
Living Homegrown Podcast – Episode 150 From The Ground Up

Show Notes are at: www.LivingHomegrown.com/150

Alana: Eating can be loaded. There's so much out there about health, and that can really make eating such a weighty task, and especially when we have these beautiful vegetables that we have grown ourselves or we've purchased from a farmer, it's like getting back to just the simple experience of loving, cooking, and eating them. That's what I hope that people will take from this book and just let go of some of the baggage that can be there because I really do think that joy is an essential nutrient in anything that we eat.

Theresa: This is the Living Homegrown Podcast, episode 150.

Announcer: Welcome to the Living Homegrown Podcast, where it's all about how to live farm-fresh, without the farm. To help guide the way to a more flavorful and sustainable lifestyle is your host, national PBS TV producer and canning expert, Theresa Loe.

Theresa: Hey there, everybody. Welcome to the podcast. I'm your host, Theresa Loe, and this podcast is where we talk about living farm-fresh without a farm, and that includes small space food gardening, canning, and fermenting the harvest, and artisan food crafts like baking your own bread. It's all about the different ways that we can live closer to our food and take small delicious steps towards living a more sustainable lifestyle. If you would like to learn more about any of these topics or my online courses, my business coaching, or my Living Homegrown Institute, which is my membership site, then just visit my website, livinghomegrown.com.

On today's episode, we talk all about how to get the very best flavor from the vegetables that we are cooking in our kitchen. Listen. A lot of you guys are growing your own vegetables or maybe you are shopping the farmers' market so that you can get the freshest ingredients that are in season in your area, and of course, you want them to taste fantastic when you place them on your dinner table, but what can happen so many times is that if we do not cook vegetables properly, we end up having something that is a little bit less than stellar, something that maybe turns us off of that vegetable completely, so I really wanted to dive into this topic and really discuss how we can get so much of the flavor out of the vegetables in the best way possible.

To do that, I brought on one of my favorite cookbook authors, Alana Chernila, and she has a brand new book out right now called *Eating from the Ground Up*. She also has a blog by the same name, and in her latest cookbook, it's all about recipes for really simple perfect vegetables. She shows us exactly how to get the very best from all of her favorite vegetables so that it's not hidden in some other recipes you don't even know the vegetables there or it's not overcooked and turned into mush. It actually has the best flavor all on its own so much so that it can be the showstopper of the entire meal.

Now, Alana has a really interesting backstory as to how she got so into vegetables, and I'll let her tell that in the interview, but some of the other things that we talk about during our interview are some really simple ingredients that we can add to just about any vegetable to make it taste amazing. Now, we're talking about eating real food here. Real foods so we can pronounce all of the ingredients. Things that are so simple and so easy. We're not talking about spending half a day creating a really complicated recipe just to get the flavor. It is so possible to treat vegetables with a light hand and get maximum potential out of them.

Also, in today's interview, Alana shares several different recipe tips with us and tells us about this recipe with fresh corn and stone fruit. It really sounds amazing, so I wanted you to know that she has graciously shared this recipe in the show notes for today's episode. You can go to the show notes and download a PDF printout of the recipe so that you can make it yourself. I know once you start hearing her talk about it, you're going to want this recipe. To get to the show notes, just go to livinghomegrown.com/150, and you can download it there.

Let me tell you a little bit more about Alana. Alana Chernila is the author of three cookbooks, *The Homemade Pantry*, *The Homemade Kitchen*, and her latest book, *Eating from the Ground Up*. She also writes, cooks, and blogs at eatingfromthegroundup.com. She has written for *Martha Stewart Living* magazine, *Taproot*, *Food52.com*, and many other online and print periodicals, and she teaches classes on things like making nut butters and granola bars. She is one of us, for sure.

Now, Alana lives with her husband and her daughters in Western Massachusetts, and I think you are going to love what she has to say on how we can prepare our vegetables in the best way possible, but before we dive into the interview, I just want you to know that today's podcast episode is brought to you by my Living Homegrown Institute, which is my monthly membership site where you have access to an entire library of monthly masterclasses.

Now, these classes help you live farm-fresh without the farm. You learn how to grow heirloom tomatoes or raise chickens and even make your own cheese and

ferment vegetables. I really do believe that living an organic farm-fresh lifestyle is a journey in learning, and just as we learn different skills such as food fermentation, and food growing, and even critter keeping, there are three distinct stages of growth. We start out just being curious, and then we go into experimentation, and eventually, we grow into mastery of these different skills.

Now, if you're looking at creating your own farm-fresh lifestyle and you're curious where you fall on the growth scale of these different skills, I've got a free resource for you. It's my Farm-Fresh Success Path that my students use inside my learning institute, and it will help you decide where you are on your own journey, the characteristics of that stage, and some action steps and information that you can take to get to the next level. To get the Success Path PDF, just go to livinghomegrown.com/path. That's P-A-T-H, and you can download it there for free.

All right, so are you ready to learn how we can get the very best from our vegetables? I thought so. Let's dive into today's interview with Alana Chernila, the author of *Eating from the Ground Up*.

Hey, Alana. Thank you so much for coming on the show today.

Alana: Oh, thank you so much for having me. I'm thrilled to be here.

Theresa: Oh, good. Well, I'm thrilled to have you. We realized as we were chatting before we started recording that we have a mutual admiration for each other, so this is really fun.

Theresa: I feel like I know you because you've been reading your books and reading your blog, so this is really fun for me.

Theresa: Good. I was very excited about your latest book because I feel like it's such a perfect alignment for my listeners. My listeners love to garden. A lot of them love to shop on farmers' markets. They're all into real wholesome food, organic food, and what you do with this book is you really help people learn how to appreciate their vegetables more, and so that's why I thought, "Ugh, this is so great because we ..." A lot of times, we grow these things, and if you don't know how to cook them properly, you'll feel like, "Ugh, I just wasted all that time, and I hate this vegetable," when it may just be they don't have the right recipe.

We'll dive into that, but what I would love to start with is that I really feel like your blog, and your book, and all of your writing has such an authentic dialog, and the recipes are amazing, but I feel like when I'm reading them that I'm sitting over a cup of coffee with you in the kitchen, so I'm really curious. Did you grow up cooking, or was it something that came to you later in life?

Alana: Well, sort of both. I grew up. I was the child of a single mom who did a lot of cooking in new age conference centers oddly enough. She was a seeker in the early '80s, and so that was where I really learned about hippie food, about tofu meatballs and nutritional yeast, but at the same time, my grandparents actually opened a vegetarian bed and breakfast, believe it or not, in 1977.

Theresa: Wow.

Alana: That was a year before I was born, and they had been living in New Jersey, and they wanted a change, and they bought a totally falling down hunted amazing house in The Berkshires.

Theresa: Wow.

Alana: Yeah, it's really incredible, and they renovated the house and turned it into a real destination for people who were starting to feel like they didn't want to eat meat. It was definitely growing movement at that point with Moosewood and all those different cookbooks and people who were starting to talk about how that was possible. I have to really credit them with my start because on the weekends, I would come up and I would spend the weekends with them, and I ... Of course, I hated everything they made. I just wanted junk food and all the sort of like whole grain date breads and spinach frittatas were totally uninteresting to me.

At the same time, I was making all the food with them. I was watching them serve it with such love and pride, and neither of them are here anymore, but I feel like they're with me in all this work because it was just like weekends for years, and years, and years, and then I actually ended up moving into the inn. My mother and I took over the management of it. So then, I became more central to it, and that process of just making food and sharing it is really what stayed with me and got me started in all of this.

Theresa: Wow, I love that story. I love that, so you really were immersed in it?

Alana: Totally immersed, and my grandfather had this amazing garden out back where it was just this square that he ... Now that I have only moderately succeeded in gardening in my own life, I can see what an amazing gardener he was. It was just this perfect square of asparagus, and greens, and potatoes, and he would go out, and harvest things, and cook some for breakfast. It was so beautiful what he was doing.

Theresa: Your grandparents were vegetarian, but you and your mother were not vegetarian, right?

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- Alana: Yeah. We went in and out, and I chose vegetarian as myself actually when I became a politically-aware 11-year-old and started putting buttons on my jean jacket.
- Theresa: I love that. Oh my gosh, that's so cool.
- Alana: I actually was a vegetarian until I was about 18, so I spent my whole teens not eating meat, and I've been a meat-eater ever since then. I had a well-timed steak that I just couldn't recover from. Now, I'm pretty much all about moderation, so I feel like vegetables are my main joy on my plate, but I like being able to eat as much as I can.
- Theresa: Yeah, and that's really what I talk about here on the podcast because I'm a meat-eater also, but it's all about sustainable meat, and knowing your farmer, and all of that, so I have a lot of vegetarians, but also a lot of meat-eaters that are listeners, so I know they can relate, but with that background, it makes perfect sense as to how you learned really how to cook vegetables in a really good way because you were totally immersed in that for a very long time. I know that every good cookbook has like a backstory as to what sparked the idea for you, and I love your backstory because it involves working at a farmers' market, so can you tell us about that?
- Alana: Yeah, so I ... Let's see. We have to go back to my mid-20's. I'll be 40 this year, so that was a while ago, and I had two young children, and I was trying to figure out what to do with my life, and I was in a lot of different jobs. I would take every job that came to me. I was tutoring, and assisting people, and all sorts of little bits, and I was also working at our farmers' market in Great Barrington where I live, and I had started there as a working member for my CSA, which was for Indian Line Farm, which actually was the first CSA in the country.
- Theresa: Really?
- Alana: Yeah. There's one in California too. I'm sure one of your listeners will pipe up and ...
- Theresa: Yeah.
- Alana: They started the same summer, so some time ... It depends on who you talk to, but Indian Line Farm according to many is the first CSA, and so I had been a member, and I started helping to pay for my share by working at the market. I had been doing it I think for two years at that point, and just so often, people on their 20's, it's like, "Oh, what do I do? What's the job that will serve the world and make me feel happy?" and all those big questions.

I was actually having a drink with a friend, and bemoaning and whining about my plate of not being able to find my path, and she said, "Well, what do you love doing?" and I said, "You know, I love talking about recipes at the farmers' market." Like I had found that I felt all buzzy after the market where I had really been forced to figure out how to cook vegetables over the last year because I would ... People would say, "Well, what should I do with kohlrabi?" and I was like, "Hmm." I have people like ...

Theresa: Yeah.

Alana: "I guess you could slice it, and you could like put some dip on it or ..."

Theresa: Right.

Alana: Or like, "What do you do to broccoli rabe if you don't love bitter things?" or like all those questions, so I would always take home all the vegetables that I had questions asked to me about, and I would experiment, and I would read always like *The Gospel of Alice Waters*. It all became really important to me, and I just wanted to be able to answer people's questions the next week.

So then, I started creating recipes for them, and I would write them down for them. It became the thing I love to do, so I'm talking to my friend, and she's like, "Well, this is a no-brainer, and you should start a blog," because there weren't that many blogs at that point, and she said, "Just start a blog and start writing the recipes down," and I left the restaurant. It took me about five minutes to get home from the restaurant, and in those five minutes, I thought, "I'm going to start a blog, and I'm going to call it *Eating from the Ground Up*." It just came to me right in the car, and that night, I started a Blogger account, which was where I started, and I had a blog by the time I went to sleep.

Theresa: Wow.

Alana: Yeah. I mean, that's the amazing instant gratification of the internet, right?

Theresa: Yes, yes.

Alana: I started writing, and I was still doing all my other jobs, but it just started taking over and taking over. Before I knew it, I was thinking about writing a book, and I had an agent, and I wanted to write this vegetable book because this sort of simple vegetables like ... I didn't need sexy, chefy vegetable recipes. I just needed to be able to talk to people about how to roast cauliflower in a way that would make it amazing, right?

Theresa: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

- Alana: I was already thinking about this book, and I got distracted by other things like I got really into homemade yogurt and homemade cheese, and I ended up selling a book about making pantry staples from scratch, and that book was wonderful to write, and was great, and started my book writing career, but I had to go through a few more books before I could convince my publisher to let me finally write the vegetable book that I had always wanted to write, and here it is.
- Theresa: Wow.
- Alana: It's been a long journey for this book, but I think that it's better for it because all this recipe writing practice has ... I can really bring it, bring it to this book, which is great.
- Theresa: Oh, yeah, total pro. The recipes are excellent, but it's what you write before each recipe that really draws you in and the photos are beautiful as well, so you've done an excellent job with this, and I'm so glad you ended up doing it because it's that good, so excellent job.
- Alana: Oh, thank you. Yeah, and the photos. I worked with a new photographer for this book than my last two. In my last two books, I worked with a really wonderful photographer, Jennifer May. This one was a departure, and I got to work with Johnny Autry who is in North Carolina, and he is super talented and just did such a beautiful job with it.
- Theresa: Yeah. It's hard to describe it, but to me, they just felt very earthy, and homey, and warm. There's a warmth to the photographs that really make you feel like you're in your home, and I loved that.
- Alana: Okay.
- Theresa: They're beautiful. The colors and everything. Just really lovely. Something that I read, and I don't remember if I read it on your blog, or in your book, or somewhere else that when you were working at the farmers' market, that sometimes people would ask you things, like you said, how to grow something, and I love that you mentioned about radishes because you were talking about how people would grow radishes or buy radishes from you guys, and they would be really hot, and then they ended up hating them, and a lot of people don't realize this unless they grow them themselves and they're told this by an older gardener, a more experienced gardener that if you pick radishes early that you don't have as much heat.
- Alana: Yeah.

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- Theresa: You have little tips and tidbits in there in all of your recipes, and it's stuff like that that I think really make it magical for us as a reader or consumer of your work.
- Alana: Thank you.
- Theresa: Yeah.
- Alana: Yeah, so especially for people who are gardening or even who are ... At this point, there are so many opportunities to not be a gardener, but still be so connected to your food being grown.
- Theresa: Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Alana: I really like to invite those people in as well who maybe don't have the space or the inclination for their own backyard garden, but like like to think about how things are grown, and maybe they're picking it at CSA or they just ... We're so lucky to be able to be around food that's being grown so often even if it's just not even in our backyard.
- Theresa: Exactly, exactly. From reading your book, I can tell also that you really want people to get vegetables and that they can be delicious that we don't need to hide them. So many recipes are trying to hide the vegetable in the dish.
- Alana: Yes.
- Theresa: You really are like, "Let's bring it out on the table and put the spotlight on it." I think you talk too about this, and I truly believe this that a lot of times, people have had a bad experience in their childhood with a vegetable, and so that just completely turned them off and like they think, "Oh, all Brussels sprouts are terrible," when really, it was that it wasn't cooked properly.
- Alana: Yeah, and food and memory are so powerful, right? It's like if you have one bad memory, especially linked to maybe one particular family instance or a person who is loaded for you, it's like ...
- Theresa: Mm-hmm (affirmative).
- Alana: Sometimes, even the smell of something cooked incorrectly can just turn you off forever, and I think Brussels sprouts are a big one because if you cooked Brussels sprouts incorrectly, they smell like stinky socks.
- Theresa: Yes. Yes.

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- Alana: That's unfortunate, or they can get so mushy in the center, and it's like, "Why would anyone want to eat this? This is awful."
- Theresa: Right.
- Alana: I think green beans are another thing. They get a treatment like that because how many people have been totally turned off of green beans for life by eating canned green beans?
- Theresa: Yes. Yes, where they're just mushed. They're just ugh.
- Alana: The texture ... Ugh, so bad.
- Theresa: Texture is a big part of it, and if the texture is off, it can be so off-putting.
- Alana: Yeah. Oh, yeah, and I don't ... I mean, I don't think there's any other category of food that has been so poorly treated than vegetables because we're always saying we have to eat more vegetables like we have to eat healthy, and so it's like whatever needs to happen like, "Eat more vegetable," it's like, "Can them. Freeze them."
- Theresa: Right.
- Alana: Like cooks them poorly, and it's just ... It's not doing anyone a service.
- Theresa: No, and I think because people overcook so many of them, they end up really losing all their nutritional value anyway so they lost their flavor and ...
- Alana: Yeah, absolutely.
- Theresa: Yeah, and the nutrition. Well, one of the things I thought was so cute I read was that your daughter suggested that you call your book "Vegetables with Cheese" because you had been working with so many cheese recipes, but it really brought up a good point, and you talk about this too about how there are certain things that you can do to vegetables to bring out their flavor, so I'd love to talk about that. What are some of the things that we can include with our vegetables that just enhance the recipe instead of covering it up or ruining the vegetable flavor?
- Alana: Well, there are definitely ... There's a very holy list of vegetable lovers. There's the salt, which is always necessary, fat, and acid, and those things are ... They'll just bring out everything in a vegetable. It's like you can start with something like lemon and salt, which is pretty much a perfect treatment for anything, but then if we go beyond, if you think beyond your traditional idea of what a salt, or a fat, or an acid might be, I love thinking about using tamari or soy sauce instead

of salt. It can often bring out whole new elements in a vegetable. It's a really great thing to have in the kitchen.

Then, I like to use miso in my cooking with vegetables a lot. I have a recipe in the book for miso greens where you just have your nice big pot of sauteed greens, and then you're stirring miso with a little butter in at the end, and that just ... It's like every sort of rich velvety, beautiful note of those greens just pops with the miso because it has that little bit of funkiness, that little ... It has salt. It has the umami. That's often an ingredient that people don't really know what to do with, and it lasts forever in your fridge, and you can just stir a little bit in. You just water it down a little bit, and then stir a little in, and it just makes everything delicious. It's also great on Brussels sprouts or anything green goes beautifully with miso.

Often, I like to think about dairy actually as acid, so we have Parmesan oregano being ... That will just bring out especially sweetness of all sorts of vegetables. It's really, really lovely, or buttermilk, which we don't usually think of as an acid, but it really is, and really not making these ingredients the center. We don't have to make a big heavy dressing or a cream sauce, but just thinking about them as these loving little hands that like shoo the vegetable on stage, and they're like, "Go, shine. Here, here." I like to think of that as like these little supportive characters that it can just pump them up, and then you can think, "Oh my gosh, I have never eaten broccoli that tasted this amazing."

It's all because we just know the right little helpers and the right treatment, and it's so simple. Butter is not to be ignored because I think butter is just ... It's a huge too, especially with vegetables like cabbage which ... I think cabbage and butter is one of my favorite combinations ever, so I encourage people not to be afraid of butter.

Theresa: Yeah, so true, and I think we're talking real food here, not margarine. There's a big difference.

Alana: Oh, yeah.

Theresa: Not only in flavor, but in nutrition and everything else. When you say fats, you're talking about oils, butter?

Alana: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yes.

Theresa: Things like olive oil? Things like that, right?

Alana: Olive oil. I'm talking about butter. I'm also talking about bacon which ... One or two slices of bacon, chopped up, and using that bacon grease can be such a nice fat for vegetables, and then you can even add the little bit of bacon on top, and

that's so delicious. Coconut oil can be a great fat for vegetables as long as you're feeling excited about the flavor of coconut. Vegetables are a great place to experiment with different oils like have you ever tried toasted sesame oil?

Theresa: Yes. Yeah.

Alana: Let's put it on your cabbage or your ... like I have a recipe for sauteed cabbage and celery, which are two pretty underappreciated vegetables together, and it has toasted sesame oil and sesame seeds, and so you're getting all these new flavors because vegetables really can carry these oils and flavors that you might never have tried before, and they'll just give you new ways to experience vegetables that maybe you've been making every week, but you can get a whole new dish out of it and a whole new inspiration.

Theresa: Ugh, that's so lovely. When you're talking about a vegetable being underappreciated, it makes me wonder like with all that you have done, and all of your recipe testing, and working at the farmers' market, what do you feel is the most underappreciated vegetable?

Alana: I do. I feel like I'm talking about cabbage a lot, but I do feel like cabbage is quite underappreciated. I think that it gets a bad rap because it's around all year long and it sits around, but cabbage is ... It's so versatile. It's always inexpensive. It's great just sauteed. It's great sliced up fresh with little garlic, and salt, and olive oil. There's a million different ways you can prepare cabbage, and I think that's one. I also think that ... I'm happy the cauliflower is getting a little bit of love these days, but I think cauliflower has definitely gotten a bad rap. I'd say those two, and there's a few vegetables that people are just scared of like kohlrabi or celery root is very scary because it just looks so weird.

Theresa: Yeah.

Alana: Yes, some of those just stranger flavors, and oddly enough, these are often vegetables that are very prominent in the cuisines of other cultures. Sometimes, it's like celery root is the basis for a dish that has been made in France in every school cafeteria for decades when it gets chopped up into some mayonnaise and yogurt, and it's shredded into little slaw. We just don't have that here. Sometimes, when you're really looking for another inspiration with a vegetable that you've never really tried, it's good to look at French cooking, or Israeli cooking, or Persian cooking and see like, "Oh, what are they doing with this vegetable," because often, it's just ... We're just latecomers here in the States.

Theresa: Ugh, I agree, and that's really good advice to be looking into other cultures because there's so many wonderful ideas, and sometimes, you might have to look for a special ingredient to go with it, but that one ingredient can open up a whole new world to you. It could be a different spice that you've never used

before, but oh my gosh, it's like ... You want to be a foodie and really enjoy food. That is the way to go. Well, you mentioned ...

Alana: Absolutely.

Theresa: You mentioned cauliflower, and I want to talk on that for just a second because I do feel like here in America, yes, it's starting to get some more attention, but I still feel like people avoid it like the plague. If I were to tell them I'm going to be serving cauliflower, they get a funny look in their face, and you talk in the book about ... and a lot of your recipes about roasting it.

Alana: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Theresa: I think that's such a beautiful way to serve it. What do you find is the best way to serve it? Do you find roasting is the best way?

Alana: Oh, yeah. Hands down. There's many vegetables that I like to do all different ways, but I will never do anything other than roast cauliflower. I even have a curry in the book where I roast it first, and then put it in the curry because what happens to cauliflower when it's roasted at a high heat is that all these amazing sugars come to the outside and you just get this brown deliciousness outside, and it's creamy inside.

It is an amazing treat, and I know I'm not the only one who has confessed to eating an entire tray of roasted cauliflower before it actually gets to the dinner table. It's like I'll be finishing other things, and I'm just like munching in, and then it's like ... It's so good, and I think that often, it's one of those vegetables that can get boiled, and then it gets stinky or people eat it raw. You can't taste any of the flavor of cauliflower when it's raw. It just chalky, and so I think roasting is absolutely the way to go, and I love it roasted with pasta, roasted on its own, and it's just like ... It's just a beautiful side dish.

I actually love to do it with a little olive oil and also some cumin seed, which I found is just a really nice addition to roasted cauliflower, so I'll put cumin seeds with the cauliflower as it roasts in the oven, and they get toasty, and then you get these little bursts of that flavor and a little bit of crunch in addition, and it elevates it just a little bit more, so that's one of those tricks that I am really grateful that I've come to know, for sure.

Theresa: Ah, and I'm going to have to try that. Definitely. I have not used the seed, so I definitely want to try that, and I love what you're saying about the caramelization because I feel that's what happens with Brussels sprouts as well. Now, you always like to do a pan-fry of your Brussels sprouts. I've always roasted them, but you do have to be careful that you don't over-roast or you get the whole stinky house smell.

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- Alana: And the mushy inside sometimes.
- Theresa: Yeah.
- Alana: Yeah.
- Theresa: It's like you have to keep your eye on it, but if you do it right, it's so good. With the pan-fry, I suppose it's a little bit easier to control.
- Alana: It's true. It's a little easier to control, and I ... Brussels sprouts was one of those vegetables that for years, I would forget about in the oven, and A, it'd be stinky, and then B, it'd be mushy. Actually, the pan-frying technique was one that I first learned from Heidi Swanson who writes the blog 101 Cookbooks and several wonderful books, and they're halved. The Brussels sprouts are halved, and they're put face-down in a cast iron pan.
- Essentially, they're caramelized by being their connection with the pan, and then they're covered, so they're steamed after that, and the result ... I love a good roasted Brussels sprout like don't get me wrong about that, but the result is this crunchy freshness that I miss with the roasted Brussels sprouts. They're bright green, and there's just a lot more water left in there, so you get ... and it also happens a lot faster, so often, I take so long to cut my Brussels sprouts that I really want to cook them faster.
- Theresa: Yeah. Right.
- Alana: I'm totally sold on the pan-frying, and I think that really is the way I always end up doing. It takes a lot of pan space, but it's also super beautiful to have all these little bright green rounds in your cast iron pan. It's a lovely moment, for sure.
- Theresa: Well, I have to tell you that my kids are going to try this. I have two teenage boys, and their favorite vegetable is Brussels sprouts, believe it or not.
- Alana: Good for them.
- Theresa: Yeah.
- Alana: I believe it. They're so good.
- Theresa: Yeah, they are so good. They are like candy, and we do what you do with cauliflower is what happens with us when we make Brussels sprouts. They never make it to the table because we make it and it will be sitting there while we're like dishing everything up and everyone is reaching in and ... like popcorn.

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- Alana: Yeah, so good.
- Theresa: It's so good. Yeah, so we're going to try this with the pan-fry. I think that sounds really fun, and I do think it sounds a little bit more easier to control. You're right there keeping your eye on it more.
- Alana: Exactly. You just want to make sure they don't get too ... You have to control your pan heat so that they don't burn on the bottom, but you're just there, so you can take a peek at them and see how they're doing, which is nice.
- Theresa: Right. Okay. Perfect. Yeah. We're going to do that.
- Alana: Tell me how it goes. I'm excited to hear ...
- Theresa: I will. Yeah, yeah, yeah. We'll send you a photo.
- Alana: All right. Perfect.
- Theresa: Yeah. Another recipe that I really want to talk about was the fresh corn and stone fruit because you ...
- Alana: I keep it.
- Theresa: Yeah. It just looks and sounds amazing, and you say that some recipes have the power to transform the way we think of ourselves as a cook and that this recipe can do that. Like you had me right there. I was like, "Ah," and I would love for you to talk about that. What is it about this recipe that you feel can transform us as a cook?
- Alana: Well, there are so many strange things about this recipe. I mean, first, it's very simple. It comes together in just a few minutes. At a certain time in the summer, everything is there, and it peaks, so you tend to have all these ingredients right on your counter waiting to be created. The first piece of it is that the corn is served raw and cut right off the cob. This is a really good recipe to really make the most of that really great corn at the moment when you want to enjoy it the most.
- The corn is cut right off the cob and eaten raw, which was a new thing to me when I started making this recipe, and then not only that, but it's combined with either nectarines or peaches. That is a wild combination, and then there is fresh herbs and a little jalapeno pepper, and it's just all stirred together with the corn juice and the stone fruit juice, which really makes its own dressing, and then there's some lime juice just squeezed on the top. There is nothing like this to be summer in a bowl. It is so beautiful. It's so fast, and I've served this at people's weddings. It's so fancy and beautiful.

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- Theresa: Wow.
- Alana: There's something about the simplicity about the imagination behind it that it's like, "Wow, we have scallions, and peaches, and jalapeno, and corn all together," and also, just the reaction from everyone who eats it that can make you realize that if you just step out of ... For me at least, it made me realize if I could just step out of the comfort zone of what I thought I could do or what was okay, that it's possible to create things that are just so simple, but so different than what I normally eat. It's like I like cooked corn. I don't like raw corn, or I don't mix fruits and vegetables, or all of those things, and this really is the embodiment of all of those moments of stepping outside of the box for me.
- Theresa: Ah, what caught my attention was, first of all, the beautiful photo, and yes, the unusual combination of corn with a stone fruit, but then I started reading the recipe, and I'm like, "And there's a jalapeno in there?"
- Alana: Yeah.
- Theresa: Like that's like going to be a magical surprise that I just ... I can't wait to try this. It just sound so amazing, and you have graciously said that we can post this recipe with the show notes, so I so appreciate that because I know everyone after listening to you describe it is going to want to make it, so that's fantastic.
- Alana: Oh, thank you for sharing it.
- Theresa: Oh, yeah. It just sounds so amazing, and to be serving that at a wedding I'm sure was magical as well.
- Alana: It's great for any occasion, for sure.
- Theresa: Absolutely. Absolutely. Well, I just feel your recipes are really amazing, and I definitely wanted you to know that, so I'm so glad that you could come on.
- Alana: Oh, thank you, Theresa.
- Theresa: Yeah. Absolutely. I really feel like what you're doing, you're really impacting people to want to step out and learn how to really appreciate their vegetables, and this is so important if we are growing the vegetables and we've put all this work into it. We definitely want to enjoy the best flavor that we can get from them, and that's what you show in the book, so what I'd love to ask you for the last question is, what would you like people to take away from your book and your blog Eating from the Ground Up?
- Alana: What I hope people can take is the ability to focus on the pleasure of cooking and eating. I think so often, especially when it comes to a topic like vegetables,

eating can be loaded. There's so much out there about health and what's going to make us superheroes or what's going to give us cancer. It's just like there's so much information that can really make eating such a weighty task, and especially when we have these beautiful vegetables that we have grown ourselves or we've purchased from a farmer, it's like getting back to just the simple experience of loving, cooking, and eating them. That's what I hope that people will take from this book and just let go of some of the baggage that can be there because I really do think that joy is an essential nutrient in anything that we eat. Especially when we have such beautiful ingredients, it's easy to just feel the joy of the ingredients.

Theresa: I love that. I love that so much. Thank you so much for coming on the show today. I really appreciate it.

Alana: Oh, thank you so much for having me. It's been really wonderful to talk with you.

Theresa: I hope you enjoyed that interview with Alana Chernila, the author of *Eating from the Ground Up*. Now, remember. She has graciously shared her recipe for fresh corn and stone fruit, and I know after hearing that description, you're going to want to make this recipe. I know I do. You can get a full PDF printout of this recipe in the show notes for today's episode, and that's also where I will have more information all about Alana, her website, her books. Everything that she does. To get to the show notes, just go to livinghomegrown.com/150 and everything will be right there for you.

As a reminder, today's podcast episode was brought to you by my Living Homegrown Institute, which is my membership site. If you would like to get the free PDF Success Path that my students use inside my membership, then just go to livinghomegrown.com/path and I'll have it there for you for free. That's it for today's episode. I hope you got some new ideas that you can use with the vegetables that you're growing in your garden or that you're picking up at the local farmers' market, and I hope they all taste delicious. Until next time, just try to live a little more local, seasonal, and homegrown. Take care.

Announcer: That's all for this episode of the Living Homegrown Podcast. Visit livinghomegrown.com to download Theresa's free canning resource guide and find more tips on how to live farm-fresh without the farm. Be sure to join Theresa Loe next time on the Living Homegrown Podcast.