



MEDIA RELEASE

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Mayor Jacobs Small Business Series Highlights Cruze Farm

KNOXVILLE, Tenn.—Knox County Mayor Glenn Jacobs interviewed Colleen Bhatti of Cruze Farm as part of his small business series. The Knox County dairy farm sells milk, and ice cream at area stores while also operating ice cream parlors and pop-up locations throughout the region.

Cruze Farm has been in business for more than 40 years, first only selling milk and then growing into the operation it is today.

“My dad is a fourth-generation dairy farmer, and his dream was to one day, put his name on a bottle of milk. He told my mom that dream and she said: ‘What’s stopping you,’ so they started bottling milk in 1981,” said Colleen Bhatti

Bhatti’s parents, Earl and Cheri Cruze, know that although running a dairy farm isn’t easy, it’s something their family is passionate about and successfully selling ice cream became their way of sustaining the farm.

“My dad has tried every single way to make a dairy farm break even. It’s a really hard business to be in and so in 1992 they opened an ice cream shop at the old farmer’s market and the first day they were open my dad scooped 1,700 cones of ice cream, and they said ‘this works.’ Selling ice cream really works” said Bhatti

In 2004, with the success of their ice cream and milk sales, Cruze Farm expanded and purchased 300 additional acres to accommodate their future plans while also placing a conservation easement on the land, ensuring it can never be developed for commercial use.

Bhatti’s husband Manjit makes pizza and other items at their Cruze Farm Pizza Barn inside the industrial park spot, but you can still get ice cream, milk and other dairy products there and at the downtown Knoxville location and the pop-up shops.

Bhatti and the Mayor Jacobs discussed the vital role branding can play in businesses, why entrepreneurial commitment matters, and why keeping the business local is the right fit for Cruze Farm.

To find out more, check out the [video](#).

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