

*WITH SATYA  
BOTCHA*

*SOW FOODS CO-FOUNDER*

9<sup>th</sup> January 2023  
FULL INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

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I had the opportunity to interview one of the co-founders of SOW FOODS, a plant-based food company focused on reducing the human carbon footprint and animal suffering. In this interview, we discussed the company's history, their mission, and their plans for the future. The co-founder, Mr. Satya Botcha has shared insights on their inspiration for starting the company, the ways in which they are making a difference in the environment and animal welfare, and their plans for expanding their distribution and product line. The interview also touched on topics such as the co-founders' background, the company's competitive advantage, and their approach to balancing quality and cost. Here is a transcript of our conversation.

Date: 9<sup>th</sup> Jan 2023 at 2:30PM

Location: Suda Coffee Bakery, 243 Eversholt St, London NW1 1BE.

CODE	DESCRIPTION	INDICATION
•	Interviewer	Arabi Hadfi
o	Co-Founder	Satya Botcha

- **It's always interesting to learn about the origin stories. How did you meet Ms. Dan, your business partner?**

- o Yeah basically I was a friend with Dan since the first year at the uni, and actually SOW FOODS is our 3rd business together. We had a startup about recycling plastic, we managed to get a partnership from Bosch and Siemens Germany.

Our second startup was about an app for language learning. And SOW FOODS are the 3rd one.

Since our early days at the university, we had the good bond even if we are from different cultures, and we found the entrepreneurship exciting, though we knew that behind the fancy word there is a lot of hard time and challenges (laughing).

- **How do you spend your time in SOW FOODS?**

- o To be honest, I don't really have a daily routine that I am following. Startups requires the more than a full time focus, I have been sleeping and dreaming that am finishing some

tasks. I would prefer to say that I have a full dedication to SOW FOODS, completing new tasks everyday.

- **Other than making great food, how do you make people excited about SOW FOODS?**
  - What's special about our products is that they are minimally processed, fully organic, and with zero micro-processed ingredients. Even in our kitchen, we never use any plastic at all. not even a cutting board.
- **Is there anything you are adding to SOW FOODS soon that you are excited about?**
  - Yeah, basically at SOW FOODS, we try to calculate the risks so well, our philosophy is about being slow and steady. So basically we have been testing some new products in the last few months, and soon they will be released to the public.
  - I am also excited for the next part of our plan which is about the amplification of distribution and sales. so we do want to make sure that we are ready for that day, otherwise all what we have built for years will be destroyed in one day.
- **On the website, I have seen that you are making meals with more than 90% less land and water consumption and less carbon emission; how do you do that?**
  - Our data is based on studies from Oxford University, and we have plenty of data available publicly on internet. Most of people still doesn't know how can the plant based meats be saving a lot of animal suffer, in addition to saving a lot of natural resources. and how it will down crease the human carbon footprint by 90% on the natural resources.
- **What do SOW FOODS do that competitors don't?**
  - The plant based food is still a blue ocean industry, though, the competition is more about the meat suppliers, so we have to convince the customer to choose the plant based meat over the animal meat, and ensure that we will deliver the same taste and textures, in addition to use nutritive ingredients.
- **Through SOW FOODS, what problem do you want to solve?**
  - Through our business, we are trying reduce the human carbon footprint, lower the animal meat consumption to reduce the animal suffering and human ethics. There is a spot we human

goes blind, because everyone on the street is against animal suffering, but no remembers that when standing in front of the supermarket shelves and choosing the different cuts.

- **What is your vision for SOW FOODS?**

- The big picture is about removing the suffering from the planet with ensuring a healthy society.

- **What is your competitive advantage? And how do you develop new benefits to differentiate?**

- at SOW FOODS, we control quality over anything else. We are different to our competitors by manufacturing everything by ourselves.

- **How long it took you to develop an innovative idea?**

- there were no specific time for developing the idea. It all started when I turned to the plant based meat, it was challenging to find meat substitute, no much choices.
- I wouldn't call it as a market gap because we weren't based on any studies, we were based on our experience and we were sure that it will be a winning business.

- **How hard was the first move?**

- The hard part is not acting, because even if acting with the wrong move will generate a new situation, and always new situations are a chance to gain new experience in life generally. Just move.

- **How do you keep the motivation? Especially at the beginning**

- The motivation is coming from the personal values, the values in life, and the nature of the business is a motivation by itself.

- **With the growth of the business, you will need to perform with more resources, so are you / or do you have an outsourcing plan?**

- outsourcing is something really easy by today, we are already outsourcing the accounting and the finance, we outsource the branding, and we outsource a lot o thing but we will never outsource the keys of our business, which is the production part to keep control on the quality.

- **Are you open to convert your business for licensing ?**

- Maybe, or partnerships, but we are sure that we will never partner with a party delivering an unhealthy food, like the fried fast food chains for example.

Actually we are a part of a convention with a startup that provides a plant based cheese, so we are selling bundles together, and having crossed customers.

- **What is the biggest risk SOW FOODS has taken?**

- it is about not raising fundings, we don't want to open our equities to any external factors.

Even with the tight budgets, we have been thinking to do a crowd funding, but we decided not to go with it. which I am happy with right now

- **How are you taking decisions?**

- Basically in term of equities, we are 50/50, in term of sharing responsibilities, we get each others opinions, on critical decisions we ask multiple parties, the RND section is for my partner, I am working more on the operations and the final call.

- **How important is the review of the customers? And what are the main ways of communication between SOW FOODS and customers?**

- We value a lot the customers review, we are giving a high priority to the customer's happiness, we get real feedbacks from face to face customers.

- **How do you balance performing a good quality product while keeping the costs low?**

- Our full focus is on the quality first, not the cost. The cost will go down by itself with the growth of the business.

- **With all the trends happening around and the fast change of trends every time, is there any plan to catch up with the trends?**

- For us, we never try to surf on trends, our focus is on quality and authenticity. The trends are changing quick and it's not the best idea for a product consumable everyday.

- **What is the priority of marketing budget for SOW FOODS ?**
  - At the moment, the marketing is low in priority because we believe in the good product that it can sell itself. our marketing is to raise the brand awareness, which will be happening in the amplification phase.
- **In general, what is the upcoming strategic orientation in the market ?**
  - Based on our experience, the B2C market is really hard in our industry. so we are selling more through the conventions, and we are moving forward the B2B market.
- **It sounds like SOW FOODS has a lot of exciting plans for the future. Thank you so much for sharing your insights with me.**

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