
Living Homegrown Podcast – Episode 151 Behind-the-Scenes of Farm Fresh Living

Show Notes are at: www.LivingHomegrown.com/151

Theresa: And people sometimes think they can't live farm fresh unless they are a farmer, and I wanted people to realize that all they have to do is be closer to their food somehow, whether they're buying it from the farmer's market, or they're growing it themselves, but understanding the seasonality of the food that they're eating and understanding the nuances of flavor. They can have all of that and have the farm to table lifestyle without having the farm part.

Female announce: This is The Living Homegrown Podcast, episode 151.

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. Now that includes organic 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'd like to learn more about any of these topics or my online courses, my coaching, or my Living Homegrown Institute, then just visit my website, LivingHomegrown.com.

All right. I'm kind of excited about today's podcast episode because it's something I've never done before. I actually had someone interview me on this episode. I thought it would be really interesting because several of you have asked me to be interviewed or have someone ask me some questions, and I've been doing this podcast now for three years, and I've never had someone interview me on my own show. Well, this was something I did recently for a friend of mine, James Wedmore, I went on his podcast, on two different episodes, and I interviewed him so that his listeners could get to know some of the stories that I knew, some of the back history of him, and some of the things that make his business work and make his podcast work. So I've seen other podcasters do this,

where maybe they have their spouse interview them or a friend, and I thought, "I want to do that." It was fun to do for James, so I thought it would be fun to do on this podcast.

Well it just so happens that a member of my team, Bev Ross, is also a fellow podcaster, so I thought she would be the perfect person to bring on to interview me. Now, you probably recognize that name because Bev has also been on two other podcast episodes. She was on episode 122, Lessons from a Beginner Homesteader, because a little over a year ago, she dove into homesteading with her husband, and so I interviewed her about that whole process. And then she was just recently on again for episode 145, where we talked about raising baby goats.

Now a few months ago, Bev also joined my team. She now helps me manage my Living Homegrown Institute, my membership site, and my Facebook group that the members get, she helps me manage that, and she helps with this podcast, which is perfect because she and her friend Sam have a podcast called We Drink, We Farm. It's kind of a fun podcast, it's definitely for adults, it's kind of a ... I think the way she describes it is "adult talk about farming and drinking", so they talk about weekly farm stories, things that are happening on their farm and their farmstead, and they say that they get into slightly inappropriate fun.

So she's been doing her own podcast, she knows how to interview people, and she's on my team, she knows me, she knows a lot of the backstory, and she's just a great friend, so I thought it would be fun to have her do the interviewing. So what do we talk about? Well, we get into everything from what I'm growing in my backyard or up at my farmstead up in northern California to how I even got into a farm fresh lifestyle in the first place, what my typical day is like, all sorts of stuff. So I think you will really enjoy it, and in the show notes, I will link to everything that we talked about. Now, to get to the show notes, you go LivingHomegrown.com/151, and everything will be there, all of the links for you to dive in deeper to anything we talk about here.

Before we dive into this interview, I wanted you to know that today's episode is brought to you by my Living Homegrown Institute, which is just my monthly membership site, where you get access to an entire library of monthly master classes. Now, these classes will help you live farm fresh without the farm. In my membership, we cover everything from how to grow heirloom tomatoes and raise chickens to how to make your own homemade cheese and fermented vegetables. I believe that living an organic farm fresh lifestyle is really a journey in learning, and as we learn these different skills, such as food fermentation, and food growing, and even critter keeping, there are three distinct stages

for growth. We start out being curious, we move into experimentation, and eventually, we grow into mastery of these different skills.

If you're looking at creating a farm fresh lifestyle for yourself, and you're curious where you fall on that growth scale with all the different skills, then I have 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 to take you to the next level. To get to the Success Path PDF, you just go to LivingHomegrown.com/Path, that's P-A-T-H, and you can download it there for free.

Okay. So are you ready to learn more about me? I had a lot of fun doing this, and it wasn't as scary as I thought it was going to be. So with that, let's dive into the interview. This is Bev Ross interviewing me, Theresa Loe.

Bev: Hi, Theresa. Thanks for having me on and letting me interview you.

Theresa: Sure. This is so weird, being on the opposite side of the interview, but I'm excited about this. I think it will be really fun, and I'm really thankful for you to do this, so thanks for asking the questions.

Bev: Oh, you're very welcome, and, you know, it's funny, when you asked me to do this, I thought to myself, "Yeah. This is something that we should totally do on her show." Because I know I've been a listener almost since the beginning, but the things I'm going to ask you today are things that have always been in the back of my mind, so I'm imagining that they're in the back of other listener's minds as well. So this is going to be a fun way to get to know you better and get to know the show better, and it just helps enhance the listening experience, I guess, for lack of a better word.

Theresa: Yeah. Well thanks, and you probably have learned some of the answers to your questions, but if ... be asking things that we haven't discussed yet. You're on my team so we talk a lot, but I'm excited to ... yeah, I'm totally ... I'm a little nervous, but totally open to talk about anything you want, so ask away. I'm ready.

Bev: All right. So one of the things that I've always wanted to know, because you live in the city, in the suburbs of Los Angeles, right?

Theresa: Yeah, I do.

Bev: So how did you get into the farm fresh lifestyle?

Theresa: That's a really good place to start. Okay, so yes, I live in Los Angeles, I live right in the heart of Los Angeles, but I'm at the beach, so I actually have a beach, I'm in a beachy community, I'm a mile from the ocean, so we have cooler climate here. And the way I got into this lifestyle is really because my parents lived this way. We always had a garden, we lived in the Pasadena area, right by ... near the Rose Bowl, we totally had really hot summer weather, so we had a great, sunny backyard, and my parents grew food just for fun because my mom loved to cook, so she loved to grow tomatoes and herbs and things for her cooking, and my dad was really into growing roses, so we always had a garden, and I grew up at my mom's apron strings learning how to cook. Then we also loved to do crafts and how-to projects, my dad loved to do woodworking and things like that, so we were always into food. I grew up being a foodie. We were always into food. I didn't have chickens growing up, I didn't have goats or anything like that, but it was something I always wanted, I wanted to be more connected to my food, I wanted to live that lifestyle because I loved food so much and I knew that fresh ingredients, in season ingredients, really made a difference.

But as I grew up, I didn't want to move out to the country, I wanted to stay in the city, so I started growing things in my backyard when I went off to college just so that I would have the freshest ingredients and the freshest herbs, and when I got married, luckily my husband totally supported me in having backyard chickens and homesteading in my backyard just so that I could have the absolute freshest ingredients and things that I couldn't find at the grocery store. So I was starting to use things in my cooking that I couldn't find anywhere else, and since I loved to garden, I was like, "I'll just grow that myself." So I started doing that, and I just kind of learned to grow intensively in a really small area. But it was something I guess I just learned as a child because I loved food. So for me, the connection is delicious food, and that's how I got into everything.

Bev: That's so neat. I think that story really resonates with a lot of people. That's sort of how I think a lot of us get excited about our food and fresh ingredients. That's the first time you start putting your hands in the dirt.

Theresa: Yeah, exactly. And I was in the dirt ... this sounds so funny, but I was in the dirt as a little kid because my mom was out there, so I would be sitting right next to her, and I'm actually playing in the dirt, and I'm growing my own little flowers. I was really into flowers growing up, so yeah, I think once you get that in you ... and it's not difficult to do. You learn it as a child, and it's not hard. Not everything works, and it's okay to fail, and you learn patience. You learn a lot of life skills being a gardener and even raising animals, so yeah, I think it's a great place to start and it's where a lot of people start.

-
- Bev: So what do you currently have growing in your backyard?
- Theresa: I have a lot of things. Right now ... in case anyone doesn't know, I only have one tenth of an acre here in Los Angeles, the property is at a prime, so we all have very small backyards, but I pack a lot into that small space. So pretty much every space that is dirt has something growing in it that is edible. And a lot of people are even surprised, if you look at the landscape, you wouldn't even realize that some of the things were edible until you walk up and you're like, "Oh my gosh, that's celery." You didn't even realize celery was growing right there next to the roses. So I have three chickens right now in my backyard, so they have their own little section and their own little chicken coop, but in order to get more food in my space, I have espaliered apple trees around the perimeter.
- So I have about five apple trees, and we get a lot of fruit from those apple trees, but they're all espaliered, which is ... it's just a technique for growing the tree flat against a fence so that you can get a lot in that space without putting shade on the garden in front of the trees. So then, around the perimeter also, I have these four foot beds, and I grow all different kinds of herbs, I probably have about 50 different types of herbs, I have a lot of vegetables, I have some fruit, and I also have some container citrus trees because I don't have a lot of space for a lot of trees, so I only need a lemon or two every once in a while for my cooking, so what I do is I grow those lemon trees in containers. So I have a lot of container plants that I move around the garden when something gets empty.
- I also have flowers. I have a lot of roses. I do eat my roses, so they're all organic. I grow them for decorations, for garnishes, I like to make things with them. They're all growing in organic ways so that I can use them if I want to eat them, but I also like to have flowers, not only for the beauty that they bring, but they also draw in the pollinators. So I have different flowers mixed in all throughout my garden, so it's not just a green vegetable garden, it's kind of a cottage-y garden, and that's what I have going on.
- Bev: Oh man, that sounds so pretty. So what is the most unusual vegetable that you think you have right now?
- Theresa: Unusual vegetables, okay. I've got several that I'm growing right now, and I may butcher the names or may not know the names, but I will put in the show notes below the podcast, in our show notes, I will put all the links to the different vegetables, but I like to grow some unusual radishes, like watermelon radish, which is kind of fun if you have kids

because when you slice it, it actually does look like a watermelon on the inside, it's got red, and it totally looks like a little tiny watermelon. It doesn't taste like a watermelon, though, it has the spice of a radish. But I also love to grow really unusual colored carrots. That's something that I'm always adding in succession in my garden so that I can always be harvesting them. Carrots come in all different colors other than orange. You can get white carrots, and red carrots, and all different shades in between, so I love to always be growing different carrots, and I actually just mix them up. I always have different seeds. When I harvest them, I just sprinkle in new carrots in that area or in another area if I'm rotating.

I also like to grow different types of zucchini because I love zucchini, and we do make a lot of chocolate zucchini bread, that's one of the things that my kids love. But I sometimes can grow too much, so I try to only grow one of each type. There's one that is round, I think it's called eight ball zucchini, I'm not 100% sure, but it's round and it's not quite as prolific as my other zucchinis, so I like having it because I can just harvest one every once in a while and it doesn't take up a huge amount of space. It grows in a very small space. I actually have that one in a container. So I'm always switching things out, but then of course, when it comes to any sort of seed growing, that's what's fun about it, is you might see something you've never grown before in a seed catalog, and for like a dollar or a dollar fifty, you can order those seeds and give it a try. It's not a big investment, and yet you might find something totally new that you've never experienced before. So that's what's fun about growing things yourself from seed in your own backyard. You can grow anything.

Bev: Oh yeah, definitely. And I love those watermelon radishes, the kids, I can actually get the kids to eat those because they're so cool looking.

Theresa: Yeah, and that's something we should talk about because if you have kids, there are really beautiful vegetables that you can grow, and when a kid plants it themselves or is part of the growing of it, they are so much more likely to actually eat it, and that's what's so cool about gardening with your kids.

Bev: Oh yeah, for sure. So one of the things that you have talked about on the podcast before is your family's farmstead that's up north from where you guys live, and I've always been curious, what is the farmstead? How did you get a farmstead? What is this?

Theresa: Yeah, I sometimes talk about it, and I always realize afterwards I don't really give the backstory on that, so people write to me afterwards, so I'm glad you asked that, that's actually a really good question. So about

five years ago ... let me back up even further. My parents have property up in the Sierra Nevada, where they have a log cabin that my dad built, and it's kind of a vacation property for the family, and it's just four or five acres of property. Now, right nextdoor to that was a farmstead that was fourteen acres, and it went up for sale about five years ago, and I really ... my husband and I really wanted it because we knew it had an heirloom orchard that has about 60 trees on it, and whoever purchased it, no doubt, was going to tear out that orchard, and was going to probably subdivide it, and we wanted to preserve it, plus it had this beautiful old 1892 farmhouse that was in desperate need of restoration on the property.

So we ended up purchasing it with my parents, and all of us together started refurbishing it. Since that time, my husband and I have purchased it back from my parents, my father passed away about three years ago, so my mom can't maintain it, so now my husband and I have purchased the property, so we are still working to restore it. And I have already pretty much restored the heirloom orchard, which had been in horrible disrepair because an elderly woman had lived there, her husband and she had purchased it and owned it for like 40 or 50 years, but prior to that was when the trees were planted. So some of these trees are really ancient, old heirloom apple trees, and although she had cared for the trees, as she got older, they were not cared for, so they were kind of rat's nests, and I think anyone else would have just torn them out. But I knew the potential was in there for these to have incredible flavor, they were still producing, and she and her husband had had an organic farm there. They had just kind of been homesteading, they were, in the '60's and '70's, had been homesteading and selling their produce.

So the property had always been kept organic, which is another thing I loved about it, so we purchased it and I got some help from a local apple farmer, and started working on restoring those trees. We have so many different types of fruit. It's not just apple trees, although there's a lot of apple trees. We discovered, which we didn't even know until we started pruning and waiting for the fruit, it was kind of like a discovery, we discovered that we had pear trees, and apple trees, and cherry trees, and peaches, and it was kind of a shock when we also had this whole bramble area and we cleaned it out and discovered that there were grape vines there, and that there had apparently been a little grape vineyard growing with beautiful grapes. They started producing grapes immediately as soon as they got sunshine. I don't know how they lived under all those brambles, but they're ancient. Really, like 50, 60 year old grape vines, and they still are giving fruit.

So it became this quest with my family and especially with me, that I wanted to discover what flavors were here on the property. So we've since planted some ... where there were some blank spots, or where trees had decayed or died, I replanted a couple things. I've planted some pluots, which are apricot/plum, and some pluerry, which are plum/cherry combination, they're absolutely delicious, I also planted some persimmon and quince so that I could ... those are just things that I love to cook with so I wanted to have those on the property. And we have already restored the downstairs of the farmhouse, and it's been this adventure, really, and eventually, my husband and I are going to move there and live on the property, so it's ... but it's a total of fourteen acres, we have a caretaker who lives there now and takes care of it, and then we go up there each month and we work on the property. So when I talk about it, when I have all this fruit and we're making all these things, all the canning that we're doing up there, that's why, because we have so much fruit. Right now, we're giving all that fruit to our neighbors since we're not there to use all of it.

Bev: You know, you answered one of my questions without me asking it. I was going to say, wow, you guys are putting so much work into this place, is it eventually going to be your forever home? And it sounds like that's what you guys are working towards. It looks so cool.

Theresa: Yeah. Absolutely. And right now, we have the downstairs and that's where we stay, but eventually, we'll get the upstairs finished up and we're going to move there. My son, right now, is in high school, so we don't want to make him leave until he's in college, but that's our plan. It should be really fun.

Bev: Yeah, definitely. So we know that you do a lot of canning and food preservation, how did you get into canning? How did you become the canning expert that you are now?

Theresa: Yeah, so I actually have a degree in engineering. I went through school, and upon graduation, realized that that was not my passion. I have an aptitude for it, but it's not my passion. Everyone in my family is an engineer, so that's kind of why I went that direction. But while I was working as an engineer, I decided to go back to school, so I started studying sustainable horticulture at UCLA, and I also went through their Culinary Arts Certificate Program, which is basically cooking school, you have to wear the chef coat, you're learning how to be a chef in a kitchen. I went through all of that program. And I decided that really what I ... the reason I was doing this was that I loved to cook, I loved to garden, and I was trying to learn how to be a better cook of what I was growing.

And I also had canned my whole life because my parents did, but I wanted to make sure I was doing it properly, so I went through the Master Food Preserver Program in Los Angeles. And it's actually through the extension service. So I went through that whole program, got training there, but I also got culinary arts training so that I really learned how to make everything that I was doing taste better. There's little tricks for bringing out the nuances of fruits and vegetables, and that's what I learned how to do by going through the culinary school stuff. And I was doing all of this at night. I did it for several years while I was working as an engineer.

I started my blog in 2008, so quite a long time ago, ten years ago, and I started writing for different publications, and I eventually started working for a TV show, for Growing a Greener World, and because I was already doing all this and had all the training and the certifications, I started teaching people how to can on our PBS show, Growing a Greener World. So that's how I became the canning expert. It was something I was doing, but I also wanted to make sure I was doing it right, so I got all the training that I could so that I understood food safety, and I also understood the nuances of flavor.

Bev: Oh yeah, I think that's one thing that people forget about when they start to garden, is that you can't use everything that grows right away when your garden isn't doing very well. So learning how to can safely, and learning how to can so you can get the best flavor possible are both so important. It's an important part of being a gardener, if you're interested in keeping your harvest.

Theresa: Yeah, well we put all that work into it, the last thing we want to do is end up throwing it away because we didn't get to eat it. If you've ever grown something like zucchini, you know there's only so much you can give away before people are hiding from you because they don't want you to share, like, "No more zucchini. I'm so over zucchini." So having a way to preserve it so that it doesn't go to waste is really important.

Bev: So what is your family life like? I know we've heard about your husband and we've heard about your sons, but only in passing.

Theresa: Yeah, I guess I don't talk about them very much, because now my kids are older, both my boys are teenagers, but when I first started writing online or even podcasting, they were younger, so I didn't talk about them that much, but now I feel like they're old enough, they wouldn't care one way or another. But yeah, I've been married now for, gosh, 28 years, to Rick, and he's not a gardener, but he will help me with whatever I need. If I pull up with a truckload full of bark or compost or

whatever, he's always willing to roll up his sleeves and help me there, so that's really why I'm able to do what I do, he's not gardening out there with me, but he definitely helps with whatever I'm working on, I just have to point him in the right direction.

And my two boys, Dylan and Trevor, Dylan is going into being a sophomore in college, I can't believe that, and he's studying computer science. And Trevor is going to be a senior this year, and he's either going into engineering or physics, he hasn't decided. But what's cool about my kids is that they definitely help with everything I have going in the backyard. A lot of people ask me about traveling, because I travel a lot, both for the PBS show and for my own business, and they're always saying, "Who's taking care of the garden and the chickens?" And my kids are usually doing that. My kids will water, they take care of the chickens every day, they raise those chickens as babies, so they're super helpful around the house and they actually know how to cook a few things, too. I always tell them, "One day, your wife is going to thank me because you know how to cook. This is important."

Bev: Yeah, definitely. So what does your typical day look like? I know you're so busy with the PBS show, and the podcast, and your garden, and your chickens, and your farmstead. What does a day look like for you?

Theresa: What does a day look like? Actually, a day is never quite the same, every day is a little bit different, but I do have a routine. I have a morning routine that I do every day, and I'm actually a very early riser, and people are like, "Oh yeah, okay. So you get up at what, six?" No, actually I get up at 4:30. I start my day at 4:30 in the morning, and it's not that I'm setting an alarm, I don't set an alarm, that's just what time I wake up. And it's really from working on the TV show for as long as I have. I'm in Los Angeles, everyone else on the show is in Atlanta, so they're three hours ahead. So if they're out in the field when we would be doing a show that I might be in charge of, they would be out in the field at 6:00 in the morning, which, for me, is 3:00 in the morning, so I needed to be up early in case they needed me. But now, it's just like that's my body clock now. So I love getting up at 4:30 in the morning. I have several hours before anyone else wakes up, and I get the majority of my work done in that timeframe because there's no interruptions, it's very quiet.

But I have a morning routine, I meditate every day, that probably sounds really weird, but I do, I meditate every day, I have some time where I read every day, and the night before ... the way I'm so productive is the night before, I pick what I'm going to be working on the next day, and I usually have three top things that I need to accomplish the next day, and after my morning routine, I start with what's most important, and I get that done first in that quiet moment

from 4:30 to 6:30 before anyone else in the family wakes up. But the rest of my day is really split between my Living Homegrown stuff, like my membership content for my membership site, or recording this podcast, and then it's also split between my business coaching, really 50/50. So about half my work week is with my business coaching, my one-on-one clients or my group coaching program, and then the other half is on my Living Homegrown content, like this podcast.

Bev: So I don't think most listeners know that you're a business coach. What kind of clients do you coach? Are they just related to the farm fresh lifestyle, or do you coach other types of businesses? Tell us about that.

Theresa: It's funny. Right as I was saying that, I thought, "People aren't going to know what I'm talking about when I say business coaching." It's good you asked that question. Yes, I am a business coach, and some of my clients are farm fresh type people, and it's something I've been doing for the last couple years under the radar, so really, I never talk about it on the podcast. I might have mentioned it very briefly before, but it's really half my business is that I coach people, usually how-to experts, they could be writers, like garden writers, or cookbook authors, but I have other types of how-to experts, too, and I teach them how to basically digitize their expertise into online courses and memberships like I have done. I teach them how to actually create the courses, how to market it, how to think like a CEO, I basically teach them how to run an online business in a profitable way.

So I started doing this a couple of years ago because I was being very profitable and my business was taking off, and people who knew me in the industry came to me and said, "Can you show me how you did that?" So I started doing some coaching on the side, and that turned into a group coaching program. I have one-one-one clients, but the types of people I do, I have farmers, I have photographers, I have a dog trainer that I've taught, I even have some brick and mortar people who are taking their brick and mortars onto ... more online. But a lot of garden writers, absolutely, and a lot of cookbook authors because they were following me already, so that's why. But it's really fun. I love doing it.

Bev: That's really neat. I had no idea that you did business coaching until I joined your team.

Theresa: Yeah, I just talked to someone yesterday who was like, "I had no idea you did that." And it's like, the reason I haven't promoted it is because I already have a four month wait list, so as soon as I let people know, I got so inundated that I really ... there aren't enough hours in the day.

But now, I'm starting to create group programs, and I teach people in larger groups, and it's working out really great so I can reach more people. So yeah, I am going to be getting the word out on it more, but I've been doing it for years, just quietly on the side, like you have to know the secret handshake to know about it, but yeah, it's been fun. Very, very rewarding, and I love doing it and seeing people take their ideas and get it to more people because that's really ... that's the thing, and I think that anyone who is in this space, whether you are teaching classes on your farm, or you're someone who is teaching in person recipe classes, or workshops, or teaching people how to bake, the thing is that you can ... when you're only one person teaching a group in a room, you can only reach those people.

And when you take it online, this whole world opens up to you, and that's how I got my business to be successful. It's now a multiple six figure business, and it's because I started teaching canning online, and getting people to ... getting me to reach a bigger audience so that I could help people. That's really what it's all about. So in our area of farm fresh, there's so many different things that people can teach, from taking care of goats, to how to grow vegetables in your backyard, and it's a really great thing to teach online, and I love to help people do that.

Bev: And one of the other things that you do, too, I don't hear you promote it very often, but you actually also teach a lifestyle productivity course.

Theresa: Yeah.

Bev: So you help people that are in this realm manage their time better so that they can actually get all their stuff done. Maybe you can expand on that better than I can.

Theresa: Yeah, you just nailed it. You totally nailed it. I do, and it is something that I haven't promoted really a lot, it was something I kind of started because I was getting people asking, "How do you do so much?" Which is what you alluded to also, and being super organized helps, but there's also some tricks to it, like having a routine. When we have really productive habits, then it makes it very easy. If we wake up in the morning and say, "What should I work on today?" We probably won't have a really productive day. But if the night before, we figure out what are the most important things to cover, and, "What should I do first? What's the most important thing?" We can end up getting those things done and out of the way before we're checking our email, because that's really one of the tricks.

I do not look at my email first thing in the morning until after I've had my two hours of my special focused time in the morning. The only time that's different is if my crew, the PBS crew, is out in the field and I know they're going to need me, but really, if they needed me, they would text me. So I know that if it's an emergency, even you guys on my team, you would text me if it was like, "The website is down." You would be texting me at four o'clock in the morning, but otherwise, if it's an email, it can wait until I get my most important thing done. And for someone on a farmstead or someone with a farm, there are always so many things that need to get done, and when we wake up in the morning and then decide, we might not get what's the most important.

So I'm always looking, what's the one thing that I should get done, that by doing that makes the other things easier? And sometimes, there's something on our farm. "If I could just get the fence finished, then everything else would fall into place." Well that should be what you work on first every day until it's done, so that's how ... yes, I do teach about productivity, too, so I'm glad you brought that up.

Bev: Well it's so smart. I don't know if this ever happens to you, but I've had people accuse me of not sleeping because of how many things I have my fingers in. And I'm like, "No, I get eight hours of sleep a night." I have to because if I don't, then I can't function. My brain just is not at its full octane. I can't think, I can't do all of the things, I can't organize, so-

Theresa: No, you're so right. And that's something that's really important that I think a lot of people, especially moms, don't think about, but we have to have self care. We have to take care of ourselves in order to be taking care of our families, or being able to take care of our animals or our gardens. If we're not taking care of ourselves, there's no energy left to take care of anyone else. It's like what they say when you're on an airplane, put on your own oxygen mask first. That's so important. So yes, I'm glad you brought that up, though, yes, I do get sleep. I don't sleep eight hours, but I do get some sleep and I go to be really early, like nine o'clock, I'm conking out. I'm not this big night owl, I'm a morning person, and everyone has to know what's their zone of genius. For me, it's first thing in the morning. That's my time.

Bev: It's so good to know that. Yeah, I was going to say, not everybody needs eight hours of sleep like I do. It took me years to figure out that was what I needed, but some people are just find on six or seven.

Theresa: Yeah. You have to know. Actually, they say eight hours is really what we should have, but I usually run about seven hours, that's good for me.

- Bev: So how do you get this podcast all put together? What's the inner workings behind all of this?
- Theresa: You know this answer. We had talked about this being a good question to ask. This is a question that a lot of people ask about the podcast, and you were probably surprised when you saw how much goes into it when you first started, right?
- Bev: Oh yeah, I was totally surprised, because I had always just pictured you sitting there with a laptop getting it all. And I was like, "How does she do that? That can't be right. I'm not imagining this properly."
- Theresa: Yeah. When I first started the podcast, it was just me doing it, and it would take me fifteen, 20 hours the first couple ones that I did because there are a lot of moving parts, and I think people don't realize that. We now have it down to about six hours, but it's a team effort, and that includes the editor doing it too, but first of all, what I do is I pick a topic, or maybe a book has crossed my desk and I want to interview the author, and I put in almost an hour usually figuring out what it is I want to cover, how I want to cover it, the questions I would be asking, all of that. Then Kayla, who is also on our team, she sets it all up. So I just give her the name of the person and she coordinates it, but that is a time consuming effort going back and forth, getting everything all set up for someone to be on the show.
- So she handles that, she handles the calendar, and then on recording day, I record, and it's usually an hour per episode because it takes about 45 minutes to record the person, and then when I'm done, I spend a few minutes recording the intro and outro right after we're finished. Then I write up some notes and send them off to you, and you take that and you create the show notes for the show. And that means putting together the graphics that go with it and all of that. And meanwhile, I send the raw footage, or the raw audio, to the editor, and he edits and sends it back, and then we create transcripts from that, any content upgrades that we've promised, like if there's a recipe that goes with it, we have to create the PDF, and we have to connect that and make it so that people can download it.
- All of that, but on top of that, we have to release it and market it. So that means the social media that goes with it, getting it loaded up so that it goes to iTunes and all of our feeds properly, and then writing all the marketing copies so that people really understand what they're getting. And then sending the newsletter. So believe it or not, we've got a really tight system, I have it all documented from doing it all these years, and we just follow a process. And when you started, I just handed

you the process and you nailed it, got the first episode you ever did out the door on time, so we have it really detailed out. But it's a fair, now, to do, but we have it pretty tight. I think it takes about six hours per episode to produce one episode.

Bev: That sounds about right. And from how many people are touching it, four or five?

Theresa: Yeah.

Bev: It's kind of amazing.

Theresa: Yeah, exactly, and with each person's touch, it helps make it a better show because we're proofreading each other, we have ideas we bounce off of each other, so I love now that it's a team effort. But yeah, when you're first starting with a podcast and you're having to do it all yourself, it can be really overwhelming, plus you probably ... you wouldn't have all the bells and whistles that mine has now. We have special different types of ways that we promote it, we have the special PDFs that we have included, we have very detailed show notes, we have the transcript, all of that is not something that I would recommend for someone who is first starting their podcast, but it's something that you can add as you go, and especially if you can get help.

People are always surprised, I think they think, "Oh, it just takes you an hour, and boom, you're done." It's like, "No."

Bev: Like you just sit down and record it and type up your notes afterwards ... yeah.

Theresa: Even if I recorded it perfectly and there were no mistakes, we still have to add the audio, the music, and adjust the volume between the guest and me. There is still editing to be done even if it's perfect.

Bev: Oh yeah, definitely. And because I do my own podcast, I was really curious when you brought me on board to see how you did everything. I was like, "Man, I know I'm not doing this as efficiently as I could be."

Theresa: Well nobody does it efficiently to begin with. I think your podcast is great, and I know you're doing all of that yourself right now, but I wasn't efficient at the beginning either. I finally ... I was horribly inefficient, and I finally started realizing, "I'm doing this every single week and trying to remember all the things." So first, I started out with just a checklist, so did you do this, did you do this, I was just checking off myself. But then when I wanted to have help, that was tricky, like what part do I hand

off? One of the last things I handed off was editing, and you know because I went through how many editors before we found one that I liked, because nobody edit ... see we'll edit that out, but nobody edits it as well as you do because you care the most for it, so it's hard. In fact, I think I'll leave that in because that was funny.

Bev: I definitely agree. I keep talking about handing off the editing, and I'm like, I know that's always the thing that frees up the most time, but nobody cares about it as much as I do.

Theresa: Right. And there's certain things that you like and don't like, so it takes some time for people to learn that.

Bev: So what is the future of Living Homegrown? What are your dreams and aspirations for all of this?

Theresa: My dreams and aspirations. Really the reason I started Living Homegrown, the podcast and the website, was because I wanted to really help people live this type of lifestyle because I love it and people sometimes think they can't live farm fresh unless they are a farmer. And I wanted people to realize that all they have to do is be closer to their food somehow, whether they're buying it from the farmer's market, or they're growing it themselves, but understanding the seasonality of the food that they're eating, and understanding the nuances of flavor. They can have all of that and have the farm to table lifestyle without having the farm part.

So I definitely want to continue teaching people that, and continue growing my membership, and continue with this podcast. I think everything with Living Homegrown is just going to be about reaching more people and a larger audience. So I'm really, really pumped about helping people so that they're living a lifestyle that supports their own health, but also the health of the planet. Locally sourced, seasonal, packed with flavor and nutrition, organic, non GMO, all of that tied together in one package of living farm fresh, that's what I want to share with the world, and get more people to realize that it's possible for everybody, no matter where you live, or how big or how small your backyard space, you can live this too.

Well, I hope you enjoyed that interview. That was Bev Ross interviewing me, and everything that we talked about, including different seeds and different plants that I mentioned are in the show notes for today's episode. To get to the show notes, you just go to LivingHomegrown.com/151, and I'll have everything there for you. As a reminder, today's podcast episode was brought to you by my Living



Live farm fresh without the farm®

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, just go to LivingHomegrown.com/path, and it will be there for you for free.

That's it for today's episode. I hope you enjoyed that interview. Please let me know, and 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.

Bloopers