



# “ Road Kill: Judging The Edibility Of Found Meat ”

Red Louvish

\* FULL TRANSCRIPT \*

Hosted By Marjory Wildcraft  
[www.TheGrowNetwork.com](http://www.TheGrowNetwork.com)

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## Home Grown Food Summit

### Transcript – Red Louvish - Road Kill: Judging The Edibility Of Found Meat

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Hello and welcome to the Home Grown Food Summit. This is Marjory Wildcraft. This summit is brought to you by The Grow Network, which is a community of people who are stopping the destruction of the earth via homegrown food on their dinner tables. Our next presentation is not so much about how to grow your own food, it's more of a foraging specialty. Red Louvish, he's a good friend of mine actually. He is an Israeli immigrant to the United States and landed in Austin, Texas. He got a job as a courier and noticed that there was a lot of roadkill along the roads and being a courier and not making a lot of money, he started experimenting with eating roadkill. And in Texas, especially Central Texas, there is extremes of heat and cold and wet and dry. And so Red has really, over the years, gotten a lot of information and insight on what's edible and what isn't edible and how to determine that. And there's actually a lot of free meat out there and it's very, very high-quality meat that is available.

And yeah, this is very useful. Even right now, I have another friend of mine that has almost like a small side business where in the fall through the spring, he just goes around his local community every morning and he picks up roadkill and processes it and has plenty of meat for his family and then a lot of other meat to barter and trade with. Of course, you're going to want to watch the legalities in your area. But this is a really, really good skill to know when you can eat that meat and when you should leave it alone. But join me with Red Louvish and learn some of these distinctions for yourself.

Marjorie Wildcraft: Hi, I'm Marjory Wildcraft and I'm the founder of The Grow Network which is a global organization of people who are producing and preparing their own food and medicine. And occasionally, you might be driving down the road and find a dead animal which is actually better than producing your own as found me, right? So, this particular video, we're going to discuss how to judge the edibility of that meat and also how to process it. And with me today, I have somebody who's an expert in roadkill. This is Red Louvish, and Red has been very interested in roadkill for a long time from a sustainability perspective of this is just meat that's being wasted and started doing a lot of research on it. He also had a job as a courier, so he was traveling all over the place delivering packages, and as a part of that job, he came across roadkill.

Red Louvish: Lots of roadkill.

Marjory Wildcraft: Lots of roadkill from time to time and so started processing it, eating it, doing more research and learning about the edibility. So, he's got years and years of experience --

Red Louvish: About 10, 12 years.

Marjory Wildcraft: -- of --

Red Louvish: More or less.

Marjory Wildcraft: -- processing and eating roadkill. So, I do want to say for this video, eating roadkill in the United States, some states it's legal, and some states it's illegal and some states there's gray area. Sometimes you need to talk to your game warden or other officials. It really depends where you are and you're going to want to do

your research on what's true in your area. Right now, we're filming in Texas and it is illegal to process roadkill, so we've taken and purchased a goat from a neighbor and we will be processing that as an example for this video. So, here we are with a goat and we know it's freshly killed because we just killed it. And so Red, if I came across this animal on the road, what would be the first thing that I would do?

Red Louvish: Well, the first thing you want to do is make sure the animal is actually dead, especially if you're approaching a deer, a big buck. They're not always dead and you can get injured. You can get kicked and bitten and it's not nice. So, if it looks completely fresh, it may not be dead so maybe poke it with a stick. Approach carefully, just be sure that the animal is dead.

Marjory Wildcraft: So, Red, what are some of the signs or indications that we've got a really fresh animal? If I came on the road and it had just been killed, how would I know that?

Red Louvish: Generally speaking, if the animal looks like aside from the fact that it's lying on the road dead, it could actually just walk up and go away, then it's fresh. You see that the fur is nice and clean and still shiny. The eyes are nice and bright. There's no cloudiness. There's no rigor mortis set.

Marjory Wildcraft: Yeah, the joints?

Red Louvish: Everything is really easy to move. So, it is a fresh animal. It won't stay like this for a very long time. Rigor mortis should set within half hour to an hour, maybe even less. The eyes start getting cloudy within a few hours. All these things are going to change fairly rapidly.

Marjory Wildcraft: Okay. Well, we're going to let this goat sit for a little bit and we'll come back to you in just a short time and see some of the changes that have occurred. Wow, so we've had this goat outside for how many hours has it been now?

Red Louvish: Yeah, so it's been about three and a half hours. And we're starting to see a few changes.

Marjory Wildcraft: The temperature has been?

Red Louvish: About 75.

Marjory Wildcraft: About 75.

Red Louvish: It's been in the sun and in the shade a little bit. So, one of the most noticeable things is, and this actually took a little while to set up. The rigor mortis is not completely set up but it is harder. The back leg is very, very stiff. Cannot bend the middle. And this started taking place probably about an hour or after the animal was killed, it started setting in. So, another thing and this is really interesting that the bloating happened so fast, but the animal is definitely very, very bloated. There's a lot of resistance here. You can probably see the bloating. This happens because the animal still has food in its guts and the bacteria are still processing things and breaking things down. But the animal is not alive anymore to pass the gases.

Marjory Wildcraft: Flatulation.

Red Louvish: Yes.

Marjory Wildcraft: No flatulence.

Red Louvish: No flatulence and no burps. So, we get the bloating. Another thing that maybe a lot harder to see, the eyes have started to cloud over just barely. These are really the only things we can see right now. So, let's talk about what all these means, and what these means to us in terms of trying to assess how fresh the animal is. It basically boils down to if the animal is not super fresh and we saw earlier what a super fresh animal looks like. If the eyes are completely clear, if there's clearly no rigor mortis, everything looks totally fresh, you'll be able to tell. You're good to go. Now, when that's not the situation and normally, that's not going to be the situation. You're not likely to find an animal on the side of the road that was just killed a minute ago. So, your task is to try to figure out how long ago the animal died. How long has the animal been dead on the side on the road? And then take that information and put that together with the weather since the animal died and whether it's been in the sun or in the shade. So, what this means is if I know the animal died 12 to 24 hours ago and it's been in the shade, and it's been in the 70's or 80's, that meat is still good. Now, a similar situation if the animal died 12 or 24 hours ago but we've had 100-degree weather, that meat is most likely spoiled, you don't want to touch it.

Marjory Wildcraft: One thing, how long, like so when I go to the grocery store and I buy a steak or something like that. How long has that meat been hanging before they actually --

Red Louvish: Oh, man. I don't know, weeks?

Marjory Wildcraft: I mean, isn't there a legislation like they have to hang it for 10 days at least? So, for people worried about, "Oh, my god, the meat is not immediately fresh." None of the meat you're probably eating is --

Red Louvish: Right. And usually it's hung in, I think, in cold weather in 30's or 40's, but that's normal. That's what its meat is designed to be able to do that. That's a really good point. And I'm going to say this right now. Any meat that you get off the side of the road, if the meat is not spoiled, it's going to be fresher than anything that you can get at the store. It's going to be fresher. Most likely it's organic. This animal hasn't been fed hormones or any of these other crap --

Marjory Wildcraft: Antibiotics, yeah.

Red Louvish: Antibiotics, none of that. It had a good free wild life and it died relatively quickly usually and there's just no comparison.

Marjory Wildcraft: So, 12 to 24 hours if it's been in the shade like in the 70's-

Red Louvish: In the 70's. If it's in the 50's or 60's, it could be easily two days. If it's been close to freezing, three, four, five days.

Marjory Wildcraft: So, this bloating isn't a problem if I see ... I mean, this is going to bloat?

Red Louvish: So, we see now that bloating is not a problem. A lot of people think that if the animal is bloated, that's a bad sign. Let's go through all the signs, but let's start with bloating. So, we see that the bloating started literally within two hours. This animal is still fresh. The meat is still good, we know that. Something that happens very often, not always but very often if the bloat ... It continues to bloat and eventually something either ruptures or the gas finds a way out. So, very often within a day or two after the animal died, the bloating actually goes away. So, when you see a bloated animal, it's not a 100% and a lot of these things are not a 100%. But when you see a bloated animal, there's a very good indication that it's been there for less than 24 hours. It's not a 100% fresh. It's at least a couple of hours, but it most likely hasn't been there even two days.

Marjory Wildcraft: So generally, to summarize, just within a day that something is going to cause this thing. It will either rupture or something will break-

Red Louvish: Yes, because the pressure keeps building up.

Marjory Wildcraft: And it still could be good meat at that point?

Red Louvish: Yes, depending on the weather.

Marjory Wildcraft: Okay.

Red Louvish: So again, everything we do is we're trying to determine when the animal died, and then take that into consideration with the weather. Another thing with the rigor mortis. Rigor mortis also tends to release. Again, not always but very often within, again, 24 to 48 hours rigor mortis will release.

Marjory Wildcraft: So, it will go back to being flexible?

Red Louvish: Exactly. So, what this means for us is if the animal is rigor mortis, we're talking about three hours, two to three hours up to about 48 hours. It's a good window we know when the animal died. If the animal is not rigor mortis, well, it's either super fresh or it's at least probably two days old. And you'll very easily be able to tell if the animal has been there for two days. So, let's talk about eyes, because eyes are a really good sign. So, they have not clouded over completely yet. This will probably take a few more hours. They have already started to cloud over. If the eyes are completely fresh and clean and this is one of the freshest animals you've seen, no problem. Just no problem. If the eyes are cloudy, then it's probably been there at least five or six hours. But here's where it gets interesting. The eyes tend to be the first thing that any animal or critter, bugs, crows, buzzards, they just eat the eyes out.

Marjory Wildcraft: That's the first thing to go?

Red Louvish: That's the first thing to go. If you see eyes at all, if there are eyes on the animal, it likely has not been on the side of the road for over 12 hours. Within 12 hours --

Marjory Wildcraft: Something's going to eat those --

Red Louvish: Something is going to eat them. They're going to be gone most likely. So, if you see eyes, it's probably pretty, pretty fresh. If you don't see eyes, then we're going to start looking at other things. So, not seeing eyes doesn't necessarily mean it's not fresh. Someone might have found them after three hours. This might have been a week where the weather has been in the 50's and the animal has been in the shade. It's been cloudy, the eyes not being there. Okay, I don't care. This could be 48 hours old and still be good.

Marjory Wildcraft: Do you know why the eyes go first or you have a conjecture? Is it just because it's the softest tissue-?

Red Louvish: I think it's because it's really soft tissue to get into and it's very easy. That would be my guess.

Marjory Wildcraft: What about the hair? And I've heard some stories about like if you can pull the hair out easily or not?

Red Louvish: It's a possible sign. I don't like it very much and I'll tell you why. It takes quite a bit of experience to know what's acceptable hair pullage and what's not acceptable hair pullage because let me show you. I pulled some hair out. This animal is totally fresh. I mean, yes, I have to use some muscle power but there could be places

where sometimes it's easier to pull, it's hard to know. But basically, the hair pulling is if it's literally just coming out, you will probably smell the animal at that point. [crosstalk] It's already going to smell. And that, let's segue into using all of our senses. So, we can touch it and feel things. Smell is a really important one. If it smells bad, it's bad. I mean, there's no ... I know people who eat green meat and I think they're insane. I don't think that's something anybody should do. I don't do it.

Marjory Wildcraft: That's another conversation.

Red Louvish: That's another conversation. So, look at it, smell it, touch it, feel it.

Marjory Wildcraft: Yeah, is it still pretty firm?

Red Louvish: Yeah, is it firm? Is it bloated? If it's been there awhile, it might not even smell but it will be desiccated. It will be all dried out. You'll be able to feel that. So, that's not an animal you're going to be able to do anything with. Another thing I want to talk about and we don't have it here. This will show up mostly in the summer, but flies find the carcass really, really fast. And you'll sometimes see, it's kind of like ... It's hard to describe but you'll see the eggs and there's kind of this creamy color and there's just these almost like encrustations all around especially around the belly and the mouth, all the places where there's soft tissue easy to get to. So, these are the eggs that the flies lay. These eggs will usually show up in the summer within four to six hours, and they will hatch the next day. So, if you see eggs, again, the animal has been there most likely less than 24 hours. If you don't see eggs, you either see larva and you know it's been there for at least 24 hours most likely or you won't see larva because there haven't been eggs.

Marjory Wildcraft: Now, what would the meat that ... So, a lot of the other meat may still be good. You would just cut out the parts that might have the larva in it?

Red Louvish: If the larva is really, really, really small, then maybe. But normally that's going to happen in the summer and in the summer, it's going to be hot. Usually, if you see the larva, if you see the worms, I wouldn't bother with it.

Marjory Wildcraft: It's already gone too far?

Red Louvish: Most likely.

Marjory Wildcraft: But if you're seeing the eggs in there --

Red Louvish: If you see the eggs in there and it hasn't been too hot, if I see the eggs there and it's been in the triple digits, it could be bad already. I mean it could be 12 hours and the eggs are still there, but if it's been there 12 hours from morning to evening and it's been 100 degrees, I wouldn't touch that. But if you see eggs and it's been in the 80's and it's been out in the shade, it's most likely still good.

Marjory Wildcraft: Okay. But again, you would just not take the meat that had the eggs in it?

Red Louvish: Well, the eggs are going to be ... They're not even going to be in the meat. The eggs are going to be on the skin. It's kind of hard to describe but when you'll see them, you'll know them. You'll be able to recognize it. It's just these weird clumps, it looks almost like clumps of mud. But when you look closer, you see its little tiny individual eggs all clumped together.

Marjory Wildcraft: What about if there's been another animal eating it or wounds?

Red Louvish: I would say usually if another animal have been eating it, it will really depend. Usually that will take some time for another animal to find it normally, not always. I mean a lot of times that's going to happen overnight-

Marjory Wildcraft: Well, I guess, there may not be anything left if a pack of coyotes find it, right?

Red Louvish: Yeah. I mean, if it's coyotes, they're going to start from the butt and actually, I've seen times where they left most of a deer and just ate the butt for whatever reason. Yeah, if you determine that the meat is still good, then cut off those bad parts and do it for sure.

Marjory Wildcraft: Well, what would be the next thing that we do? So, we've decided that the meat is probably pretty good even though we've got some bloating and rigor mortis. What do we do next?

Red Louvish: So, I just want to say even though, there's no even though, right? We're happy to see the bloating and the rigor mortis in this weather because that indicates to us almost definitely the animal has been here for 24 hours or less, maybe up to two days, but we're good. So, the next step would be we're going to start preparing the animal for skinning, and for field dressing, for gutting.

Marjory Wildcraft: Now, do you usually do that out there or do you like load ... Let's say we're in a state where this is legal, would you just load this in your trunk in this thing in this kind of condition or you're going to just do this out there on the road side?

Red Louvish: I recommend against doing it on the road side. Sometimes you do it in a state where it's not legal. And I believe in the 11th commandment, don't get caught.

Marjory Wildcraft: I guess if you're stopped, your car is on the road, you probably can be causing problems so it's best to just --

Red Louvish: You don't want attention. So basically, load it up as quickly as possible, put it in the truck, in the bed of your truck, whatever it is. Cover it with a tarp and get out of there. Now, some of us can do it at home. But a lot of times you can't. A lot of times maybe you're in an urban area. Maybe you're not set up. I find that the best thing to do is to load it up in your car and drive somewhere a little off the way where you can just do it on the spot. And that's why the way I do the gutting and the processing and everything is a little different from how a professional butcher would do it, because we're geared towards quick and dirty and easy.

Marjory Wildcraft: And on the ground [crosstalk].

Red Louvish: We will hang it for skinning, but there are easy ways to do that. And we're going to hang it from the neck, for instance, instead of from the hind legs, so all kinds of different ways to do it.

Marjory Wildcraft: Well, let's do the next step then.

Red Louvish: All right. We set the animal up on its back and just use whatever you need to prop it up. Usually, it won't stay on its back. First thing we're going to do is we're going to cut the legs off and then we're going to do the initial cuts for the skinning. And then we'll do the field dressing. So, for the hind legs, an animal like a goat or a deer and a lot of times what you're going to do with roadkill, if you want the meat, deer is your best option. It's just a lot of meat on an animal. It doesn't take that long to process. You can do raccoons. You never know what they ate. It'll take about the same amount of time that a deer takes and you get 10 pounds of meat, if you're lucky. A good-sized deer, you can get 20, 30, 35 pounds of meat. So, with the hind legs, you want to find the joint here and cut right all the way around in the middle of the joint. You don't want to cut there at that tendon



here. You just want to cut right here all the way around, all the way around. Cut a little bit through the tendons right in the middle here. There we go. Right there, and it comes right off. Front legs are really easy. Again, just in the middle of that joint and it will come right off. Break it a little bit, cut the rest.

Marjory Wildcraft: Red, do you ... Just any old knife will work or?

Red Louvish: I like the Moraknivs. I really like them. I like the fact that this knife has a very low profile. It really makes it easy to not puncture the stomach. Don't use a big knife. Don't use the Bowie knife. That's not going to work.

Marjory Wildcraft: Okay.

Red Louvish: But really simple knives that like \$15, \$20 and they're great. You don't need anything else. So, we're going to make the initial cuts now on the front legs and back legs. And I'm going to show you the cut that produces the best shaped hide because I'm, among other things, a tanner. I like to have nice hides and we'll talk about it when I skin the animal. So, where you cut will really affect the shape of the hide. A lot of people will cut right down the middle of the legs on both sides. So, that doesn't produce a really good shaped hide. It will actually produce a hide that will look a little bit like an hourglass. Whereas if we cut it right, we get a really nice hide. So, on the front legs, we cut on the front of the leg and angle about in right by the breastbone. And on the hind legs, we cut on the back and go all the way around the anus. So, let's do that. So, I'm going to pinch. I'm going to go in and cut, in and cut. I'm trying not to damage the meat too much. And angle in, here we go. Let's see, okay, there we go. So, hind legs again on the back right along the back. If you're doing a deer, it's really easy. It's really where the light meets dark and where on the front, light meets dark in the front, light meets dark on the back.

Marjory Wildcraft: Okay.

Red Louvish: Okay, so right down here and angle in.

Marjory Wildcraft: It looks like once you get it going, it just slides?

Red Louvish: Yeah, exactly. Well, it takes a little bit of practice. Everything gets easier once you've done it a few times. There we go. Okay. So, now, we're going to just cut down here. I'm going to start with breastbone.

Marjory Wildcraft: And I guess the main thing is that you're trying not to puncture into the-

Red Louvish: Into the stomach, yes. So, I'm actually starting with the easy place. I'm starting at the breastbone where --

Marjory Wildcraft: The intestines are.

Red Louvish: There's no danger of puncturing the intestines, exactly. So, got that. Let's go down the neck now. Okay. We got that open. So, you want to feel where the breastbone is, where the breastbone ends. So, we're safe up to about here and then we have to be really, really careful. So, this is where your danger starts. So, just really small movements. So, I have to pick the skin up so you're away from the stomach just slowly and carefully. If you do puncture the stomach, it's not the end of the world. It might stink a little bit. It might be messy, but don't let that stop you. You can still get a lot of good meat off of that animal. And sometimes with roadkill, the stomach is going to be all messed up. It's all going to be punctured inside. And once you open it, it's just god-awful mess and not probably a good first animal to process but with a little bit of experience and a good strong stomach, you'll be fine. All right, we got that done. Okay. The next thing I want to do is open up the breast cavity. That will help us with the gutting. So, I think a little bit of a mallet is going to help you. So, get it in. I can even just push it in and then use the mallet to, and start by pushing ...

Speaker 3: [inaudible]

Red Louvish: Yeah. Start by pushing away from the stomach. Try not to hit yourself.

Marjory Wildcraft: Now, you're cutting right through the breastbone with that?

Red Louvish: Yeah. So, and now we're going to go towards the stomach and be really, really careful about what we're doing. Marjory, can you hold the legs up for me, please?

Marjory Wildcraft: Sure.

Red Louvish: Thank you. That will help. So, really gently, make sure you don't overshoot. All right, there we go. All right. Here's the heart and the lungs. Now, really carefully just open this up here. You see there's this membrane here, so I'm going back a second time. And I punctured a little bit, all the gas is coming out. It smells a little bit. How bad does it smell, Marjory?

Marjory Wildcraft: Well, it's not ... It hasn't hit me yet.

Red Louvish: I've done it a couple of times.

Marjory Wildcraft: Oop, yep.

Red Louvish: So, you see I'm holding my finger in here and I'm guiding the knife so we're not puncturing the stomach anymore. All this is getting ready to get it all out. So, we got it all open here, propped up. So, we're going to expose the trachea and we're going to use the trachea to pull everything out. So, here's the trachea right here. I'm going to just get it all right there, right here. Okay. And we'll see if this works. A small animal, it's really easy to tear the trachea and it won't really pull with it. With deer, it usually works really well.

Marjory Wildcraft: You mean larger animals, it's easier?

Red Louvish: Yeah.

Marjory Wildcraft: Wow. That's counterintuitive.

Red Louvish: Well, it's just that there's more substance to the trachea.

Marjory Wildcraft: To grab on to?

Red Louvish: Yeah. This is just a really, really delicate thing here. So, I'm just cutting all the connective tissue, whatever is still holding it and using my fingers, of course. If you want to prop the animal open and we can maybe move things around a little bit, there you go. So, let me put this down. If you can just prop it open just like that, so there's that lining that separates the chest cavity from the stomach that actually allows you to breath.

Marjory Wildcraft: Oh, the diaphragm.

Red Louvish: The diaphragm, thank you. We're going to cut that and do that on the other side too.

Marjory Wildcraft: Red, at this point, do you ever stop and look at the organs to maybe try and judge the health of the animal in any way?

Red Louvish: Sure, sure. That's a good idea. If the heart is nice and firm ... I mean I would look at the liver when it comes out but if there's spots on the liver, that's probably not a good sign.

Marjory Wildcraft: Parasites or worms --

Red Louvish: Parasites, worms running around inside, I mean who knows?

Marjory Wildcraft: Would you eat that animal then? Would the flesh be good even if the organs are bad?

Red Louvish: I don't know. Some diseases of the organs, that means that the animal is tainted, like rabbits with tularemia, you don't want to eat that. So, if you see a rabbit with a speckled liver, just throw it out away. I haven't run into that with deer, so I don't know.

Marjory Wildcraft: Okay.

Red Louvish: I have not found an animal that personally that I didn't eat because I saw any sign of disease. But I may just be lucky. So, I'm just pulling everything out wherever there's a membrane or a diaphragm or whatever that's holding me, I'm going to try to cut that out. In here. Okay. I may not need the knife anymore. So, just try to find out what's holding you and rip that out or cut it. All right. And here's the pee sack.

Marjory Wildcraft: That's the bladder.

Red Louvish: The bladder. So, we're going to try to avoid getting pee all over the meat, but if you do, it's not a big deal.

Marjory Wildcraft: So, urine is generally sterile?

Red Louvish: Yeah.

Marjory Wildcraft: Is it right?

Red Louvish: Yeah. Well, okay then. And nothing on the animal, no big problems. We have the liver here. We have the gallbladder. We definitely want to take that out if you're going to take the liver. A lot of people say "eww" about the liver but I think the liver is delicious.

Marjory Wildcraft: It's the most nutritious part of the animal.

Red Louvish: And it's very nutritious and there's all kinds of nutrients in the liver that you're not going to get from just the meat. So, I strongly recommend to go for the liver, definitely something I always do. In fact, when I get the deer, the first thing I eat is always the liver and the heart. That's the treat for the dinner after.

Marjory Wildcraft: And there's that gallbladder sack.

Red Louvish: There's that gallbladder and you really, really don't want to ...

Marjory Wildcraft: That is some bitter tasting stuff.

Red Louvish: Yeah, you don't want to get that bile on the meat. So, just cutting around a little V ... Oops, just stabbed myself.

Marjory Wildcraft: Now, do you generally do anything with the intestines?

Red Louvish: I don't. There are lots of things you can do with the intestines. In fact, for Native Americans, it would be a delicacy to eat the upper intestines. They would just take it straight out of the animal and just gobble it up. Apparently, that's how they got a lot of their vitamin C and all kinds of other things. There's always this issue of waste and use as much as possible off the animal. And that's a very good place to be but I feel that especially with roadkill ... Well, I feel that there's no such thing as actual waste. Someone is going to eat it, whether it's bacteria or flies or coyotes or vultures, someone is going to make use of it. It's going to go back to nature. There is no actual waste. If all you can do is get the hindquarter off or get a backstrapper too, that's fine. Don't feel bad. Don't beat yourself up because you're just using a little bit. It's out there on the side of the road and nothing is happening with it. So, whatever you use, that's good.

Marjory Wildcraft: All right. So, I guess part of the kit that you need to keep in your car all the time or truck is going to be some plastic bags --

Red Louvish: Plastic bags, cooler, a water jug is nice. It's really nice to be able to wash your hands and this is remarkably not bloody because we killed the animal and we bled it. That normally doesn't happen with the roadkill. Normally, it would be some kind of bruise or some kind of an internal breakage that happens but there's no outer break and the blood stays in the animal, and it could be pretty bloody. So, you really want to be able to wash your hands.

Marjory Wildcraft: Okay.

Red Louvish: Now, there are other things in here that if we get technical, there's pancreas, there's kidneys, lungs. There's all kinds of things you can eat that's really up to every individual what they want to experiment with and try. For my money, get the major stuff. We're almost ready for the skinning. We're going to hang the animal. I just want to cut around the neck. I want to cut the skin here all the way back to here. Where are we at? There we are.

Marjory Wildcraft: So, you're just going to cut the head off?

Red Louvish: No, I'm leaving the head on him. I'm just loosening the skin off.

Marjory Wildcraft: Okay.

Red Louvish: So, now, we're going to hang the animal. Most people hang from the hind legs. I personally find that firstly, if you're out and about and you don't have a gambrel, it's much easier to hang from the head. Secondly, personally, I find it much easier to skin the animal from the neck down. So, we're just going to tie a little rope. So, depending on how you're going to hang them, we're hanging them using a gambrel and a pulley and tackle system which really makes it easier to pull things up. So, you either just have a long rope and you tie it around the neck and just hoist it up or you have something like this. So, I'm just going to make a little loop here.

Marjory Wildcraft: So, that's another piece of kit for the car then?

Red Louvish: Yeah.

Marjory Wildcraft: Piece of rope?

Red Louvish: Piece of rope, but really preferably if you have a pulley and tackle system, it makes it so much easier to hoist the heavy animal up. I had a lot of problem if you're doing it alone, a deer could be really heavy.

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Marjory Wildcraft: Now, you're just using a square knot there, or what kind of knot?

Red Louvish: I'm just using whatever knot works. It's really not a big deal.

Marjory Wildcraft: Okay.

Red Louvish: I'm just lowering it down, putting it up here and hoisting it up. And this whole idea of all the rollers, it makes it very, very easy to hoist heavy stuff up. So, get it at a really good height, this looks pretty good for now and tie it up. So, we have all the initial cuts done and I implore everybody at this point, this thing does not exist. There are no knives and there are two reasons for that. If you use a knife when you skin an animal, you're going to do two things aside from skinning the animal. You're going to make marks on the skin. Not matter how careful you are, I don't care how good you are with the knife. I've never seen anyone not make marks on the skin. You make marks on the skin and it's really not good for tanners. I'd be really pissed off. But there's another part to it even if you don't care about skin and no tanner is ever going to see it, it's just going to get thrown out to the dogs, the other side of the coin of making a mark on the skin is making a mark in the meat. You're cutting into the meat and when you cut into the meat, you create a vector for infection. You're giving flies an opportunity to come onto that meat and infect it.

It's not a good deal. You're leaving meat on the hide depending on how go you are with the knife, maybe just a little bit or maybe a lot. And I've seen deer hides from hunters that came with three, four, five pounds of meat. It's a waste. It's silly. We don't need it. So, the knife doesn't exist, with very few exceptions but we'll see if we have them or not. So, I like to start from the four legs, what I like to call the arms because it's easier to say. So, we're just going to call them arms from now on. And just using whatever your thumb, your fingers, whatever you need to do, just start peeling. Start getting in there and start pulling that skin off. Once you have purchased, it gets a lot easier. Again, when you have any kind of resistance, then get in there with your fingers, your fist, whatever needs to happen to get that skin off. We'll just start here and continue on this side now. What we're going to try to do, what we're going to do is we're going to open it up from this side, open it up from this side. Have everything loose here and then go up from the inside and it will make sense when we do it. Free the neck and then all this is dangling and then we just pull it all off. So, this is the place where sometimes I will use the knife. Sometimes, it's really hard to get that especially on a bigger animal. And, okay, you're going to use one cut here. I'm not going to hold that against you, but we didn't need to.

If you do this though, this is how most people use a knife when they skin, is [inaudible] and open it, [inaudible]. You're doing nothing. You don't need to do it. It's useless and you're damaging the hide and the meat. And this is a small animal. It's definitely easier. It's also easier when they're super fresh. So, if you're doing a bigger deer, especially a bigger animal with fat on it especially if it's been on the side of the road for two days, this could take a little more effort. It's definitely within the realm of possibilities. So, at this point really just pulling, mostly just pulling. See how easy it pulls, how fast this is going. Maybe again, use your thumb, use your fist. And as you can see, I am pulling the skin off with so far, no meat on it, none whatsoever. And it's trying to come off here and we'll probably get a little bit on it, which is okay. But this will be a prime hide for tanning. The meat is not punctured at all and actually, once it dries out, it forms a bit of a protective sheath. There we go ... Again, this one of the places where if you must use a knife, that's all right. We didn't need to. And there's no reason why we necessarily need to pull the tail off last. It's just how this hide is working out. And we're done. Beautiful skin, no knife marks. You give me a skin like that, I'm going to love you.

So, we're going to start breaking the animal down. It's really pretty straightforward, forearms, just cut out here. You basically just follow the shoulder. It really separates very easily when you just follow the shoulder blade and cut the connective tissue. That's one, and two. And there you go. We can try to get as much meat as we want to off the neck. We can get some good roasts. It's not a lot on this goat, but there's definitely meat to be had here.

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On a deer, you can easily get five, six pounds, maybe eight pounds, maybe even a little more on a really big one just from the neck. I'm just cutting right along the spine. I'm just trying to remove these nice little chunks. That's a nice little chunk of stew meat. So, let's go for the loin or the backstrap, which is some of the best meat you can get off of the animal. Again, these are such tiny animals. There's not going to be a whole lot there but, on a deer, oh, man, you can get a backstrap, it will be like this thick around and this long. That's-

Marjory Wildcraft: Delicious.

Red Louvish: Just don't overcook it. I'm going to cut right down on the spine just alongside the spine to start getting it exposed right here and goes all the way up to here, up to the neck. Again, this looks really small and scrawny here than it is. On a deer, this is really, really, really high-quality good meat and lots of it. Another piece of meat, really, we're not going to mess with it here because it's practically nothing, but not to be missed on anything bigger. This is where the tenderloins are, these two stripes of meat right here. So, it's on the inside right above the pelvis on the inside of the animal, either side of the spine are these two strips of meat and this is the tenderest, juiciest, the yummiest meat you're going to have. So, on a deer, you can easily get pieces that are probably about the size of my knife easily, maybe even a little thicker. This is nice good meat. On this animal, I don't think we'll bother.

Okay, all that's left is the hindquarters. They are just a little trickier. Basically, what you want to do is we'll cut all these stuff out that's in the way that's just kind of annoying and hanging there and not adding anything to our lives. Let's get it out of the way. And so, what we're going to try to do is expose the ball joint that is holding the hindquarter keeping it attached. So, cut around here, cut around there. Just try to leave as little meat as possible on the animal here. Here's the ball joint, and just cutting around it and starting to loosen it up. There you go, and then cut around the rest and you have a hindquarter. And my knife is getting dull. This will happen. Usually, one animal processing and the knife is dull, but we can make it last. And again, the ball joint right here loosened up, and now it can cut around and get the rest off. There we go. Especially on deer, also there could be quite a good bit of meat on the ribs. I personally never bothered with it, but it's just because like we said, I don't believe there's such a thing as waste with an animal that you didn't kill especially. Someone is going to eat it. I've already gotten a lot of meat off the animal. For me, I'm letting some of it go back. But if you love ribs, you got ribs. You can cut them off. So, that's what we got.

Marjory Wildcraft: Well, Red, have you ever gotten sick off of eating roadkill?

Red Louvish: Not once.

Marjory Wildcraft: And you've been eating this for ...

Red Louvish: I've been eating this for a good 10 years at least. I have gotten sick off of store-bought food. That has happened. Roadkill, not once.

Marjory Wildcraft: Nice.

Red Louvish: Yeah.

Marjory Wildcraft: Well, thanks so much for that. I want to let everybody know; Red has ended up taking the roadkill. And as he was so meticulous in not having you knife things up when he pulled the skin off, it's because he's a tanner. And actually, he does tanning techniques very similar to what the indigenous Native Americans used. And it really is quite a skill to go from taking this basically raw hide ... And if you'll hold that for me ... and turning

it into this, which is an amazing material. This is buckskin. And early Americans loved this material, it's just unbelievably soft and lightweight and flexible but extremely strong.

Red Louvish: Extremely strong.

Marjory Wildcraft: I've made a pair of moccasins out of one of tans of Red's hides more than a year ago and I wear these regularly. They're just as comfortable as a pair of socks. I believe me, I would tear up a pair of socks in about a day. I've been wearing these for a long, long time. So, thank you so much, Red. We really appreciate you sharing your knowledge today.

Red Louvish: Thanks.

Marjory Wildcraft: Well, this is definitely a presentation I like to review several times and keep up with from time to time. And if you're interested at all in foraging, if you push that button on the right, that will allow you to become a sponsor of The Grow Network. And we actually have several, we have a wild tending certification and we have a foraging certification in there. And we're actually adding more of those type. We've had a lot more requests where people who are saying they want to know more about wild edibles, and so we're adding more in there.

Of course, there's lots of certifications on other things like growing medical marijuana and culinary mushrooms and backyard chickens and all different kinds of gardening styles and home medicine and making home medicine. So, we have lots of different certifications that are available. And when you become a member, you're sponsoring a really, really awesome organization with an incredible mission. And if you click on the button down below, you can own this presentation and all the other presentations that come with the Home Grown Food Summit. And when you do that, you are again also really sponsoring the work of The Grow Network. We truly believe in the mission of stopping the destruction of the earth via homegrown food on every table.