

Our interview with Chaz and Sarah Kirby was conducted on April 12, 2012 at Kirby Brothers Feed Store in Medford, New Jersey.

Kirby 1

Shots of water tower, parking lot, exterior

“It’s taken 3 or 4 years... we started this garden”

Just wanted to sell some extra tomatoes

10 definite vendors

2:12 “We’re doing produce,” meat, fish market in Medford, organic raspberry grower in Hammonton, Jim’s Jarhead Jerky

3:15 “It cost money to be certified organic”

3:50 “The main thing for us is local” more than organic
Peaches in December

Keep money in your community, knowing the people who grow the stuff

4:50 “The farm market’s going to be every Sunday”
Homestead meeting

5:30 We did a couple of chicken events [laugh]

3:37 Homesteading – a blanket term for being able to do things yourself

6:10 Most of our marketing right now is through word of mouth in the store and on Facebook
Newspaper – don’t get the same coverage

Kirby 2

0:00 Site plan, where stuff’s going to go
Parking – on Main Street, help other businesses

1:09 Important that everyone have access
Bike or walk to get food instead of driving giant SUVs to get local produce

2:03 Age of building – over 100 years
Train tracks – broke a lot of lawnmowers

3:45 Shot: KID ON DOCK
Shot: Going inside store

4:45 Tour of store, old counter, original entrance

5:30 Grinding oatmeal

6:36 Out machinery was so old, when it broke down, you couldn’t go to Home Depot

Kirby 3

0:00 Shot: cogs
0:26 Shot: cash register
0:55 Shot: safe

Kirby 4

0:00 Going up stairs
Through attic
1:28 Shot: cobwebs
2:00 Pulley system

2:45 “When my dad started here, they used to mix cattle feed”
When I started working here, it was only 8 bags
By the time I started here, it was mostly horses
Now we mostly sell dog food [laugh]

3:38 STAIRS: Only one of us on stairs at a time

Kirby 5 (in the engine room)

0:00 Darren coming up stairs
0:35 Big Wheels: turned the shaft, etc.
1:20 “would take us all day to unload a trailer full of oats”
2:04 How loud would it get in here?
2:14 One of the things I miss now about it – everything was always urgent
Never thought I’d say I miss mixing feed
2:35 “You’re a lot cleaner when you get home from work now”
When we first started dating, the smell of the mill
3:30 “Sad that our kids won’t ever know that”
Three mills in this town

4:00 Corn cracker: Blades, screen, crushed and broken (better light)
“That, I do not miss.”
“If it got over full, it would throw the belts off...”
5:45 Vertigo: Corn cracker
6:10 Belt changing, teeth

7:48 Would this ever be a mill again?
Long pause
8:44 A mill like ours, no
8:50 Back breaking, body killing work

- My father is a machinist, just pushes buttons
9:47 “It’s not the same as it was” [laugh]
- 9:55 We are all about the local food movement, small scale farm
Out there so early, working so hard, what you ask of your body – Sarah
This is dying out
- 10:49 Carry more organic feeds, encourage people to grow own (separate from feed)
Gas prices, insurance – a bit more practical to have bigger facilities
- 11:45 “I was thinking about how much I always hated to be up here”
“And now we’re so desperate to remember it”
Grandfather would tell these stories: Farmers and fertilizer
- 12:30 “I think that’s a little overdoing it” [laugh]
- 13:00 When I was a kid, there were a lot more farms around
And that’s gone
- 13:44 Old men that were the last of them
Development didn’t drive it away, it just killed it off
- 14:00 With our kids, we want them to be healthier, better
But having the background makes it easier to transition
- 14:45 Sarah – a natural progression to doing the farm market
Keeping it relevant
GOAL: “We’re not trying to convince people that local foods is a good idea, we’re trying to help all those people who know it’s a good idea **come together.**”
Right place at right time
- 15:25 Difficulty: finding people to sell
GMOs: Grow things that are not edible
Almost like a possessiveness, where they’d rather manage it themselves because it it’s a precious commodity
- 16:45 Need to prove ourselves – big commitment for farmers to take a day off to sell
- 17:15 Farm market scene: Not like fishing, all day commitment for farmers
- 17:45 Forces community involvement
Comfortable with, “I’ll pay someone to do this for me.”
Every part of that is important, everyone works
- 18:39 People are starting to realize how many things they don’t know

Instead of doing things yourself: “raise your kids, fix your car”

19:30 Nutritionist at Shop Rite

Necessary, but sad

“We’ve forgotten how to eat food.”

Things that are instinctive to humans

20:26 “How far away are we going to let ourselves be removed from what we need to do to take care of ourselves?”

21:10 When agriculture was more prevalent, kids worked with their parents growing food, raising animals, working in mills, now everything is compartmentalized

21:40 When we had our own kids, didn’t work. They come to work with us when they can.

22:15 Shop Rite, Wegmans – jump on board and see importance of local food

Not that picky – move forward

23:15 We started slow: drive to Whole Foods, peaches from Argentina

Shop at local grocery stores, local is from Virginia and Maryland

24:00 How hard you want to work at it. No one grows wheat locally.

24:40 Preparing whole foods at home.

Takes “an amazing amount of time,” 3 hours

Home ec was done: five hours for chicken, green beans

25:22 Canning: First time I made pickles, it took 9 hours

“Forget it, I don’t even want a cookie, I’ll eat this carrot”

26:15 Zucchini and cucumbers grew in garden

You feel really f-ing proud of yourself

26:53 Going to the grocery: I get a little better, I pick one thing I could make myself

I pick up that box – “This isn’t even food”

27:10 We can’t even eat fast food anymore

28:15 Left over from being an infant, only eat when they’re hungry

29:05 People don’t wanna know, Facebook – Pink Slime

30:10 Try to move out of just selling stuff and more into education

30:25 Every time I learn something new, there’s 12 new things that come out of it

- 30:50 “You fail so much more often than you succeed... and you can’t be embarrassed to tell people that.” – Education the most important
- 31:25 People who have never seen a tomato growing on a tomato plant – That’s what we’re up against
- 32:00 “So I take this, and I put it in the ground, and then in like 2 months I’ll have corn?”
“Oh that’s disgusting, I buy my eggs at the store.”
- 32:50 Membrane on outside of egg – protects
Egg shell is porous
- 33:45 Friend is dumbfounded! Posts on Facebook
12 step process, like dealing with grief
- 34:35 Once a rooster sees the sunshine, he won’t stop crowing [laugh]

Kirby 6

- 0:15 Discussion about favorite book
All the food you need on a quarter acre
Vertical gardens – mini-farms on patio
- 1:48 100 mile menu – support people you interact with everyday
Full circle thing – keeps money in community
- 2:35 Food is easy – we live in an area when people are still growing food
Collingswood
Organic peaches from Argentina – different regulations, business practices
- 3:45 Accountability – I can go check it out
- 4:03 “If you’re selling something to your neighbor and it sucks, they can come back and be mad at you!”
- 4:15 You do work harder
- 4:45 Adds value to your money
- 5:20 Organic farm in Medford
Two people who raise beef in this whole area
- 6:15 Preserve what little there is
- 6:30 Can produce a lot of food in one place, but it’s not necessarily for that area
Split up between grocery stores
- 7:30 We do a lot of stuff people think is weird
We have goats in our backyard!
- 8:05 Economic depression on local food
- 8:30 Mr. Will’s Store: Little general store, mom used to send on bike
Wanted to have with farm market – on Sunday, just walk down

- Music, not cost a lot to come out with your family
- 9:30 We needed that in our lives, and if you miss something and no one else is doing it, you have to do it yourself
Selfish – work and do our grocery shopping
- 10:00 Bands playing
- 11:46 Community involvement
- 12:00 Space for nonprofits
- 12:30 The community will direct the market – democracy in action
- 13:15 “If I can leave work and do my grocery shopping on my way down the street to my house, that would be absolutely perfect.”
- 13:30 Grass fed beef – demand – maybe a horse farm will convert
- 14:10 Opens Sunday May 20
- 15:00 “They have a website and an email, but they don’t always get back to you right away because they’re ... farming.”
- 17:00 Pictures of original Kirby Bros.
- 18:38 Saw a picture of horse and carriage at store
Distinctive cars – hovercraft
- 21:00 Kid bugged out by food documentary
Salad, etc.
- 21:40 “I still get pizza every Friday!”
- 23:15 Do you want the mustache or the beard?