

2 ANGRY CATS

The cats may be angry, but Josh Williams is happy to be here. He started experimenting with hot sauce recipes at home as a hobby in 2019. Things intensified when he brought his experiments into work for his coworkers to try. A few of his colleagues expressed interest in purchasing the product, so he started to think about selling at farmers markets in the area.

At the time, he was working as a medical claims processor for the Department of Veterans Affairs, spending time after work and on weekends cooking up and selling bottles of sauce. After about two years of pulling double duty, he plunged full-time into 2 Angry Cats in October 2021.

Josh remembers being excited to make even \$100 per day when he first started working markets. It just felt good to have people show interest in the product. Since then, he has continued to build a customer base, and now vends at seven markets around the area and sells wholesale at a number of grocery stores.

While the competition is fiery, he has found the local hot sauce community to be a supportive one. In the early days, Dave Silagy of Silagy Sauce, another VFM vendor, offered tips and guidance. When he can, Josh sources ingredients from local farms. Of the growers at the VFM, he has used hot peppers from Flat Tack Farm and Bautista Farms and strawberries from Marquam Hill Berries.

He likes that this job allows him to be outside, interact with the community, and get a bit of exercise. The upside to having a 9-5 was a steady and consistent paycheck. But, Josh said, "I would take this any day."

