

Bryan Schaaf:

Back here on the Meat Speak Podcast, powered by the Certified Angus Beef brand. I am Bryan Schaaf, and sitting across from me by way of Zoom is my good man chef. He's got a fine head of hair, and any time we want to talk about anything barbecue-centric, he is our go-to chef. Michael Ollier, chef, how you doing?

Michael Ollier:

Fantastic, B. Schaff. How are you?

Bryan Schaaf:

And I am living the dream because it's not every day that you get to talk about subjects that are so near and dear to your heart, and at the same time, be able to call them work. So today, we are going to talk about Tennessee whiskey and as BBQ, it's like the peanut butter and jelly of my ... I was going to say, of my childhood. Not quite. Sorry, don't worry, mom, you're off the hook. Really, since I was 20 years old. Jack Daniel's is where we're going with this. And chef, you are a guy who's always plugged into the barbecue world. Jack Daniel's, of course, everybody knows it because it's the Tennessee spirit of Tennessee spirits, but they've got this foot in the barbecue world. And as Certified Angus Beef, whom we both are fortunate to work for, is involved in this barbecue competition that they put on, give us a rundown of what that is. There's barbecue competitions, and then there's the Jack.

Michael Ollier:

The Jack, it's a big deal. You have to be the elite and be lucky to, as part of a lottery. You've got to be the top of the game to make it to the Jack, and it's got such a tradition to it. This would have been the 31st year, I think, and it's history. So a shame that it's not going to happen in 2020, but understandable. I will look forward in 2021, but it's been something that we've been fortunate enough to be part of for the last three, maybe four years, Bryan.

Michael Ollier:

As a brand, you and I have been there together, our foot in the water, a little bit to see what it's about, and then actually getting to sit at the judges' table. So that's been pretty quite an honor for me, honestly, to have the tenure of a KCBS judge that I have, which quite honestly, is maybe a dozen or so judges under my belt, and to be able to judge the Jack was quite a coup. So it's one of those seats that you just don't give up. It's the masters. You don't give those up. And you've got a ticket at the seat judging at the Jack. You got to hold onto it.

Bryan Schaaf:

And it's funny you mention that because if you're in the food world, or honestly, if you're in the world, period, and if you've ever watched television of some sort, the judge's tent at the Jack, if you want to talk food, it's like you turn around and it's like, there's Mike Mills, there's Tuffy Stone. Holy cow. But then you also look in, I remember a couple of years ago, John Schneider was there, and you actually were sitting next to Kellie Pickler's husband, who is a studio musician in Nashville.

Michael Ollier:

He is [inaudible 00:03:39] like table buddies at table two now where we always hang out together.

Bryan Schaaf:

It's amazing, and the Jack is kind of the Super Bowl of barbecue in that there are two automatic qualifications, correct? The winner from Memphis in May, the winner from the American Royale. And then the rest of it is you have to have won to even have a chance to get in. And you look at the list of folks who've not just, you can easily say the folks who've won, the people who have competed at the Jack, and if they haven't won, it's a pretty impressive list, isn't it?

Michael Ollier:

It sure is. And to your point, under the judge's tent of any competition that I've been part of, it's more of a ... I don't know how to put it. It's more of a who's who within the tent than ever. And so that's why it's something that we think is kind of important to be part of, is where else can we get a concentration of the who's who in barbecue in under literally one tent?

Michael Ollier:

And so going to that judges, that time slot, it's just one of the greatest things that I look forward to every year.

Bryan Schaaf:

Yeah, it's an amazing thing, not just from the competition standpoint, but Lynchburg, Tennessee. It's a town of 2000ish people, and once a year, it's like the world converges on Lynchburg, Tennessee, which is funny. I think folks have heard that Lynchburg, Tennessee actually sits in the dry county. So it's not like there's bars and Jack Daniel's flowing, all these things like that, but there's such reverence that that is down there. It's a very beautifully surreal scene that you get to experience late October every year, although this year you'd mentioned already, they have sadly suggested that, or that they have gone ahead and made the call that they're not going to have it this year. It is rescheduled for October 8th and 9th in 2001.

Bryan Schaaf:

But that said, I guess flipping the page, the whole reason that we're kind of setting the scene is I got the opportunity to sit down with a gentleman named Jeff Arnett, And you may not know the name, Jeff Arnett, but Jeff Arnett is the master distiller of Jack Daniel's. And I know we are a meat-centric podcast, but let's be real, meat and spirits, they go hand in hand. I may allegedly have a bottle sitting within arms like that, where I'm sitting right now, they go hand in hand. If you get the chance to chat with a gentleman like Jeff Arnett, who's just the seventh master distiller in the history of Jack Daniel's, which goes back to the 1700s, I believe you said there's been like 26-ish U.S. presidents in that time. There have only been seven master distillers in that time. If you have a chance to pick this guy's brain, what does he do, how did he get to do what he does and what truly makes a really good Tennessee whiskey man, you're going to take that. It's like the opportunity to sit down and talk to Babe Ruth in the batting cage.

Bryan Schaaf:

I got to talk to him in Lynchburg, Tennessee. So that's coming up here in a few minutes. We're going to probably turn over to that, and have a chat with Jeff Arnett, master distiller of Jack Daniel's, and chef, if you would mind sticking around, we're going to come back and follow up with you to talk a little bit more about barbecue, and the people in that really cool tie-in that they have with the Jack Daniel's.

Michael Ollier:

You bet. Take a listen.

Bryan Schaaf:

Excellent. So stick around here, coming up next, Jeff Arnett, master distiller of Jack Daniel's. Okay, so we're here with Jeff Arnett on the Meat Speak Podcast. Not every day that we don't talk about meat, but when you're in Lynchburg, Tennessee, when you're in Jack Daniel's house, and you get a chance to chat with just the seventh master distiller in the history of Jack Daniel's, you got to do it.

Jeff Arnett:

You got to do it.

Bryan Schaaf:

So first, tell me, in our profession, meat people certified, we work with a lot of meat science PhDs, and people say, "How do you get the title to be meat scientists? And there's this long story. How do you get the title, master distiller? Because that might even trump meat scientist.

Jeff Arnett:

I came out of college with an engineering degree, and I went to work for a food and beverage manufacturing company. I learned the sensory sciences in coffee, learning how to taste individual coffee beans, and class and grade them for flavor and acidity and body, and think about further how you would blend them to make them more balanced and complete and complex as a unit than they were individually. I made juice beverages, I made salted snacks, but there was an opening here at Jack Daniel's back in 2001, they were looking for a quality control manager. So that was the first role that I took here. So working as quality control at Jack, you get involved with everything that we do here. And it takes years from the time that we take water and grains and yeast. By the time that has been mellowed and matured in a barrel, and is ready to be bottled and shipped all over the world, it's years, as far as the duration of time.

Jeff Arnett:

And most people only work in one part of our process, but quality allowed me to work in every spot. So it allowed me to put all the pieces of the puzzle together. I was training under the previous master distiller who had worked for Jack Daniel's for 40 years and served as master distiller for 20 of those, and was just lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time after seven years as quality control manager. Now he passed the baton to me, so that was 11 years ago now. So the way my job is structured, I spend 80% of my time here in Lynchburg, because we make every drop of our whiskey here. I travel about 50 to 60 days a year. And in the last 11 years, I've been to 41 countries. And we're sold in 170, and we're proud they never dropped this bait right here. An hour South of Nashville, literally a town that only has one stoplight. But as the, I guess, probably one of the largest whiskey manufacturing operations in the country.

Bryan Schaaf:

Can you talk about that? Jack being Jack, it's everywhere. Everybody's heard of Jack Daniel's. Every bit of it is here. Can you talk about, I guess, how important is it that the fact that you guys take such pride,

that every drop comes from yours, that you've gotten really big, but you haven't ever compromised where you come from.

Jeff Arnett:

Like I said, it takes years to manufacture whiskey, and it can't be rushed. So if you want to produce a product for the entire world in one spot, it means that you have to have some size or scale. So for us, we have 90 warehouses, for instance, and they're scattered throughout the Hills of Lynchburg because we're making every drop here, we store every drop here, we mature it. And that is a part of us not making it in other places, is that our water source, our grain supply, yeast tends to be a regional and a product of where it grows, and we have a proprietary yeast culture. So if we moved Jack Daniel's somewhere else, it would start to change just because of the natural processes that exist. But we need a four seasons climate for the whiskey to work its way in and out of the barrel over the course of the year. So if you change the climate, you change the location, you change your water, the product is going to change.

Jeff Arnett:

And that's one of the things that we want to be able to promise people, is that when they pick up a bottle of Jack Daniel's, even if the bottles were produced years apart, not that they're going to be the same, that you're assured that no matter where you find it on the planet, you know who made it, where it was made, and what it's going to taste like.

Bryan Schaaf:

Yeah. So you started on coffee, now you work for Jack Daniel's. Jack Daniel's is everywhere. Can you talk about, and I understand there's certain things you can not divulge, and I understand that, but what is the magic behind Jack? What is it that has made it successful for so long that people just keep coming back to it?

Jeff Arnett:

You hear that phrase, "if you do garbage, then you'll get garbage out." I think with Jack Daniel's, it's a quality-in, quality-out scenario. It's hard to point to one thing that makes Jack Daniel's what it is, but we have a fantastic water source that flows from a limestone cave. It's cold and mineral-rich and iron-free. We have a great supplier base. We only buy the finest grade of each of the grains that we use, corn malted barley and rye. We have a proprietary yeast culture. We have mastered whiskey making over 150 years. If you go through our distillery, you'll see that things are built a certain way, and that's been years of learning. And also, the passing down of understanding and the skill from one generation to the other. The employees at Jack Daniel's, we have 600 production employees. 400 of them are the sons and daughters of previous employees. So we're multi-generation, it's a passing down of skill and pride from family member to family member.

Jeff Arnett:

But the charcoal mellowing process, we make barrels, Jack Daniel's is the only whiskey company that makes barrels as well, and barrels are all of your color and over half of your flavor. So controlling all those parts of the process, making it all in one spot, I think, adds up to Jack Daniel's being a whiskey like no other.

Bryan Schaaf:

As you look, there's distilleries popping up everywhere. From your perspective, from a Jack perspective, is that competition, is that, you know what, it just draws more of a spotlight on what you guys do?

Jeff Arnett:

I will tell you that I think a rising tide will raise all ships, and what this boom in what they call craft distilling, or small scale whiskey making, has done is it's created interest in whiskey. So Jack Daniel's, I don't think, has been harmed by people coming into the industry, because what they're doing is they're luring people who were maybe beer drinkers or vodka drinkers, or rum drinkers into the whiskey category, because they're wanting to sample around because they're interested in what's going on there. So I think it's been good for all of us. We went from three distilleries in the state of Tennessee to now 40, and that happened to just about five or six short years. And I'm the vice president of the Tennessee Distillers Guild. So I'm good friends with a lot of the small distillers.

Jeff Arnett:

And we have helped one another out of situations, we've been able to get laws that were written in the 1930s kind of corrected so that we're being socially responsible, but not being restricted where we can't sell and market and manufacture our products like beer and wine do. Distilled spirits are often kind of viewed as a different category, and a lot of people will allow something for one form of beverage alcohol, but not another. So we always kind of say that we want parity. We just want to be treated like everybody else. So it's been good to get to know them. And I think in general, this influx of new distillers, it's got people like us, we've come out with eight new products in eight years. And I'm not sure that we would be doing that unless there was so much interest in people wanting to try new things.

Bryan Schaaf:

You don't talk about those new things. Obviously when people think of Jack, they think of old number seven, or Gentleman Jack. Yeah. But what else is out there?

Jeff Arnett:

Our old number seven Tennessee whiskey is the number one selling whiskey on the planet, and it's still the biggest thing in our portfolio. But surprisingly, the second largest selling thing now is honey. Flavors have become a attractive thing because what we found is that when we first put out honey in 2011, many of the people who would come to me and say, "Hey, I drink honey, and I never was a Jack Daniel's drinker, I never was a whiskey drinker, but ever since you came out with honey, you've hooked me." So it brought new consumers to us, but also people were loyal whiskey drinkers would tell us that there were times in life occasions where whiskey didn't work, and they would go to another product. Like after dinner, during dessert or something, they wouldn't necessarily serve whiskey, but they'll use honey there.

Jeff Arnett:

So then we follow that up with cinnamon or fire. Now we've come out with Tennessee apple. So we have three flavors, it actually mixed well across them. So people can take the honey and fire and put them together, and they call it a red hot honey or a bee sting. People can take the Tennessee fire, the cinnamon product with the apple and kind of make Mom's Apple Pie or an apple turnover. So people are getting creative with the flavors. We are doing our very best to keep those a quality product. It uses our old number seven Tennessee whiskey, all natural flavorings, but it has definitely created a whole new market for Jack Daniel's over just the last five or six years.

Bryan Schaaf:

What does that mean for you? You're from Tennessee, and Tennessee is all about the Jack, and you've released all of these new variations on under your watch. Do you have a favorite or is there a part of you that still says, "You know what, it's all about the old number seven?"

Jeff Arnett:

I think definitely the old number seven. It's our flagship, and it's always going to be our biggest and most important brand. I was a Tennessee Squire, so I literally was in the fan club of Jack Daniel's, and the reason I was because of the old number seven Tennessee whiskey. So it's important, but I love our Single Barrel. I think if you're a more mature drinker, a very discerning one, and you like to sip and savor, there's things beyond old number seven within our portfolio. They're kind of based on what you like, and if you want something approachable, we've got Gentleman Jack. If you want something big and bold that's really interesting, we've got Single Barrel. If you want the tried and true, flexible, balanced, it's old number seven. We got flavors, we've got barrel finishes. We're doing a lot, needless to say, but being a barrel maker and controlling more of the process than anyone else does, we feel like we've got the right to test the waters and do a lot of different things because we think we can do them well.

Bryan Schaaf:

Excellent. So with all those, on a personal level, you got a favorite?

Jeff Arnett:

When I first came here, I was the quality control manager, and I took over the Single Barrel processing area. So I was one of two people that was tasting every barrel to let it go to market. So sometimes, 40 or 50 different unique individual barrels in a day. And that was a great learning experience for me. And I'm still a big fan of our Single Barrel whiskey. It's super hot character, it's dark, it's aromatic. I just like to put it in a glass with some quality ice on it, just kind of let it dilute a little bit. And as whiskey changes in proof, as it dilutes, it actually is like peeling an onion back. You'll notice differences of character as the proof changes. So I always tell people, not only is every Single Barrel different, but every sip will be different. If you'll put one ice cube in it, just let it slowly work it down. It'll change all the way down to 40 proof. And it's bottled at 94, so it literally almost cut it in half, but you're noticing it's like an onion peeling back its layers and showing you its nuances.

Bryan Schaaf:

Talking about the job itself, you talk about how much you get to taste every barrel in quality control. That's got to be a dream job, isn't it?

Jeff Arnett:

It is, but it goes more than just me. As I was saying, we have about 600 employees here today. 100 of them are official whiskey tasters. So they've been trained on the standards of Jack Daniel's. So I travel about 50 to 60 days a year, but tasting needs to go on every day here. Now, everything we're putting in barrels, everything that's coming out of barrels, and being prepared for batches, they've got to be tasted. As much as technology has advanced over the years, nothing will tell you what something smells and tastes like. You still are dependent upon human beings to do that for you. So it's important that they know the standards. So I get the credit for managing the brand, but realistically, I've got a hundred people who are multi-generation whiskey makers who love the brand who are stewards, and they were

the stewards when I got here, and there'll be the stewards when I go. So I just get credit for a lot of people's hard work and love and passion of the brand.

Bryan Schaaf:

Is there a process for achieving, it almost sounds like it's a master [samaya 00:18:35] of Jack Daniel's too. Is there a process to get to that standard?

Jeff Arnett:

Now the people who serve as official whiskey tasters here, we actually want them to be representative of the drinking public. So we have people within that group that we know are super sensitive on nose and palate, I would call them the hypersensitive people, that can smell and taste everything and every nuance. And then you have people that I think are more normal, where they they'll notice the big things, but they don't necessarily smell and taste every single minor difference of it. So you want your panel to kind of represent that diversity of people and what their senses are. Now we do recognize people within the group that we know that you can just put a off note, and purposely spike it into a sample. It's just a few parts per million, the people who can consistently find it and pull it out. So that is our master panel.

Jeff Arnett:

So we use that group of people to get down to splitting hairs, if you will, and we have to make some choices on is it ready or is it not. We're not going to this broader panel. We're going to a very talented, skilled group of people who are gifted on the palate to be able to help us manage it.

Bryan Schaaf:

How about, as far as the competition here that's going on this weekend, what's your role in all this?

Jeff Arnett:

I just helped to host this, but this is my 12th barbecue in a row as master distiller in helping do this. But I love the passion that comes from this group of people. They all came here to win. They're very competitive, but to watch them celebrate one another's victories, the way they do, they really are happy for one another. So there's a sense of community and family among them, that they want to be the best, but as I was saying it last night, that when you share joy, you double it. When you share sorrow, you half it. And I've watched these people go through cancer together, lose loved ones, and how they rally around one another, and celebrate victories together. They're just a great group of people. So we love having them come to town because it just makes our family of whiskey makers even larger when we have all the cookers in town,

Bryan Schaaf:

Is this the busiest weekend in Lynchburg?

Jeff Arnett:

It's one of them, for sure. If the weather cooperates, we can have as many as 25,000 people who will attend. So you'll be shoulder to shoulder through this whole park. On a rainy day like today, where people were looking at the weather in deciding to come, we might have closer to 10 or 15,000 who come. But we have the Tennessee Squires, our fan club, they're going to come out, rain or shine. So we have a massive thing set up for them, and they're lined up down the street trying to get in over there.

But it gives them a chance to get to know one another. A lot of our squires in this fan club are also collectors. They love to show off the things that they found, and old rare things from Jack Daniel's that they have in their collections. A lot of them carry around brag books of all the things that they found, and I'm here to sign bottles for them. So that's the other thing that I do. There's a lot of people, once they have something collectible, they'll want a signature and a date on it. So I'll do that.

Bryan Schaaf:

You ever step back and think about, I guess, the magnitude and the gravity of the Java side, but the title itself? If you look at the reputation that Jack Daniel's, no matter how big they've gotten, they are still that gold standard for Tennessee whiskey to be one of seven master distillers. What is that like? Is that something maybe you're still processing that?

Jeff Arnett:

It's humbling for sure. It was three years ago that we were celebrating our 150th anniversary, so it was a big milestone year for us, and it got me thinking about the fact that only five people have served since Jack Daniel to me. In this very small wall of the old office, you have all the faces of the master distillers, and there's so few of them. Over that same timeframe, I was looking a few years ago, thinking about how does this compare to other offices that people would know. Since 1866, there have been 28 U.S. presidents. There have been 12 popes that have served over the Catholic Church. So I tell people when you're the master distiller, Jack Daniel's, that's like four times better than being the president, and then it's almost twice as good as being the Pope. And that's just doing the math on it. And then it has a lot of other parts that go along with it as well. But it's quite an honor.

Jeff Arnett:

And it was humbling from the first time they mentioned it to me that they were considering me to take my mentor's place. I was like, "Wow, that's going to be a game changer." You're not anonymous anymore. So I can walk around the park and most people know who I am, whether I know them or not. A lot of them, I see them, and I'm like, "Oh yeah, I recognize you. I can't remember your name," but it's fun. We say that we make more than whiskey here. We make friends. And whether you drink or not is neither here nor there, but we have people who come and take the tour who don't drink a drop, but they just love the history, they're fascinated by the process. And that's a big part of who we are at Jack Daniel's. It's the pride, it's the heritage, the history of the brand. So you're drinking more than just the liquid. You're drinking the story, and it's making a statement about you when you drank it.

Bryan Schaaf:

You know what, one last question. We've got to have one meat-centric question among this. Jeff Arnett, master distiller of Jack Daniel's, we'll say, "Speaking on behalf of Jeff Arnett," not necessarily taking a position on Jack Daniel's, what's the official beef cut of Jeff Arnett's grill?

Jeff Arnett:

Typically, when I was a kid, my only restaurant experience was in a place that was called the Ribeye Barn. So I love ribeye steaks. They grill well, the marbling of fat through it. They don't dry out very easily. So I'll usually cook one that's sort of just on the approaching side of medium, warm pink center, still nice and juicy. So I like a thick cut, and I ribeye if I'm going to choose a steak for myself. But we tell people that we use a corn malted barley and rye. We take all the starches and sugars out of that when we make distiller's beer. And that's what we distill in the whiskey, but that left over grain, if you're not a distillery

employee, if you don't work at the distillery, most people here raise cattle, and they do it off of the stillage or the byproduct of the distillery, because it's got all the carbohydrates out of it. It's just protein, and a little bit of fat and fiber.

Jeff Arnett:

So if you feed stillage to these beef cattle that people are taking in and beefing up and getting ready to sell, you can put two to three pounds of lean weight on a cow a day, feeding this stuff. So we tell people some of the best beef on the planet comes from Lynchburg because we marinate it from the inside out.

Bryan Schaaf:

Well said, well said. Well, Jeff Arnett, master distiller, Jack Daniel's, thank you so much for taking the time.

Jeff Arnett:

Thank you, I've enjoyed it.

Bryan Schaaf:

Back here on the Meat Speak Podcast. That was, no joke, one of my most, honestly, I had the opportunity to talk to Jeff Arnett. And as soon as I did, the first thought of my head was, Okay, now how do we make this about meat so we can actually put it in the podcast? But if you go to Lynchburg, Tennessee, if you go down to the Jack, which is always in mid to late fall, mid to late October, really, if you want to get specific, there's no shortage of meat. It's the world, barbecue championships. And chef, you are a KCBS judge. Judging the Jack is one thing, but you go down, the competition is on Saturday. On Friday night, there's quite the to-do up on Barbecue Hill, which sort of overlooks the holler above the distillery itself. Man, is that one of the highlights of your calendar year?

Michael Ollier:

It sure is. Every year, you look forward to it that Friday night gathering, because it's kind of an intimate group. If you're only invited to the Hill, if you are either competing in the Jack, or you're a judge in the Jack, or it's a VIP only. And so it's been something we've been fortunate enough to have some fun actually grilling up there. So been up there with big Jim Stancil, our buddy with bare knuckles.

Bryan Schaaf:

The tallest man in barbecue.

Michael Ollier:

The tallest man in barbecue, and he looks down on you, but not in that way. And of course, Barbecue Ninja was there last year. So we pulled out all the stops, and we had some big Tomahawk steaks. and this isn't their dinner per se, it's just because. It's just for fun. It's because there's a grill, and we should be putting meat on it when people gather. That's the reason. And so that's always a fun thing. I'm always looking forward to thinking about what big Jim and I are going to put on that grill actually each year. So this would be the time where we'd probably be talking about it. So we'll think about what we're going to do for 2021, but to your point, and Jeff is just fantastic. He hosts that event, really on the Hill, and it's always a pleasure to hear him speak and command the crowd.

Bryan Schaaf:

Yeah, it's an incredible event. Of course, our buddy who we knew before we realized he was even at the Jack, Chip Chapman, the weatherman from Chattanooga, Tennessee. The man can operate a grill himself, but he's been the MC of the Jack, this was going to be year 30, correct?

Michael Ollier:

Yeah. And so, yeah, Chip is the reason that I have a seat at the judges table. So it's thanks to the old Chip Chapman that I have a seat there, and I appreciate his orange jacket every year.

Bryan Schaaf:

Give us an idea of what it actually is like being the judge, because it's not just, "Oh, I ate this. I liked the way that it tasted, it gets high marks." It's a little more intense than that.

Michael Ollier:

Yeah, it is a different level of barbecue, meaning when you look at the presentation score, and what happens, the first stage is the table captain opens the box and gives everyone, all the six judges at that particular table, an opportunity to mark the first score, which is judging for appearance. And it is rare that you see something that's not a full nine, and that would be the highest mark. And so you kind of feel bad when you give the eight. It's that level of barbecue that these are eights and nines across the board, generally speaking. So it's pretty rare that you see something that's not. Typically, it's kind of an international team. You're like, "Oh, that must be an international team," because you could just tell that something was different. Not on the appearance, but on the taste side. And then it just culminates. It gets better and better. And I don't know what else I can add to it. It's just that it's a high level of barbecue.

Michael Ollier:

I will say it's unlike chicken that you would taste normally. It's unlike pork that you would taste normally. And then for us, brisket, it's unlike what you experience when you go to a barbecue joint.

Bryan Schaaf:

Yeah. Although I will say that, I know that I have I mentioned this on the podcast in the past. Our mutual, how Chris Lilly, he's often competing at the Jack, and I've kind of learned brisket usually goes to the judges about four o'clock in the afternoon. And once they go, there are a lot of like the Chris Lilly rejects that didn't make the delivery to the barbecue tent for judging. And so I just sort of positioned myself and get ready to swoop as soon as those come out of the pit so that some of the best deeds I'll have all year long is the-

Michael Ollier:

Smart man. Smart man. The point is that the percentage that actually ends up in the box is such a fraction of what they cook, because they absolutely want them. We have one opportunity. It's one bite. It is truly one bite to make that impression. Usually on a rib, I'll take a bite on the other side also. I want the benefit of the doubt. I want to have the full experience. So two is the max. You're not going back for much more. You just can't handle it. Think about it. You've got six chicken to eat each time, you've got six pork ribs, you got six pork. You've got six brisket. There's an other category, and a dessert typically.

So you're looking at, what is that, 50-some bites? You're not taking down each of those chicken thighs. You can't do it. You shouldn't do it.

Bryan Schaaf:

It becomes a competition in itself if you think about it. Last question before we put a wrap on here. I think it's only right, one of the questions that, of course I posed to Jeff Arnett was a meat-centric. What is the official beef cut of Jeff Arnett? I'm going to pose it to you. I'm going to turn this around, and one thing, although the county where Jack Daniel's in Lynchburg, Tennessee is dry., Judges always get sent home with a little something-something for when they get back home. So you have procured a couple bottles of Jack over the years, in addition to your own personal shopping. How do you take your spirits? Are you a guy who mixes it? Are you a neat guy? Are you on the rocks? How do you like your Jack?

Michael Ollier:

Normally, I'm an on-the-rocks guy. And after going to the Jack, I really got into the Jack and ginger, so it's maybe a seasonal way to drink it. So Jack and ginger part of the year, neat sometimes. And then on the rocks when I want it to be chilled.

Bryan Schaaf:

Well said, well said. One of my favorite things, and unfortunately it's been a few years since we've got to hang our buddy, Gary Brown, the former Green Bay Packers offensive lineman turned meat connoisseur, he turned me on to the gentleman Jack a couple of years ago. It's so smooth, it's like you're riding on a sled in the [inaudible 00:31:43] wintertime. It's delightful. So that's it, chef Michael Ollier of the Certified Angus Beef brand, not just a chef, but a guy who knows a whole lot more barbecue than the average Joe. Sir, thank you for taking time to join us here on the Meat Speak Podcast, powered by the Certified Angus Beef brand. If this is your first time tuning in, know that you can find us across all of your major podcasting platforms, Google Play, Apple, Spotify, or by visiting certifiedangusbeef.com/podcasts, or honestly, follow me on the Facebook or the Instagram. So until next time, thanks for joining us, and we'll catch you all later.