dedicated to super high quality ingredients, the sausages are always made without binders, fillers, gluten, preservatives, MSG, nitrates or nitrites and they use only fresh, never frozen, hormone free pork, chicken and turkey meat from local producers and you can find their products in the freezer section of your grocery store.

Some in the refrigerator aisle but you can also learn more about their company, what they offer and check out their special fully paleo certified products at jonesdairyfarm.com/paleo. I have eaten probably a few of everything that they make and I'm a fan. Check them out and let me know what you think.

[CONTINUED]

[0:16:05.1] AVH: Would you say that you're 100% recovered from that accident?

[0:16:10.3] DS: I'm a, I guess you would say, a constant optimist. If I pulled myself out of my shoes, no. I definitely have my aches and pains but knowing where I come from before and also you know, I push it physically quite a bit. If I stand in my shoes, yeah, I'm 110%.

[0:16:28.9] AVH: It kind of stopped you from like having more adventures and –

[0:16:33.5] DS: No, I think age, you know, I'm 42 now and I think age has made me more intelligent where things that I maybe would have done a little more riskier things, I'm now just smarter because of age. Maybe that has to do with injuries as well but I think the risk to benefit ratios changed a little bit as you get older.

No, for me, my dietary means and how I operate on a day to day basis is because I enjoy life and I enjoy doing things and I want to constantly expand and try new things and it's really tough to do those things if your body's not reacting the way you want it to.

[0:17:12.5] AVH: Yeah. How long were you in Dubai recovering?

[0:17:17.2] DS: I was in Dubai for a little less – I think it was like eight or nine days. We were in Kurdistan for two or three days because the government wouldn't let us leave, it was like this big rigamarole and basically three of us laying on the couch, completely injured, couldn't really get hospital care because there really isn't hospitals there.

Eventually, we made it to Dubai and I finally made it back to Los Angeles and I guess about 10 or 11 days later and I healed pretty quickly. I think mainly because you know, I do take care of myself but at the same time too just a good attitude and maybe when you feel a little twitch here and there, you just kind of ignore it and push through it.

[0:18:00.3] AVH: I really feel like this injury like this whole accident and recovery could be like its own story because it sounds like a crazy – make like an outdoor adventure movie about this. Stuck there and like having to get medivacked to Dubai, sound like it's a crazy story.

[0:18:18.4] DS: Yeah, one of my friends that I was in the accident with, she's actually a filmmaker and she went back two years later. Truth be told, I can say, I was really busy but the truth is that I would probably be too scared to go. It shook me up. She actually went with a full National Geographic film crew for about a month and they actually did a whole story on it so it definitely was a complete, random occurrence. But you know, in retrospect, it was a really scary experience but I'm thankful and grateful to have – I learned a lot from it.

[0:18:51.7] AVH: I mean, that's the right attitude to have I think whenever you have any kind of challenge or obstacle in life is there's two things. You can let it traumatize you and not to say that there isn't sort of trauma involved and you got to get over it but you can let it kind of permanently scar you or you can look at it the way you do and think like, "I can learn from this, I can get better from this, I'm better because I went through it," and I think that's probably the better way to look at any situation.

Is there a way that we can watch this video or is it available anywhere that people can see it if they want to?

[0:19:23.3] DS: I'm sure I can get you a link, you know, I have a – it's funny, I have a blog I wrote while I was in Dubai and I wrote a blogpost based on the experience, it's a fairly long one because three days into being in Dubai – this kind of tells you my personality, I got bored and I escaped the hospital because I've never been to Dubai before and I wanted to check it out.

[0:19:47.9] AVH: Leaving the hospital with a broken back and broken –

[0:19:51.1] DS: Here's the deal too, that was the first time I ever experienced morphine and I understand why the country has a problem with it right now. I found out I was taking morphine the day I left on when I flew back to Los Angeles and I'm not – I appreciate dietary supplements and all the sense of how to kind of manipulate your biology and chemistry but I'm not a big

proponent of blocking pain. I feel pain is part of the process, so I stopped it immediately and I have never felt pain like that in my life going cold turkey like that.

But, while I was in Dubai, I really thought I was completely fine. I felt great, I did check out Dubai for an hour before I got yelled at and had to go back. But the moral of the story is, since I was bored and had nothing to do, I did write about it.

[0:20:42.0] AVH: Morphine's a hell of a drug. Okay. That is really epic. All right, okay. This whole experience kind of spurred you into like revisiting a paleo approach to eating and then coming up with this supplement company. What was your – what were you doing for a living before and did you eventually have to transition full time into being an entrepreneur, how was that process?

[0:21:05.9] DS: Yeah, lucky enough, it was right down my alley. In 2003-ish. I started a company called True Protein and like I said, it basically was – it's still around, it's called True Nutrition now. That company basically allows other nutrition geeks like myself to really create a product they want for themselves.

That basically, that company spawned into many other companies, we're basically a contract manufacturer, one of them where we ended up making a lot of the health foods and dietary supplements that you see on shelves today. You know, for us, manufacturing is our core business but I think for me, you know, after you see all the big stainless steel machines and all the processing that's pretty cool but it gets boring.

What's exciting for me is really impacting people, really helping people and not just from like a health standpoint but also because some people are like – "I want to jump higher, I want to lift heavy, I want to go further." And to be a part of that process is like the greatest thing in the world for me. It's so motivating, keeps me motivated every day.

I was at lunch one time with one of my coworkers and I kind of had this idea and we're kind of spit-firing ideas back and forth and we had a few products out there, you know, basically at our core, our grass fed beef isolate as well as collagen products and different things that I utilize, you know, following this paleo diet and it kind of just happened by eating lunch one day before

we knew it, product line kind of emerged but we started creating the company itself and we started it real grass roots.

I think that's what happens, you start something and it starts with one sale and then you know, larger retailers picked us up like Whole Foods and Sprouts and we were kind of off to the races. That's – I was always kind of in the industry and health foods and health sciences, nutrition, things of that sort but this was one that kind of was really close to my heart because of how much it impacted me personally.

[0:23:16.9] AVH: Were you deeply involved in all elements, in terms of branding and marketing and coming up with the name and coming up with the look and all that stuff as well?

[0:23:25.9] DS: Yup, everything. I have two other partners with it and you know, they're just as passionate as me and they have their own stories on why we all came together with it. You know, we all have our strong points where one guy is basically really focused on the marketing and focused on the nuts and bolts of things and so yeah, we're still a small company, we're also a company that's privately held and the main mode is obviously we're a business and we're a business to operate and be successful. But what matters first is the quality of the products and to make sure their efficacious, make sure they work and they have some –

They define a goal where the goal itself defines what the product is and that's always been super crucial for us. I know we were one of the "first paleo friendly protein powders" out there, now there's a ton of them. You know, it's good to kind of be the first guys, the thought process behind it and we've heard everything from people like, "That's not paleo," I'm like, "Well, going to a grocery store is not paleo either," but –

[0:24:29.9] AVH: Yup, either is air conditioning but I'm not giving that up. What are your thoughts about and I ask this of people a lot and Paleo f(x), were you at Paleo f(x) last weekend?

[0:24:40.7] DS: I wasn't this year but we've actually gone other y ears where we were presenting but we didn't go this year.

[0:24:46.8] AVH: Okay, yeah. I've been involved and gone to it a couple of years and I haven't – I wasn't there last year either but one of the conversations that kind of keeps coming up and I'm always interest in asking business owners is what are your thoughts on, I guess, there's positives and negatives to branding something as paleo because on one hand, it is a growing community as such that you can go to a grocery store and it's like mainstream language now.

People are starting, even if it's diluted, even if it's sometimes incorrect. People are starting to understand the general concept of what that means. On the flip side, it can also kind of pigeon hole you and maybe consumers who immediately are turned off to anything that they consider to be a fad or a diet or a trend, are going to be turned off by language when that may not even necessarily be accurate.

What are your thoughts on the idea of kind of labeling something paleo and is that something that you'd consider maybe not doing moving forward or you stand by the name or what are your thoughts on that?

[0:25:51.1] DS: Yeah, I mean, between you and me, this may not be the best thing for marketing, I hate the term paleo with a passion, to be honest with you.

[0:25:59.9] AVH: Yup.

[0:26:01.4] DS: Because the main reason why is it creates a definition and usually when you put a definition to something, people can therefore become very dogmatic about it and it becomes a group, it becomes like a tribe of people that you're either in or you're out. This club.

Here's how I look at it dealing with health. I'm a big proponent of like, for instance, eating animals and I know that in today's day and age, especially where I live and Encinitas which is one of the largest yoga communities in the country, I'm kind of the odd man out. How I look at it is, there's a lot of ways to skin a cat. What I mean by that is that as long as you care about your health and you're doing something to progressively make yourself better, that can give you some type of movement that's going to make you healthier and more present with how you're consuming things, I'm okay with it.

If that means it's a vegan diet for you, so be it. If that means there's just some going gluten free, so be it. At least you're being present or something, you know? I can tell people hey, from the shortest point, from point A to point B is this and this is my opinions and beliefs on it. Now, if you want to go to point – go on a squiggly line around that to point B, who am I to say that that's right or wrong.

I always tell people there's three things you don't discuss, religion, politics and diet. Diet has become this – if you're not doing it my way, you're wrong and almost like I can't even communicate with you anymore. How I look at it, I mean now, like the paleo diet, it's gone into so many different derivatives of where it's low carb or zero carb. It's carnivory and all this different stuff. I could give you again, my opinion on it but this is what works for me. I can't say what works for me is going to work for somebody else.

For someone to list something as being paleo friendly, I can again give you my opinion on it. Now if somebody puts a bag of potato chips out there and says paleo friendly, I'll probably be pretty opinionated about it but I think for myself especially if you are going to a grocery store, for me it is more buyer beware. I think people need to do less reading on labels and they need to do more self-discovery of what works for them and if truthfully, sitting around eating oatmeal all day long is what is best for them for their brain and their body though in my opinion it isn't, then so be it.

That's good but it is better than people just going through life eating haphazardly and wondering why they are obese, have type two diabetes, on the verge of getting cancer or something else. Like that is what I see as being unacceptable not if you want to list something as paleo. People going through life without having any clue that food doesn't come from a grocery store. It comes from somewhere else, that's where I have a problem with.

[0:28:57.2] AVH: Yeah, that's a good point and it is so subjective and so individual and I think what you're saying too is that anybody who whether you are keto or carnivore or vegetarian or just like to eat animals, like we do, just the fact that you are taking the time to maybe educate yourself and care about where your food comes from, you're already way ahead of the game because I think in our industry, in our bubble it seems normal to be such a nerd about these things.

And do so much research and understand and read books and talk to people but we are still the weird ones like the [0:29:30.8 inaudible] they don't read ingredients or read articles about what is healthy and what isn't or the latest trends in food. People don't care. They go to the grocery store and they buy things that are within their budget and that they like to eat. So I think yeah, you are touching on something pretty important there.

And also, even these terms, we've talked about calling things paleo or not, the terms can be so subjective because another one that we are hearing with keto, low carb, carnivore is this plant based paleo and to some people, that means the same thing as regular paleo. You look at the plate and there is protein on it and then there is a lot of vegetables. To some people that means you are eating vegetarian but you are just not eating processed food and to me like my macros are going to look a little bit different.

I lean more towards carnivore based paleo, which means I'm still eating vegetables but I am eating probably more protein than maybe other people would. So it is really like you said, it's just doing the research and figuring out what works for you personally and worrying less about what other people are doing or what other people are calling it I guess.

[0:30:37.6] DS: Yeah because I know for myself like I am an explorer in life and I am also a self-explorer like how some things is going to make me feel, am I going to be happier, is this going to upset me but it is the same thing with diet, you know? Like what you are saying, there is all these rules like you could read *The Paleo Solution* and be like, "Well here is the rules of the paleo diet." Okay, what about me not eating a vegetable for the last six months, am I not paleo anymore?

It's this weird – like I said, I think people get into these little cliques and clubs because I think that is what humans do but I think as I have learned is that I know what works for myself and I am happy enough to know what works for myself. but I know other friends and people I'm acquaintances with that are super healthy people and they don't eat like I do and who am I to tell them they're wrong, you know? I am not and who am I to – I mean the reality is nobody is paleo.

If we were paleo, we wouldn't have cellphones, we wouldn't have jobs, we'd be out hunting and gathering and doing what we did 10, 15,000 years ago. So in reality, you know I could basically claim nothing is paleo. But it is more just being present with. We would understand what works and not just going through like haphazardly and wondering why, "Hey doc, my arm fell off." That is my problem.

[0:31:56.4] AVH: Yeah that would suck. I like being as close to paleo as I can get but I am not getting rid of my Netflix subscription. So there is all those kind of things.

Okay, let us talk about your products a little bit more. What is the most popular bestselling product that you have?

[0:32:13.6] DS: At the core, it has always been over the years is our protein and the supplement space, the health food space, protein rich products are usually your origin product because everybody ends up buying that because it is such a daily useful thing. So you know our paleo protein has always been our bestseller. We just launched a new bone broth collagen protein, which is similar to it. It is just a little more based with collagen. It just doesn't have any egg product in it but similar.

But again for us, the sourcing is the most important thing. We do know it is not just a straight going to a farm and getting the cow. But it's what's hopefully as close as possible to it. You know for us, we source all of our beef material out of Sweden. The reason why we go out to Sweden is because unlike here where there's this whole conversation of conventionally grown cows compared to a fully grass fed pastured animal, we do it a little differently here than in some places in Europe. So Sweden is a 100% grass fed, which has seemed to be an important thing for our consumer.

Now again, I can give you my opinions on that but that doesn't really matter if everybody is saying we want grass fed. So at the core, it's a grass fed beef isolate, where simple in that, we are basically taking the lean tissue itself and if you think about making a roast in a slow cooker for eight hours it basically pulls apart to nothing. Now if you keep doing that that roast will basically turn to mush.

It will turn almost to like a Slurry in a way and that is essentially what we do is we over roast meat to the point where it is in a liquid form and then we spray dry it and spray drying may sound really complicated but it is not. Basically we are putting liquid through a nozzle and just like you would like with Windex, you know the Windex is all at the bottom of a bottle and it is basically a liquid form and then when we spray it, it creates millions of little droplets and that is what we are doing.

We are pushing this through really high pressured nozzles into a heat tunnel and the heat tunnel is basically like hair dryers in a way that evaporate that little microscopic droplet. It dries all of the water away and what is left over is a very small particle of dried meat powder and that's at the core of what it is. So when people are like, "You know this is highly processed stuff." I'm like, "It's not really when you think about it." If you consider like if you went to a butcher and you got a piece of meat and you cooked it on a grill, different but similar processes.

[0:34:50.8] AVH: Right.

[0:34:51.2] DS: And for us, we do it in plain but you know we have a lot of people that are like, "I just can't take it plain." Even though it is pretty benign tasting and in that case, we just add a little monk fruit, which is a complete non-nutritive super powerful, basically leaf extract and with either vanilla extract or cocoa powder, really simple stuff.

[0:35:12.6] AVH: I love your products. I mean I don't know if it is – I guess I am allowed to be biased. I don't know, I am just telling my opinion with the podcast if we air this. But I love your products. I use them all the time. The ingredient lists is a few ingredients and I can pronounce it, which again shouldn't really be revolutionary when it comes to supplements like this but it is still kind of is. So I love your stuff but would you say that the processing that you just described, in addition I guess to sourcing is what still makes you stand out? Because as you mentioned there are a ton of —

[0:35:47.7] DS: Yeah, there is a lot of competitors out there and other guys doing different things. Yeah, first off, super appreciate the kind words. We do worked really hard on that and I think what we always say is that since there is less ingredients and they are really just the core ingredients, there is not much to cover up, you know? And even as late as possible and I give

this analogy often that if you pick up a piece of raw steak and you smell it, it should smell like nothing.

The same if you crack an egg and you smell that egg, if it smells like a rotten egg, don't eat it. It's bad and it is the same thing here. So even the plain versions that don't have any monk fruit or cocoa powder, they are really benign tasting because we don't have all of these highly processed materials that have hydrochlorides or esters attached to different ingredients to make them more bio available or dissolve in water. They are really simple at the core.

And I think for us, the really interesting part is you think the simpler would be, "Well there is less stuff and so it should be cheaper," it is kind of the opposite. It ends up being a little more expensive. That is very interesting in the world of processing foods. But that is kind of how it is. Yes, I mean the funny thing is to we always have people like, "Hey, I can't find your ingredients on the back," and I'm like, "We deliberately made it the largest font out of any font on the bag."

We're like, "There is only two or three ingredients," and people are like you can spell it and large, you won't miss it.

[0:37:18.0] AVH: Yeah, they don't even know what they are looking for.

[0:37:20.4] DS: They miss it, which we laugh about but maybe that is not a great thing to be there.

[0:37:25.0] AVH: I think people are starting to get around to – I mean you are paying for quality and you are paying for something that is going to make you feel a certain way. It is not always about quantity and more is better and, "This only has three ingredients. Well I don't want to pay a premium for it." I think that again, we're dealing with a different audience generally because we are dealing with people who tend to be a bit more educated and nerdy about these things and really are interested.

But I think we are and lucky for you, owning a business as you do, I think we are starting to open that up to more people and people are willing to pay more for a product. That is really going to give them the effect that they want so.

[0:38:03.5] DS: Yeah, my whole take is I'd rather pay a little bit more today than to pay millions of dollars when I am sick and later in life and that's something we really try to push to people is that you don't want to – there are certain things you don't want to discount in life. Like I am really into climbing and rock climbing and there is a difference between different carabiner prices that I am like, "This isn't the time you want to skimp on your carabiners."

It is the same thing with your health, you know food is something you're going to consume every single day for the rest of your life. You better make sure you are putting the best quality stuff in your body and if you're not, don't be surprised that 10, 20, 30 years down the road the wheels start falling off a little bit. And things are expensive. If you take one visit to the hospital and unfortunately, I've had to do it a few times in my life, it's not cheap. It is unbelievably expensive.

And how I look at it you know to spend a few extra bucks on the better stuff at a grocery store is well worth it in my opinion.

[0:39:10.4] AVH: Yeah, I agree. You've got some new products. You've got a couple that I haven't tried so I am going to have to talk to you offline about that because I want to get on it but the coffee, you got a paleo powered coffee product and then did I read something? I thought that you guys are coming out with a bar too, is that true?

[0:39:27.6] DS: Yeah, so we are just about to launch our bar. Literally, it's been over two years in R and D on this bar and the main reason why is that there's a lot of bars out there right now and at least for myself, I don't want to just launch something because everybody else has it. I want to make sure it's a good product and unfortunately in the process of me being pigheaded and the other owners of the business being pigheaded as well, it means that R and D becomes very difficult.

Yes this product tastes good however it is shelf stable for five days or the other way around, this is more shelf stable however it tastes like absolute dirt. So it has taken us about two years before we kind of come to some conclusions on launching this product and it's basically a collagen protein bar and there is a couple of collagen bars out there right now. But we feel – I mean obviously we are opinionated but we feel there is really nothing like it out there.

So we are pretty excited, it is about to launch in the next month or so and we just launched the power coffee as well and this is our rendition because so many people are like, "Well I want some type of pre-workout or something to take in the morning," and I'm like, "Okay." So we actually threw around ideas for six, seven months and what we feel that we have like the vasodilation from the beetroot powder. Obviously the coffee itself, which has been really complicated because most instant coffees are garbage beans.

They are not Arabica, which we are using, so ours is a higher rated coffee and just the different ingredients that are in it. So that's been one of those ones where it's really been tough to keep in stock because it's been selling like crazy. We thought it is just going to be one of those, well we got a bunch of customers that will be interested but we didn't really push it much but it is turning to be one of those things where I think people they really enjoy it.

It's everybody from breakfast or pre-work out, it seems like everybody is using it for. And then obviously our other product that we launched maybe a year ago, you know the bone broth collagen protein, which has kind of been our second bestseller outside of our protein. But you know the proteins are pretty similar between the two products. They each do their own thing but they are similar.

[0:41:39.7] AVH: Okay, so a couple of quick technical questions. So is the coffee product, does it taste like coffee? Like if you mix it with water is it like you're drinking like a coffee smoothie or is it not?

[0:41:51.1] DS: If I had my way, yes it would have tasted like coffee because I drink my coffee black. No sweetener, no milk, no nothing and I like it dark too. But when we went through beta testing, most people were like they wanted it a little bit sweetened, a little bit lighter than when I had it. And also because of the other ingredients in it. You know the beetroot powder and the various different things in it. It doesn't throw off the taste too much but you almost needed some of that flavoring component to make it taste like a mocha compared to a black coffee.

[0:42:27.5] AVH: Okay that still sounds delicious to me because I have a sweet tooth, so I am into it. Okay, next up the protein powders, why would one person choose one over the other like what are the key sort of defining characteristic between the bone broth and the regular?

[0:42:41.2] DS: Super good question. Here is a fact, nobody seems to be admitting too and I won't mention all the other big companies out there but collagen is a terrible protein. I will say it one more time.

[0:42:53.5] AVH: Uh-oh, here we go.

[0:42:55.4] DS: Collagen is a really bad protein to take. Now let me explain why. Collagen is one of the best products you can use too but if you are using collagen as a macronutrient to protein, don't. It is not a good protein. Now I will tell you the reason why. It is only rich in three or four amino acids. So those three or four amino acids are monumental as it comes to gut health, rebuilding of collagen, skin, hair, nail, all of the good stuff that collagen can do for you.

However, if you are using it as in, "Well I need a post work out protein shake or I need protein to fill a void in my day. I will just use this collagen." Bad idea. Now again, the main reason why it is a bad idea is you really need to have all the essential amino acids in play and collagen just doesn't have it. It is an incomplete protein. So it doesn't mean it is not a great product but I give this analogy, a Ferrari is a really good car however if you are a construction worker and you buy a Ferrari to take to your job sites, you're an idiot.

So it's the same thing, it doesn't mean that Ferrari is a bad car. It is just not being used for the proper thing. A Ferrari should be used to maybe take out on a Sunday drive or to go around the track and the same thing with collagen. Collagen is great for gut health, basically soft tissue growth, hair, nails the whole gamut. However, if you are using it as an actual protein to fulfill your X amount of protein grams a day, bad idea.

So that's the main reason what I give to people is like both products contain a fair amount of collagen in them. The first, the main protein powder is basically a blend of egg and beef. There are some people that are sensitive to egg. So obviously we say do not use that product. But we

feel is the egg more well rounds the product. It slows down the digestion a little bit, which then slows assimilation. Which means like the protein “lasts longer.”

The bone broth collagen, it is a complete protein because we are not using just straight 100% hydrolyzed type two collagen. It is a blend of beef isolate and collagen. So it is more geared towards people that are looking for the benefits that collagen presents. But why our collagens a little bit different is that it is not just hydrolyzed collagen like a lot of the XYZ brands that are out there.

[0:45:25.2] AVH: Okay, that is a really helpful explanation because I even sometimes have a hard time understanding or describing the differences between regular grass fed beef protein and bone broth and collagen and I love collagen and use it all the time and I have these beautiful strong wolverine-like fingernails to go for it. But what you are describing actually makes a lot of sense and I think it is also people sometimes think of bone broth and collagen as interchangeable, which as you just explained is not necessarily the case.

[0:46:00.2] DS: They're similar. It is like saying all cars have four wheels and a steering wheel. They all do but there is a big difference between a Ford Fiesta and a Ferrari. There is a big difference and there is a different reasons to use one over the other and I think what we always try to do is — I am not here to talk bad about another company but it does irk me a little bit when you really get into the geeky science and the biology of it how these things react within your body.

Ultimately in the end, I want to see people attain their goals. Again, if it is health goals great. If it's physical goals, great. If it is some type of I want to jump higher or whatever it is, so when I see companies well rounding a products going, “This is good for everything” again, I feel like it is not the proper thing to do with that, in a nice term.

[0:46:55.3] AVH: Yeah that makes a lot of sense and I am definitely excited about the bars because that is one of my — I am not even going to say guilty pleasures because I am not really ashamed of it but even being in the paleo world and trying to be as unprocessed and natural or whatever as I can be, I have a total soft spot for protein bars because I have a huge sweet tooth

and that is one way that I can kind of fix those cravings while still getting stuff that is nourishing to me.

So I feel like, “Oh, I can eat a protein bar.” It’s tasty but I don’t feel like garbage afterwards. So I am very excited about that new product.

[0:47:32.5] DS: Yeah, you’ll love these. As soon as they come in, we’d literally just ordered a truck load of these things. So I will send you a few boxes of each flavor as soon as they get here.

[0:47:40.5] AVH: Awesome that is really exciting. What else is going on for you, for the company and you have talked about these new products but is there anything else on the horizon or anything in general that you are excited about that you are looking towards the future or places you are going to go or things you are going to do? I guess this can be personal too if you have any cool events coming up.

[0:47:58.2] DS: Yeah, I always have adventures coming up. I am planning on a few trips. I try to go to the Himalaya this fall, we’ll see but yeah, always traveling. I like to work really hard but I like to play at the same time too. But for business wise, you know Paleo Pro, we’ve really seen, like you mentioned a few of the things from zero carb community and the keto community as well as the carnivore community, I think there is a real need for people that are transitioning into these pretty hardcore ways of eating, basically if you are carb burner and sugar burner for 10, 20, 30, 40 years, to all of a sudden try to become fat adapted, the body fights it and fights it for good reason.

You know homeostasis a real thing and there’s a lot of – basically you can go online and find what people recommend but there’s nothing really out there that is kind of helping people traverse that adaptation period. So we are looking at a lot of things right now on how to fill in a few of those voids of those.

They are like the sub-diets of the paleo movement. So we are pretty excited about that and I think in general, I think again some people are like, “Well now I am keto. I am not paleo.” But I think if you look at the whole community as a whole, we’re all in it together and you may eat one

way or the other where you're like, "Well I get 90% of my calories from fat and 10% from protein," compared to somebody who does something different. We are all in the same boat. We are all generally thinking the same way.

So yeah, for us we are always expanding learning as much as we possibly can. We are kind of at the forefront of the different farms that are making things and creating things and how do we adapt those to a convenient product. You know part of the issue with the paleo movement is I tell people all the time, if the food goes bad in 24 hours that's what you want, eat it. It doesn't make a good consumer good but we're trying to figure out how to again bridge that gap.

[0:50:08.5] AVH: So you've got a lot in your plate.

[0:50:10.4] DS: We do, we are always trying to expand. I think if you keep at the crux of your business on trying to help people, there is always people that are struggling with something and when you see a massive people struggling with the same thing, you know we are just always trying to be creative and we're going, "Well how do we fix that? How do we solve that?"

[0:50:29.5] AVH: Yeah and I like the approach too that whether you are keto or zero carb or whatever the hell you are, we are all kind of in it together and we are also more alike than we are different, you know? There is way more overlap and there is way more universal truths about all of us than there are differences. We are all just trying to find out what works and find a balance and enjoy our lives and be healthy and have vitality and all of those things.

And if we can put more information and more resources out there to help people achieve that then that's what we should do.

[0:51:01.1] DS: Yeah, I agree. I think for the masses to kind of shift more obviously in a tragic time unfortunately with the state of people's health. You know nobody gets infectious diseases anymore. We create our own diseases and these metabolic diseases and they're all our fault unfortunately and I hate saying that but you know, we didn't catch these things. We did it to ourselves. So whatever myself and our little team can help propel and push people forward, I mean that is what really matters.

[0:51:33.9] AVH: Yeah, I mean it is a hard truth but I think admitting it is the first step, right? Because if you approach it like it's this thing that is like magically happening to the world, in the western world and it's like how did this happen and that's not the right way to find answers and to make change, right? So we need to be brutally honest with ourselves I think sometimes when we are trying to fix the problems that we have created but yeah, Doug thank you for taking the time.

And thank you for doing your part in helping us out and like I said, your products are amazing. They're great ingredients, they're delicious. I use them all the time and I am really pumped about the new products. I am excited to see what you guys come out with next and I just appreciate you guys doing your part and helping out.

[0:52:14.2] DS: Thank you, we really appreciate the comments. It's really nice.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:52:22.2] AVH: Okay everybody thank you so much for listening. Watch out for my feature on Paleo Pro, the company in an upcoming issue of Paleo Magazine and of course, you can always go to paleomagazine.com if you want to get access to exclusive online articles, recipes, things like that. You can subscribe from there. You can subscribe and get either digital and or hard copy issues of the magazine if you want to do that.

You can get back issues, you can access our special edition issues on the online store. So if you want the AIP issue or the keto issue or whatever, you can go get yourself one. So make sure you are going to paleomagazine.com every once in a while because we put a lot of awesome stuff on there that you might miss otherwise.

Thank you again to our show sponsor, Jones Dairy Farm. And join me next week on the podcast for a very, I think, very clear helpful short episode. It's called Keto 101 and this is basically sort of a basic master class, what is keto from paleo perspective? It is going to teach you the basic tenants of what keto is, the key things you need to know about how it works, the best foods that you can incorporate for a nutrient dense paleo-keto diet. Because despite what Instagram might tell you, keto is not just bacon covered in ranch dressing.

And I also give you some good resources for further learning about keto if you are interested, if it is something you are maybe dabbling in, you want to learn more about, maybe there is somebody in your life who is interested and they are asking questions like what is it, how do I get started, this is a great easy accessible episode for you to get started.

So definitely join me next week for that. Thank you again as always for being here and have a great week everybody.

[OUTRO]

[0:53:47.8] AV: The intro music for Paleo Magazine Radio is a song called Stronger performed by Alter Ego and I hope you love it.

[END]