

ALL AMERICAN

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“It wasn’t just chicken and rice,” he said. “It was like, let me add a ton of flavor. Let me change it up and keep it fresh.”

The word spread, and the business grew quickly.

What started as personal training became a meal-plan company. Swanson hired cooks and delivery drivers, bought a food truck, and eventually built a major operation around the World Series of Poker at the Rio Casino.

By 2019, he had 63 employees.

His philosophy was to change his client’s habits, not just a good one-time meal.

“You couldn’t just get one meal,” he said. “You had to buy 20 meals.”

Then came COVID-19.

When the Rio implemented COVID-

ID-19 vaccine requirements connected to operations at the property, Swanson said he was unwilling to require his employees to get vaccinated, citing his belief in personal choice.

“The Rio basically said, ‘You can’t be on property unless you have the vaccine,’ and I wasn’t willing to do that for my staff,” he said.

Swanson tried to keep the business running by splitting operations, with some employees working off-site out of his food truck. But losing access to the Rio’s facilities and infrastructure made the operation increasingly difficult.

In 2021, he lost his contract with the casino.

Then came another loss.

During the World Series of Poker main event that year, Swanson’s father

died.

“He was my best friend,” he said.

The business eventually went bankrupt, and the collapse affected customers who had unused meal-plan credits from previous purchases.

“I contacted every one of my customers that had a rollover balance and said, ‘Hey, what can I do? We’re busted. We’re bankrupt. The company is going under,’” he said. “I gave away blenders, beef, and protein powder.”

Swanson said many longtime customers understood what happened, but criticism from others spread online and damaged his reputation within parts of the poker community.

“It was the worst year of my life,” he said.

In early 2022, he moved back to

Oregon with his family, living in an RV while working construction and assisting a family with various jobs.

But the dream of restarting his brand never went away.

“I knew I had built something really special,” he said. “If I let this horrible situation just end me and not try, I’ll regret it for the rest of my life.”

So how’d he end up here?

Swanson had stayed close with Esfandiari, who had been visiting Mammoth with his family to snowboard. Eventually, Esfandiari bought a home in town and encouraged Swanson to consider moving.

Another former Vegas client, Tom Cage, offered him a place to park his food truck.

Last summer, Swanson took the chance.

The food truck opened in late 2025, and earlier this year he expanded into the Snowcreek bistro area.

For Swanson, Mammoth fits the larger vision he has always had, which is a place where healthy food, fitness and outdoor adventure intersect.

“I’m not in this business because it’s the best financial business,” he said. “I’m in it because it matters.”

Today, Swanson is once again offering meal plans, including many of the same dishes that built his reputation in Las Vegas. The business is still young, but he believes in the concept.

“If I can pay my staff, pay my bills and make a dollar, that makes me successful,” he said. “Because this matters.”



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