
Interviewer

All right. So can you just start off by introducing yourself, who you are, what company you founded, and where are we right now, specifically here, but also on the planet? 00:00:01

Bill

Okay. I'm Bill Carvallo and I founded Wild Planet Foods in 2004. And we are here in northern California, the very northern corner in the middle of the Redwood National Park that you see behind us and its state as it was hundreds, thousands of years ago, untouched. And it's a beautiful, beautiful corner of this wild planet. 00:00:16
00:00:40

Interviewer

Great. That was great. I had to tweak the audio a little bit, so let's just do it one more time. 00:00:45

Bill

Yeah. I'm Bill Carvallo with Wild Planet Foods. I founded Wild Planet Foods in 2004, and we are in northern California in the very northern corner along the coast in the Redwood National Park that you see all around us here. This park is as it was hundreds of years ago before the Columbian exchange. This was here and now we're here as an appropriate place to have a brief interview about Wild Planet. 00:00:51
00:01:08
00:01:15

Interviewer

Awesome. Great. So talk a little bit about how Wild Planet got started and what your role was in creating the company. 00:01:22

Bill

I got into the seafood business in 1990, started a company that did all forms of seafood, and over time I saw what was happening at sea, that we were just too good at catching fish to the harm of the marine 00:01:31

Bill (continued)

environment. So in 2001, I decided to make a change and only source 00:01:49
sustainably produced products. In 2004, I decided to create a brand 00:01:59
name that I could identify our products with that would resonate the the
the more ecologically sensitive view of sourcing products. And that's 00:02:17
when Wild Planet was created. Great. 00:02:20

Interviewer

So let's tell me that story again. But tighten it a little bit in terms of 00:02:20
founding and then renaming Wild Planet in order to focus on the
sustainable aspect of it. Okay. 00:02:30

Bill

So I got into the seafood business in 1990, created a company that ended 00:02:33
up becoming Wild Planet Foods in 2004, and that was because of my
desire to to communicate the need for the industry to take from the
oceans while maintaining its wildness. And so Wild Planet was the name I 00:02:53
came up with to communicate that that we can take from nature and still
preserve it.

Interviewer

Great. Are you happy with that? Pretty much. Um, so tell me about the 00:03:04
scope of the business and what variety of products you offer.

Bill

Wild Planet today has about 40 different items that we sell at retail. Our 00:03:17
aim has been to help people have choices to to. Let me just start that 00:03:31
over again. Yeah, that's the nice thing about about not being live. 00:03:32

Interviewer

It's definitely not live. Hold on one second. Okay. See? Okay, You get. 00:03:35

Bill

Since 2004, while planet has has grown to to be well distributed 00:03:45
throughout the United States and and internationally as well. We have 00:03:55
about 40 different seafood items, all in shelf stable, canned, jarred or
pouch format. That's a sound bite in itself. 00:04:05

Interviewer

So maybe maybe turn this into a little bit more of a narrative in terms of 00:04:06
where did you start the business in terms of what products you offered
and then how did it grow from there? And you don't need to list 00:04:18
everything you you all offer, but maybe don't need the timeline. Give us 00:04:23
this sense of the arc of where you started and and, and what developed
from there. Okay. 00:04:31

Bill

Beginning and beginning in 2004. We just had tuna. We had albacore 00:04:35
tuna, which was pole in line sourced, and that canned tuna gained entry
into the marketplace. We followed that with Skipjack tuna. Salmon. 00:04:48
Sardines and then mackerel anchovies. And we've been adding things 00:04:53
that are actually low in the food chain. And so they're abundant and 00:05:02
underutilized. And those things are really the right choice for consumers 00:05:06
to consume. So while Planet has tried to to give guidance to consumers 00:05:11
and provide only the best choices of sustainably sourced product and
also to to eat more responsibly by shifting species to things that are more
abundant.

Interviewer

That was great. So now contrast that with the broader seafood industry. 00:05:29
What are you doing that is different than what the majority of the industry 00:05:36
does? What types of of products are you offering and what's the process 00:05:42

Interviewer (continued)

that you're using to both capture and and process them? Right. 00:05:54

Bill

What differentiates Wild Planet's sourcing methods from the from the 00:06:00

industry at large is really the the more narrow acceptance of sourcing

from fisheries that are entirely selective. They're not causing damage to 00:06:16

the habitat and they're not causing damage to the other species that are

non-target because seafood harvesting in general produces a great

amount of bycatch. Mortality discard. And those are meals that the 00:06:33

human race needs. And it's about diverse ecosystem that the entire 00:06:38

planet needs.

Interviewer

That's great. And I can enlarge upon that. Tell me tell me a little bit about 00:06:44

the species in terms of the small species versus the larger ones and and

how. You know, I think most people kind of the fancy fishes, the fishes 00:06:54

you want to eat tend to be the larger ones that are really famous, but

you're going in a different direction. And just if you could contextualize 00:07:06

that a little bit, just explain briefly why is that more sustainable and why is

it why is it something that's good for your company?

Bill

Yeah. And there's still so that's sort of a, a, a follow, a follow up to a 00:07:19

previous comment. And then the comment I just made. There's a little 00:07:27

more to say there too.

Interviewer

Okay. Yeah. However you want to do it. 00:07:31

Bill

Okay. So let me see if I can wrap up the other one. Okay. In addition to to 00:07:33
having a different sourcing and a tighter sourcing policy of selective
fishing, Wild Planet also produces the edible seafood very differently. We 00:07:50
don't pre cook the tuna, clean the tuna, put it in a can. Now that's 00:07:54
dehydrated meat that needs water to be added. Then it's cooked again, 00:07:58
essentially boiling tuna in water. You pour that off and eat what's left and 00:08:02
the flavor is just not there, nor are the omega threes. And so Wild Planet 00:08:07
is crafted after my family tradition, my Portuguese grandparents canned
their own tuna by going to Eureka down here, bringing home 400 pounds
of tuna, cutting it out, putting it in the jars, cook it in a pressure cooker, in
a glass mason jar. That's the tuna I was raised with. And that's exactly 00:08:26
what we have in Wild Planet cans. And that's the the secret sauce to our 00:08:31
success is that people eat it once and they love it and don't want
anything else. So that's the follow up on the other one. 00:08:41

Interviewer

Yes. Great. 00:08:43

Bill

Now, now on the back to the species. Are you ready? Yes. The smaller 00:08:44
species. Sardines, anchovies. Herring. Mackerel. Those. Called forage 00:08:58
fish are things that that modern consumers aren't accustomed to eating.
And yet they're every bit as delicious as the larger fish. But there's the 00:09:10
barrier of. Well, they have skin and bones. Well, those are the good 00:09:18
things. And so our efforts at Wild Planet are to help people know how to 00:09:21
eat the products and to have the eating experience be so good because
the product quality is so high that they come to realize, well, I should
have been eating these all along.

Interviewer

That's great. Perfect. So you already hinted at this, but let's take a step back. And I want to I want to pull the redwoods into this also. But tell me about your family heritage and and tell me a little bit more about what this place means to you, not just the redwoods, but this part of the country. This is you grew up here. Just kind of emphasize that. And how have you kind of stepped back into your cultural heritage to find this sustainable ideology behind the company?

Bill

My grandparents immigrated to Humboldt County right around World War One. They were from the Azores Islands. Those islands are fish centric. They're also whale centric. And the reason they came to Humboldt County is because there were two whaling stations here in the in the 19th century. So the early Portuguese immigrants came for that. Afterwards, those were closed. And there there were jobs in lumber and a dairy. And that's where my father worked. And this area is is very similar to the Azores Islands. It's wet, it's foggy, it rains everything's green, and it feels so lush. And the environment here is quiet, serene, and it is what the human experience on this planet can be. And I think it's it's a good place for Wild Planet to have germinated. And our goal is, is to help preserve places like this, whether it's above land or whether it's underwater, underwater, most of the oceans are still like this and can be preserved. If if we act wisely and work with them in wisdom.

Interviewer

That's great. So tell me a little bit about the network of fishermen that Wild Planet works with and how you decide on who your producers and partners are.

Bill

While planet. Yeah.

00:12:06

Interviewer

Let's take a break.

00:12:13