Episode 70: All Bone Broth is Not Created Equal
with Justin Mares of Kettle and Fire
Katie: This episode is brought to you by Perfect Supplements. This is a new supplement company that I really love, I've recently discovered them. Their products are made in the USA. They make all-natural, nutrient dense superfood supplements at incredibly reasonable prices. So I found this company really helps make it possible for families to eat a nutrient packed all-natural diet without breaking the bank. And even better, they offer bulk discounts. So if you have a big family, this has really helped our budget. You can buy all their amazing supplements like liver, collagen, even fermented kale and get up to 35% off with bulk orders. If you use the code wellnessmama10 at perfectsupplements.com you can also get an additional 10% off of your order on top of that. Definitely check them out.

Katie: The other sponsor for this episode is the “Wellness Mama Cookbook,” and yes, that is my cookbook. But I wanted to specifically talk about it for a second because I spent a lot of time compiling this cookbook as a resource for busy moms. As a mom myself, I know that you just don't have extra time to spend hours and hours each day in the kitchen, and this is why the cookbook contains all of our family-favorite recipes. Many of them you can make in under half an hour using only one pan, so you can save on the dishes as well, and they have sneaky veggies, which use veggies in place of a lot of the refined ingredients in many foods. I know that your family will love the recipes as much as ours does, so grab it at any major bookstore, on Amazon, or check it out on wellnessmama.com.

Welcome to “The Healthy Moms Podcast.” I'm Katie from wellnessmama.com, and I'm here today with Justin Mares who, along with his brother Nick, is the founder of Kettle & Fire Broth, which is the first and only USDA grass-fed bone broth. And these brothers have been passionate about health their entire lives and they started Kettle & Fire in 2013 after looking for a high-quality bone broth and having trouble finding one. So the back story is, Justin's brother, Nick, tore his ACL and was looking for foods that would help with the healing and recovery process. And Justin’s an awesome brother, so he went online to try to find Nick some broth, which is great for recovery from those kind of injuries, and he could only find frozen bone broth, which was made from non-organic, non-grass-fed cattle and shipped in Styrofoam containers, which are terrible for the environment.

So we'll talk about the story more in depth, but the long story short is they decided to create a better option and their passion for creating a superior bone broth led them on this long journey to find the best recipe, the best bones, the best ingredients, and the best packaging. And the result of that journey is what is now Kettle & Fire Broth, which is available at many Whole Foods stores and also online, and it's a shelf-stable grass-fed broth, which I've been using a lot recently. So, Justin, welcome. Thank you for being here.

Justin: Thanks for having me. I'm super excited to be here.

Katie: Yeah, it's going to be awesome. So let's get started. How did you get into this broth business? I kind of gave an overview of the story, but take us on the journey with you.

Justin: Yeah. So I first heard about bone broth doing CrossFit. So being involved in the CrossFit community,
I'd kind of heard a couple of friends that were using it for recovery, were using it for different gut issues that specifically one of them was having, and I, at the time, was working in tech and just traveling all the time. And so it was something that I wanted and I went online to buy it. It's like, “I want this. I don't know that I want to spend $200 buying a bunch frozen stuff and have it sit in my freezer. I don't know about that.” So I said, "You know, there has to be a better way." You can buy almost any health food product that you want at Whole Foods or online these days. And so, after a ton of searching, I found that there was literally no high-quality bone broth available in a convenient format. And when Nick experienced his knee injury just a couple of weeks later, I also, I re-did the search again, went to try and find him some, make sure that it was good, made from grass-fed bones, was certified organic, all of that, and yet nothing existed. And so that's when Nick and I decided, "Hey, we should team up and do this bone broth company together," which at the time was called Bone Broths Co., which is possibly the worst name we could’ve come up with, so. Now, we're much happier with Kettle & Fire. But yes, that's how we got started.

Katie: Very cool. So I think probably a lot of people listening are familiar, at least in passing, with the benefits of bone broth. I've talked about them a lot. And certainly bone broth is very well documented for its use in traditional cultures around the world and many of them have, at their core, some version of bone broth, or meat with the bone in, or something kind of dish like that. So let's talk about the benefits of bone broth, and is there any modern research that backs them up?

Justin: Sure, yes. There's a lot of research backing up the specific amino acids and nutrients in bone broth. There's less done on the bone broth itself. That's actually something we're looking into, and talking to a couple of different academic institutions about doing studies around this. Because right now, where it stands, it's a product that a lot of cultures say this helps with recovering from illness, like your grandma’s chicken soup or chicken noodle soup, that's pretty prevalent in Eastern European and a lot of Jewish traditions, and Asia as well. There's a lot of stories around bone broth and then there's a lot of research around the efficacy of glycine, glutamine, gelatin, collagen, glucosamine, and all of these nutrients, that are present in bone broth, and yet there's no real single, authoritative study that shows or points to the benefits of bone broth, specifically, just yet. So I can talk a little bit about the research that is out there, if you'd like.

Katie: Yeah, that would be great.

Justin: Yeah. So there's a lot of interesting studies, including one that came out about a year ago, that points to the ability of gelatin, specifically, to attenuate or basically lower the effects of glucose. And so what this study showed is, they showed that when you ingest sugar or some high sugar foods, snacks, whatever they are, the results of... You know, the way that sugar acts on your blood stream, the way it spikes when you eat sugar alone versus when you eat sugar while also eating gelatin or glycine? Basically, your blood sugar spikes roughly 50% less than when you just eat sugar alone. And so that's a really interesting point, because it kind of points to the idea that when you're ingesting glycine or gelatin as part of a diet, even if you're eating something that might be little bit high in carbohydrates, your blood sugar is less likely to spike and less likely to trigger an inflammatory response or all of the negative things that we're trying to stay away from as health conscious people.

There's also been a lot of interesting research around glycine's impact around and usefulness in clearing out excess methionine. And methionine is something which can build up in your system when you eat large
quantities of eggs or muscle meat, and it's highly related to high homocysteine, which is a big risk factor for heart disease. And so glycine is required for the synthesis of glutathione and uric acid, which are important antioxidants which help clear out methionine. And so there's a lot of different theses, research, pointing towards the idea that, effectively, when you ingest glycine or gelatin when you're eating meat, it allows your body to process those and get a lot of the nutrients out of the meat without necessarily having some of the negative side effects, like methionine build up, that you see in a lot of people that eat just tons and tons of meat.

Katie: That's really interesting, and it's kind of neat. I'm excited for more research on this to backup what traditional cultures seem to have intuitively known for years. I feel like when... You can look at the history of so many cultures and see bone broth in some form, it's like there's an intuitive wisdom there, but I'm definitely a research nerd, so I love seeing the research now starting to back it up.

Justin: Yeah, same. I mean, you're completely right. There's definitely a lot of traditional wisdom. I also think that, just in general, there's a lot of research and a lot of studies pointing towards the idea that we are, as humans, meant to be eating multiple parts of the animal. Like, you get a lot of health benefits from eating all parts of the animal and not just cuts of muscle meat, like ground beef, or chicken breasts, or whatever over and over again. And so I think bone broth is a really, really key and easy way to incorporate some of the nutrients that you don't necessarily get in muscle meats into your diet.

Katie: Yeah, that's a great point, and we’re kind at an interesting point of history where we can actually just choose to eat the muscle meat, but if you look at our grandparents and certainly our great-grandparents they use the entire animal out of necessity, and they got probably a lot wider of a nutritional profile from their food by doing that. So I love that it's getting this resurgence. What are some of the compounds that you would find in bone broth that... So you talked about the gelatin and there are amino acids like proline and glycine. What kind of things will you find in broth?

Justin: Yeah. So, you'll find two things. So proteins and amino acids are the big things that separate bone broth from a lot of other health foods. So if you're eating organic vegetables or just cuts of muscle meat, what you're often not getting is a lot of the amino acids like glycosaminoglycans, or they're called GAGs, which include, like, glucosamine, glycine, all of these different amino acids that help with recovery, help with joint health, digestive health, and the like. You're also getting a lot of collagen protein, which doesn't necessarily exist in muscle protein. Where you'll find collagen, for the most part, is bones, connective tissue, tendons and often skin, which most people just don't incorporate into their diets. And so those are kind of the key nutrients, key proteins, key amino acids that make bone broth a really, really important and highly nutritious food, even for someone that eats pretty well otherwise.

Katie: Gotcha, okay. So I've been making bone broth for years and I have blogged about it. I think a lot of listeners may make their own bone broth, which is awesome, and I'm so glad to see so many people doing this. And a question I get a lot that I'm hoping you can answer for us is, when it comes to broth and whether it gels or not, because it seems like a lot of people have problems with getting it to gel or not gel. And what is it supposed to do? So can you talk about why broth gels and if that's a good or bad thing?
Justin: Yeah. So, to answer the second question, it is almost certainly a good thing. Now why it gels is because, often times as you're doing the long cook times, the collagen protein will breakdown into gelatin and then when that gelatin cools it binds together and creates that Jello-like substance, that Jello-like feel, that texture that you'll see in a lot of bone broth when it's cool. Now I have seen a couple reasons why a lot of bone broth won't gel. One is, different bone mix. So often times we found that when we cooked our bone broth a certain way, even if we were using the exact same bones but didn't cut them or didn't prepare them in a certain way, it wouldn't necessarily gel. And so we've see a lot of bone mixes, like if you just use femur bones alone, there's less a chance that the broth will actually gel, except when you use neck bones, toe, a mix of femur bones and kind of mix it up, I would say that your chances of getting a bone broth that gels is actually much better.

So we've seen that the length of the cook time greatly impacts the gel. I mean, we cook ours for 24 hours. If you do it at home and cook it for 48 hours or however long you want to do it, the longer you cook it the higher the chance that your bone broth is actually gonna gel, because you're letting the bones and the connective tissue break down more and more, which allows it to gel just even more. And so those are the two big factors that we've seen in terms of creating a bone broth that gels, is cook time and the mix of bones that you use.

Katie: Okay, cool. So let's talk about the mix that you guys use, because what I also think is unique is that you guys have beef broth, which I feel like the majority people, when they make it themselves, they start with chicken or turkey usually because I feel like beef is a little more tricky and there also tends to be more of a smell to it. So since you guys use beef bones, what kind of bones do you use and how do you make sure that they're high-quality and that it's going to have those same properties?

Justin: Yeah. So we source all of our bones from family ranchers that use organic and completely pasture raised 100% grass-fed animal raising practices. So we source from a network of these family farms, mostly throughout the Midwest. We pull and use a mix of neck, femur, and ankle and toe bones. And then we treat and prepare the bones in a certain way to maximize the availability of the bone marrow and the connective tissue, and to make sure that our bone broth gels as often as possible. And so what we do...

In the early days, as we were starting this, it was kind of driving us crazy, because we didn't realize exactly some of the nuances that go into making bone broth at a large scale. And so we found that some our boxes would gel, others wouldn't for whatever reason, and we’d realize that because of the way that we are making bone broth, in this 2,000 gallon steel drums, like completely different process than you making a quart or two at home, and that's because the bone's kind of settle at the bottom, and so we found that a lot of the product we were making would gel when it was first packaged, but as you got closer to the top of the kettle, where the water was a little bit farther away from the bones, we were getting product that just wasn't gelling as well. And so we’ve since fixed that, but we've learned all of these different things like, how to cut femur bones, how to expose more marrow to the broth and to the water as you're doing these long cook times. All of these things impact exactly how much our bone broth gels, and it's why our product has only gotten better and better, and is still be only one out there that when you open it, pour it in a cup, put it in the fridge for 15, 20 hours it will gel up just like a homemade bone broth.

Katie: So you just mentioned marrow, let's go a little bit deeper with that. So explain what bone marrow is and why you would or wouldn't want it in broth.
Justin: Yeah. So bone marrow is the rich fatty substance that is in mostly femur bones, spinal column of not only these animals but also humans. And so bone marrow, it's about 97% fat. And there's been a lot of really interesting studies that show that the fat tissue and bone marrow, it has a whole bunch of really, really healthy nutritious hormones, lipids, different things that promote health and wellness. And so the more that you can expose that bone marrow to the actual bone broth and let it seep into the broth itself, the better off it is and the better the broth will actually gel, from our experience.

Katie: Gotcha. And those may be more difficult things to replicate at home, like you said, it's probably simpler on some levels to make it at home in smaller batches, but it may be hard to source things like neck bones, and femur bones that have been cut, and things like that you guys are able to do on a larger scale like that.

Justin: Yeah, absolutely. I mean, most people at home, no matter how big of a bone broth fan you are, are not gonna be splitting femur bones, and cutting them in different ways, and exposing the marrow to the broth, and all of that. They're just not, because it's time intensive, it's hard, and it's kind of messy. So that's what we do to get those extra nutrients into the bone broth.

Katie: Yeah, definitely. So let's walk through the process a little bit. Maybe people listening are familiar with making broth at home, but let's take them through the process of how broth is made and also the differences of making it at home versus, like, a commercial thing. You touched on that a little bit, but take us through that process.

Justin: Yeah. So what we do is, we source the bones from 100% grass-fed, grass-finished animals, all raised using organic raising practices. So we take these bones, we then take all organic ingredients, including apple cider vinegar, throw it into a kettle and then slow simmer it on low heat for 20 plus hours. So usually we do 24, 28 hour cook times. So after going through this process, what you're left with is a broth, and all these vegetables, and the bones that have been now broken down somewhat and cooked down. And so we then filter out the vegetables and the bones that we've cooked, separate them, then you have this super-nutrient-rich broth. We then package that into our packaging under a vacuum, so that there's no air where it's being packaged, and that way you can get no germs, no bugs. There's nothing that can get into the carton as we pour the broth into our cartons, seal them, and then send them to our warehouse.

And so that's why, that last step, where we're taking the product that is clean, that has just been cooked for a long period of time, when we fill that into the carton under a vacuum, that's why we have a shelf-stable product, meaning the product doesn't need to be refrigerated until you open it, because there's literally not even air in the carton. Like, there's nothing in the carton for the broth to react to and thus go bad.

Katie: And that makes you guys unique, right?

Justin: Yeah.
Katie: Because I'm familiar with quite a few broths that are, like we talked about earlier, refrigerated or frozen, they get shipped in big containers. And you guys are the first to market, that I know of at least, with a grass-fed product like this that is shelf-stable, which definitely sets you apart.

Justin: Yeah, exactly. And we wanted to make sure... You can achieve shelf-stability through a couple of different ways. You can add preservatives, you can add additives. We didn't want to do any of that. So it took us a really long time to nail down this process and figure out how we can make a broth that is shelf-stable, still gels, relatively high protein, and still delicious, while also having the shelf stability aspect and without adding any preservatives or any of those kind of unnatural gross ingredients.

Katie: Yeah, and the part that I love about, especially with broth, I actually have relatives who used to can their own broth in jars. And I've had people ask, like, "Well, doesn't that kill all the nutrients?" And, when you're talking about vegetables or certain foods, it can, when you overcook it, or can it, or have it under high pressure, but with broth you're cooking it at a high temperature for a long time anyway, and so it's a very natural part of the process. So you're not damaging any of the nutrients and you're actually helping preserve them in the way you guys do that, which is really fascinating.

Justin: Yep, exactly.

Katie: Hey guys, I wanna pause this episode for just a minute to again thank the sponsor for this episode that makes it possible, perfectsupplements.com. They make these amazing, natural, nutrient dense super foods, made in the USA, and incredibly reasonably priced. They are recent additions to our diet, and I'm finding that every product of theirs I love, that I've tried. A favorite in our house right now, especially among my husband, who does not like liver no matter how I cook it, no matter what I do, is their Perfect Desiccated Liver Supplement, which is a capsule. So, if you have listened for long, you know that I use organ meats in our home a lot and I consider it nature's multivitamin, if it's from a really good source.

If you have a hard time with the taste of liver, like my husband does, you may want to try their desiccated liver capsules. Other products of theirs we've been using recently are collagen, their greens powders and even fermented kale, because I will admit I don't actually love kale. It's just one of those greens I don't love, and so it has made it possible to get it in our diet. Well, back to their liver. It's made from 100% grass-fed cattle and nothing else. Their liver is packed with vitamin A, B12 and iron and this is the same product that has been recommended by Tim Ferriss and Dave Asbury, and I finally broke down and tried it, and I love it and can see why they recommend it.

So I actually found, especially with pregnancy and nursing, that liver capsules like theirs can really help with energy levels and help mental clarity, which of course all moms need. So I wanted you guys to be able to try it and love it as much as I have, and they've offered an amazing discount. So you can get 10% off of any order by going to perfectsupplements.com/wellnessmama and using the coupon code wellnessmama10. But the best part, if you're from a big family or even if you only have a couple of kids, you can order in bulk and get even bigger...
discounts.

So they offer 25% off if you order three bottles of their supplements, and 30% off if you order six bottles. So if you combine this with the coupon code wellnessmama10, you're saving 35% and 40%. And you can mix and match these to get a volume discount, a great way to get discounts on their prices, and some of the best prices I have found on these supplements, especially USA made high-quality ones. So just go to perfectsupplements.com/wellnessmama to get all the details.

This episode is also sponsored by “The Wellness Mama Cookbook.” And as I mentioned before, this is a resource that I worked for hundreds and hundreds of hours on to create a guide that would actually be useful, practical, and really easy to use for moms who are busy and who don't have hours and hours each day to spend in the kitchen, but who also prioritize cooking real food. And my kids helped me test these recipes, so they are definitely family approved. They're also mom approved, and here's why. Like I said, I am an incredibly busy mom and I don't have a lot of extra time, so the majority of recipes can be made in under 30 minutes and a lot of them can be made in only one pan, because I am personally not a big fan of dishes, and would rather not do any more than I have to.

So you can check out the cookbook at any major bookstore, on Amazon, or on wellnessmama.com. It contains over 200 family-friendly recipes as well as some meal plans, some guidance on planning, and some how-to for getting your family on board with eating healthy. I also like to tell people that it's a completely grain-free cookbook, but if you don't avoid grains, you can easily add in things like rice and pasta to dishes for most meals. What I did, though, is I replaced a lot of refined ingredients in the recipes with vegetables. Our family does not eat any refined flour or refined sugar, so I replaced those in recipes with vegetables that kids love, like zucchini, and cabbage, and sweet potatoes. And there's everything from lasagna, to chicken fingers, to shepherd’s pie and all of our family favorites. You check them out, like I said, any major bookstore or at wellnessmama.com.

Now, back to the episode.

Katie: Yeah, so definitely not all broth is created equal. And I talk a whole lot about, obviously, sourcing, if you're going to make your own, source the bones from a really high quality source. But let's talk about that, about what are the factors someone should consider when they're either making or buying bone broth?

Justin: Yeah. So I would say, two factors, when you're making it, ingredient quality is the first and by far the most important. I mean, if you're buying bones from factory farmed animals, which hopefully you're not, if you're doing this on your own, you're gonna get a lot of the toxins and some of the negative things that the cattle have experienced in their factory farm diet. And that's probably not something that any of us want to incorporate into our diets. So first and foremost, ingredient quality is of utmost importance, and the second piece is the cook time. And so when you're considering making this on your own, I would just make sure that you have the right ingredients and can afford to sort of monitor the bone broth that you're cooking for an extended period of time. When you're looking at buying it, again, I would think ingredient quality is of the utmost importance, and the second piece is, not only cook time but what ingredients and how they process the bone broth.
So there's a lot companies, Pacific Foods being one, where they say they have a chicken bone broth, they actually take a bone paste. So that's a paste made from a bunch of mashed up chicken bones and, kind of, crappy cuts of chicken meat. They mash all of that up, they flash-cook that paste in water, then they add maltodextrin and a couple other additives to the product so that they can say they have a shelf-stable bone broth. Now, to me, that's not necessarily a product that you still wanna be incorporating into your life, just because of the additives, because the low ingredient quality. And so I think that it's really important to look at those two factors when you're considering buying one or making it on your own.

Katie: Yeah, I agree. That's so so important. So let's talk about that a little more, how do you... Because there are a lot of bone broth products in grocery stores, or broth or stocks, they're called different things, in those kind of Tetra Packs, which are similar in size and shape to yours. But let's talk about how they stack up and why, like you just mentioned, they may not be a good choice and you may not be getting the benefits by choosing one of those kinds.

Justin: Yeah. So it's a good question. So effectively, what you're seeing is a lot of these large companies kind of had a race to the bottom in terms of quality and price, when it comes to a beef broth or a beef stock. And so all of these companies, for their broth and stocks, they will do quick cook times, they will add a ton of sodium, a ton of what they'll call natural flavorings, to get flavor in their normal broth and stock, because both of them are flash-cooked for two to four hours at really high heat, and they're just churning through these products because most people are just using them as a flavoring agent in a soup, vegetables, rice, whatever.

Now that bone broth is becoming something consumers are starting to care about and something that they're getting excited about, these big companies have kind of jumped on the band-wagon. So companies have said, "Oh, we'll add a tiny bit of apple cider vinegar to our existing chicken stock or our existing chicken broth, and we'll call it a bone broth." Now the USDA allows that because they haven't release any sort of guidelines yet around what is considered a bone broth. And so if you're Pacific, you just add apple cider vinegar to your existing chicken stock, call it a chicken bone broth, and all of a sudden you have a product that is selling pretty well because it's very, very on trend and it's something consumers are demanding.

Now, still to this day, we've been around for about 15 months now, we're still the only company out there with a shelf-stable bone broth product that doesn't have any unnatural ingredients in it, the gels when you take it home, that's made from 100% grass-fed grass-finished cattle bones. And those are qualities that are really important to us and ones that I think will matter a lot as more and more consumers become educated around what is important, why bone broth is delicious, why it's important, and why it's good for your health.

Katie: I agree. And I'm excited that you guys are going to be, and you already are, in quite a few stores, to be a better alternative, even for those who are just trying to buy broth off the shelf. And maybe for people listening, I know for a long time I was kind of stuck in a bone broth rut, where I would use it in soups or just drink it on its own, but there are so many creative ways to use bone broth and I know you guys have some really cool stories from people who have used your broth. So let's talk about that. How do you get creative with bone broth and incorporate it into your life?
Justin: Yeah, great question. So we have a ton of customers that use it to make soup, they'll use it in different recipes, a lot of them will add different things in the morning like ginger, garlic, Himalayan sea salt, chili oil, egg yolk, whatever it is. We've heard tons of stories of customers that have doctored it up and started drinking it in the morning. And so those are the main use cases we see, is either do something really interesting with it, use it as a morning drink, or use it in cooking to replace a more standard beef stock, or beef broth, or what have you. One of my favorites is, I just heard last week from a customer that he uses, I think they're called chaga mushrooms. So he uses chaga mushrooms, a little bit of turmeric, and blends that together with some sort of probiotic to make what he calls his bone broth morning power smoothie. It sounds really interesting, like, I'm planning to try it myself just because I wanna see what it tastes like. But he said that he drinks it every morning, he loves it. He said it's replaced his morning coffee. And we hear stories like that a good bit, which are pretty cool. It's just really interesting to see people applying their creativity and their own kind of flare to a product that's so traditional.

Katie: Yeah, I agree. I actually have an e-book that's gonna be releasing soon that I used your broth in developing, but it's an entire e-book about broth and it's called “Broth for Breakfast,” and it kind of follows my own journey with that as well. In fact, I have a recipe that's kind of a hybrid of, like, the Bulletproof Coffee idea and your bone broth, and so instead of coffee you're using broth but you're blending in all the good fats, and some super food spices, and that kind of stuff. And it really is awesome, so much energy in the morning when you do that.

Justin: Yeah, completely. I mean, I personally, I like to use ghee, I've done coconut oil on occasion, and it's just delicious.

Katie: Absolutely. So you guys have people who are just drinking this every day. Basically, it's become very much part of their daily routine?

Justin: Oh, absolutely. We have customers that drink an entire carton every morning before they go to work, or they'll drink half in the morning and then take half to work and use it as an afternoon snack. We have people that drink 30 to 40 cartons a month, which is a lot of bone broth.

Katie: That's impressive.

Justin: Yeah, I know. It's pretty cool.

Katie: Very cool. So if someone is just getting started into bone broth, or maybe they've seen the trend, or they're seeing the benefits, and they want to get started, and they don't want to make their own, they can obviously order online from you guys. But talk about what stores you are in also, so people can find you locally if they're able to.
Justin: Yes, so we are in Whole Foods all up and down, The West Coast. So specifically, The Rocky Mountain region, so Utah, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, as well as the Pacific Northwest. And so you can find us in Whole Foods there, otherwise we're in about 300 other retailers mostly up and down The West Coast. So if you wanna try and find us, we'll be in a lot of smaller, kind of natural, independent supermarkets, if you're looking for us, just in an independent spot.

Katie: Very cool. And the part that amazed me when I started researching it, because I've always been very much a DIYer and I've made my own broth for years, and so your broth, I feel like is at a really good price. It's lower than a lot of the refrigerated ones, because you don’t have to ship it on refrigeration, but it's super high-quality and I found that to actually make a similar broth would cost me more because, since I don't have the economies of scale that you guys have in making 2000 gallons, it actually costs more for me locally to buy the bones to make it myself than just to get the convenient kind from you.

Justin: Yep. We found the same thing. A lot of customers actually say that, which works for us.

Katie: Yeah. Have you done much research into broth and traditional cultures being used as, like, a first food for baby because I always introduce broth to my babies first and I've read some, at least traditional viewpoints, that it might help to prepare the gut for food. Do you have customers who are doing that as well?

Justin: We do. We have a lot of customers that use it for their under three-year-old children, so babies to toddlers. I personally, I don't have kids just yet, and so I can't really speak to firsthand accounts of seeing how well it works, but we have a lot of customers, a lot of mother customers that have said just how much they enjoy our product and how much their kids like it, which is great.

Katie: Yeah, I'm excited. I hope that that'll be a trend that continues in the next generation, because seeing kids who like bone broth so much, and even more like the millennial generation, there seem to be quite a few of them who have an interest in broth and more of this return to traditional foods. I'm hoping that's a trend that'll continue to grow.

Justin: Yes, me as well.

Katie: What do you see as, kind of like, the future for bone broth and what's the future with you guys for bone broth?

Justin: Yeah, for us, our future is pretty right clear right now. I see so much interest in bone broth, I see so much interest in traditional foods, traditional ways of incorporating these key nutrients back into your diet. And so we're just gonna create more and more products that fulfill that. Right now, we have just a beef bone broth, we'll be launching a chicken bone broth. It's the most no-brainer second product of possibly any company ever, it feels like. We’ve had tons of people ask about that. We'll be launching more flavors, we'll be launching different kind of bone broths that are more in the ready to pour and drink family. Like, you mentioned you
blend some different fats into it. So we're gonna be working on a couple of different bone broths that have some fats that are pre-blended into it, that we've tested in our kitchen and are amazing. So we're just gonna be moving more down the path of creating products that make it easier for more and more people to incorporate bone broth into their daily lives and into their daily routines.

Katie: That's awesome, and I can't wait to try all the new ones. One question I get a lot, people read about the benefits of broth and they'll read how to make it, or they read about gelatin and collagen and how those are so helpful for the body, and the question I get is, “Is there a vegetarian option for this? I don't like to eat meat.” And I have my own answer to that, but I'd love to hear your take on it too.

Justin: Yeah. So funny enough, we've definitely gotten this question. But funny enough we have a lot of customers, maybe not a lot but certainly several hundred, that are vegetarians who say that this product is the only product that they will eat that's actually a meat product, and they do it for the nutrition and also because there's not really the ethical quandary that a lot of vegetarians have when it comes to bone broth. Like, many vegetarians say they don't eat meat because for ethical reasons, while with bone broth, we're literally making calories, nutrition, and giving you a real food source, yet we're doing that making use of a product that is traditionally thrown away, like the bones. And so we found that some non-insignificant portion of customers will actually drink this even if they are vegetarians. So I'd love to hear your answer, because that's for sure that's what I've seen.

Katie: That's fascinating, yeah, I think, especially for you guys because you're using pasture-raised cattle so they were even in a humane environment when they were alive, and like you said it's just going to be wasted, so you're actually helping the environment in several ways by using those in a way that provides nutrition to people. And my answer has always been that based on the research I've seen, there's not a plant food that replicates the exact effects of gelatin and collagen in animal products, and I wish for the sake of those readers that there was, but I am yet to find any research that there is.

Justin: Yep, and I have not seen anything either.

Katie: Yeah, I think there's a few compounds that derive, there's one from seaweed, and some things that will act in the way of gelatin in a recipe to cause the gelling, but they don't act the same in the body. And I think that's the important key, is, if just your goal is to get a texture in a recipe, yeah, you can replicate that, but if your goal is to get proline, and glycine, and collagen, and gelatin, I'm sorry but I don't know of a way.

Justin: Yeah. Yeah, unfortunately.

Katie: Awesome. Well, I just want to make sure readers know where to find you. So I always go to kettleandfire.com and if they go to kettleandfire.com/wellnessmama they can find out about you guys and about the company. Are you on social media? Where else can they find you?
Justin: We are, yes. We're on Instagram @KettleandFire, we're also on Pinterest, Facebook. All of the big social platforms, but I would say Instagram and Facebook are probably our two biggest by far.

Katie: Awesome, and hopefully soon you'll be in a lot of stores, they can find you in their local neighborhood as well.

Justin: Absolutely.

Katie: Very cool. Well, Justin, thank you for being here and for talking about broth. It's definitely one of my favorite topics and a food that is in our house all the time. And I appreciate your work in evangelizing broth and in explaining all the benefits today.

Justin: Fantastic. Thanks so much for having me.

Katie: And thanks to all of you for listening and I'll see you next time on “The Healthy Moms Podcast.”

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