
Living Homegrown Podcast – Episode 156 Theresa's Favorite Farm-Fresh Things

Show Notes are at: www.LivingHomegrown.com/156

Theresa: This is The Living Homegrown Podcast, episode 156.

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 having a farm. Now that includes organic, small-space food gardening, canning, and fermenting the harvest, and artisan food crafts, like baking your own bread, or making your own yogurt. 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, including my online courses, my business coaching, or my Living Homegrown Institute, which is my membership site, then just go to my website, livinghomegrown.com

You know how when you get together with friends and you have maybe something that you have been using a lot that you love, or some special little tool, or a handy thing in the kitchen that you just discovered, and you share it with your friends, and everyone's like, "Oh, that's so cool!" Well, that's what today's episode is about. I just thought it would be super cool to share some of my favorite things. Maybe it's a favorite tool, or a kitchen appliance, or anything that I'm using on a regular basis, and I wanna share it with you because when I share what I'm using, I know it can help you have a more farm-fresh lifestyle. And I would love to invite you guys to all share things with me that you are using. You know, if there's some special little thing that you are using in your garden, or in your kitchen, or in your home that's helping you live a more farm-fresh lifestyle, then I wanna hear about it too.

Now I have to say right off the bat, that this is not some sort of like a sponsored post where companies have sent me tools, and I'm gonna talk about them because I got one for free. First of all, I don't do that. I don't care if someone wants to give me something for free. That doesn't mean I'm gonna endorse it.

And secondly, all the things that I'm talking about here are things that I've paid for with my own money, that I've been using for a long time, in many cases, like years and years that I've been using these things. And I just find that sometimes I'll be talking to someone, and I'll mention something that I'm using, like you know, a harvest apron for when I'm climbing up into our heirloom orchard, harvesting apples. And I'll mention this particular apron that I'm using, and everyone's like, "Oh, man! I didn't even know that existed."

So that's what today's all about is I just wanna share some of those things. But nothing here is a sponsored post. Now like I said, I would love to have you share with me some of your favorite things after you listen to this episode. And you can really do the sharing to me in two different places.

First of all, you can go to the show notes and share in the show notes for this episode, which is at livinghomegrown.com/156 And, in the show notes, I am going to have a printable PDF that links all of these favorite things with websites for where to find them. So if you are listening, you know, you're driving in your car, or you're exercising as you listen, or working in your garden, you don't have to stop and try and write any of this down, because the PDF will have all the information for you. And I'm just trying to make it super easy. So you can just listen, and if there's something that you wanna get, or check out, then you can just go to the show notes and print out the PDF, and it will all be there for you.

But also, you can also reach me in social media, especially on Instagram. Now, we're doing something new. My team and I have split my Instagram into two different accounts. I'm currently on [@theresaloe](https://www.instagram.com/theresaloe) and I've had that account for a couple of years. But because my business has sort of split into two, I not only teach people how to live farm fresh, I also teach businesses and entrepreneurs how to do what I'm doing online, which is teach online, have online courses, memberships, and how to run an online business. So I've been doing that for several years, quietly on the side. But I needed to have really a place on Instagram for people to be able to contact me about business topics, and about entrepreneurship, and keep the farm-fresh content, which is all about homesteading, eating farm fresh, raising chickens, all of that.

So, we have now created two different accounts. I'm on both of them. And if you want to chat with me, you can chat with me in either place. So, [@theresaloe](https://www.instagram.com/theresaloe) is more focused on business. Although, because it's really about my lifestyle, I do post, you know, when I'm making a pie, or anything else. And, if you want to chat with me about the podcast, about Living Homegrown in general, I will have [post@livinghomegrown](https://www.instagram.com/post@livinghomegrown) which is all about living farm fresh. So you can follow me in both places. I'm active in both accounts. And I would love it if on either account you connect with me and let me know any of your favorite things. I wanna know what's your favorite tools, what are your favorite seed companies, where do you buy supplies, spices, or herbs for your kitchen, what is your favorite kitchen tool? Anything like that. Let me know on

Instagram. So that would be really cool, because I want to continue this conversation, and I think that's the best place to do it.

All right. Now before we get started, I wanted to let you know that this episode is brought to you by my group-coaching program, Level Up and Leverage. Now, you may know that I have several online courses geared towards helping you live a farm-fresh lifestyle without having a farm. But you may not know that I also have courses for creative entrepreneurs, especially in the garden, food, and wellness space, who are wanting to set up a business like mine.

So inside, Level Up and Leverage, I teach them not only how to create courses, memberships, and workshops online, but how to run an online business successfully. Now, if you have ever considered teaching online, I have a special PDF for you called, The Five Signs You're Ready to Digitize Your Expertise. And it has a section at the end that will help you narrow down a good topic for your online product, whatever that may be. And to get a copy of this free resource, just go to livinghomegrown.com/free and you can download it there to get started.

Okay. Let's dive into my favorite farm-fresh things. Here we go. Number one, I have a favorite harvest apron. Now, if you know me or have followed me for any length of time, you probably know that I am all about vintage aprons. I probably have 50 or 60 vintage aprons, both here at home and at our homestead in Northern California. And I use them, not only while I'm cooking or maybe canning in the kitchen, but I also use them in the garden. I like to wear vintage aprons when I'm gardening, especially when I'm planting seeds so that I have a pocket to keep the seeds in while I'm working.

Well, this is different. My favorite harvest apron is by Roo. And it's very, very different. It's not in any way vintage, but it is so useful, especially if you are climbing up and down a ladder harvesting fruit from trees which, you know, I do a lot of because we have a heirloom orchard up in Northern California with all these fruit trees. So we do a lot of harvesting.

Well what I love about this harvest apron ... I've had it for years and years ... is that it has this pocket in the front, and it's quite large. And in this pocket, as you're harvesting, you're just placing the fruit that you're harvesting into the pocket. But then when you climb down that ladder, you just unhook this pocket, and you can dump all of the things that you just harvested into a basket or a bucket at the bottom of the ladder, and then climb right back up. But it also has like this nylon liner, and I've had some other harvest aprons that did not have this liner, and if you are ever harvesting on a cool morning when there is like a morning dew or moisture on the fruit, the front of your shirt can get soaked because it soaks through the harvest apron. But not so with the Roo apron, because it has this liner on it.

So that's why I love it. It's just super easy to use, and it keeps me clean, and it's very convenient even when I'm climbing up and down the ladder with a lot of fruit. Before this, I was trying to balance a basket at the top of the ladder. And you know what? It just wasn't safe. This is a much easier way to do harvesting. So, I will have, in the show notes, links to the Roo apron, and I think you would love it if you do a lot of harvesting yourself.

Okay. The second thing that I wanted to share with everybody is my favorite places to buy mail-order trees. Now there's two that I'm gonna list today. I actually have more than just these two, but these are probably my top two that I use the most. And the first one is Peaceful Valley Nursery, which is here in California, but they do mail order. And when I have spoken on the podcast before, you may have heard me mention some of the more unusual fruit trees that I have planted on our homestead, including pluerry which is a plum, cherry mix, or pluots, which are plum apricots. And I also grow quince which, you know, is an older fruit that a lot of people don't normally grow.

Well, sometimes it's hard to find those particular types of fruit trees, and Peaceful Valley has all of them. You can find them at groworganic.com but they mail order, and they are super wonderful with customer service. I just really love them to pieces. So that is one of my go-to places for mail ordering trees.

And another one is Stark Brothers. And what I love about Stark Brothers is that they also have some of the more unusual fruit trees that you might want to place in your backyard, or if you have a larger piece of property. They have things like, you know, nut trees and pawpaws, and they also have dwarf fruit trees, and multi-grafted trees, where you might have one tree with several different types of cherries, for example. So I really like Stark Brothers as well. And I think it's starkbros.com but again, all of the links will be in the show notes.

All right. Number three on my list of favorite things is my go-to garden marker. Now if you have ever written on a, let's say, a plastic plant tag while you're gardening, most of us would use Sharpies to do that? And so you write whatever the plant is, maybe the date that you planted it, and you stick it in the garden. And within just a few weeks, the sun can bleach that away. And right when you most need to know what it is, you can't read the tag. I'm sure that has happened to you if you have ever put plant tags out in your garden. Well, this was really frustrating to me for a really long time.

Well, a while back, I learned that there is a special horticulture garden marker that everyone uses in the greenhouse that will hold the words on your plastic marker, and it won't fade away. Now, if you already shopped from a greenhouse catalog, you probably already know about this. It was a new discovery to me several years ago after many years of frustration. So I wanna share it with you.

The particular one that I like to use is just called, Garden Marker Pen, and I buy it from Greenhouse Megastore. Now they cost about \$3.00 a piece, but I buy them in packs of five, and it's five for \$12.00. And I'm telling you, they work so great. They dry really fast, they're waterproof, and they have these like ultraviolet filters, so that they don't fade. It really, really works. And you can write on wood, plastic, metal, glass, anything. And it really holds the ... you know, the words stay there, so when you come back four or five months later, and you're harvesting whatever it is that you had planted, you can still read the tag. It's like just a lifesaver in the garden. So, I will again ... I will have links for that in the show notes? But I get it from ... My particular one that I buy is from Greenhouse Megastore. I'm sure that they carry it in other places, but that's what you want, is one that is specifically geared for writing out in the garden. It looks just like a Sharpie, and it works just like a Sharpie, but it lasts much, much longer.

Okay. Number four. Gauntlet gloves. If you at all garden with anything with brambles or thorns, you know, things like roses or blackberries, or raspberries, you have to have gauntlet gloves. Now a gauntlet glove is a gardening glove that goes all the way up to your elbow, and it kind of protects your arms. And I've tried so many in the past, and there's several out there that are really, really good. But the problem can be, with a lot of those, is either if they're not well made, they only last for a very short amount of time and they start getting holes in the fingers, which is not good when you're working around thorns. Or, if they are made with leather, which is what a lot of people go for the leather because they know that the thorns won't go through, and the fingers last longer. But the problem with the leather is that once they get wet, they get really stiff, and they shrink.

Now, the particular glove that I like is called West Country Gloves. And I buy it from gardeners.com And what I love about it is that it's a miracle fiber that the glove is made out of. So it can bend and get wet, and it doesn't shrink, it doesn't stiffen up. So it really does last longer than a typical glove. Also, it still protects your arms, you know, from thorns. It has a very thick almost canvass-like sleeve that goes all the way up to your elbows. And, because it's not made of leather, you can actually wash them, although I've never washed them before. You can certainly rinse them off out in the garden, but they are washable if you wanted to.

So, those are my favorite gauntlet gloves. Highly recommended if you grow roses, or anything with thorns.

All right. So let's move into the kitchen. Those were some of my favorite garden things, but let's move into the kitchen, and talk about some of my favorite kitchen things.

So number five on the list is a butter keeper. I don't know if you've ever used a butter keeper before, but what it is is it's usually made out of ceramic, it holds butter, and then it turns ... The container turns upside down into another bowl that has some water. So it creates a water barrier so that insects, and dust, and dirt, or anything in the kitchen will not get to the butter, so the butter stays clean and protected. But, because you can keep it out at room temperature, the butter is soft. So it's much nicer for spreading on, you know, your bread or muffins, or waffles, or whatever. So I really like having a butter keeper. But what I didn't like about them is if you search online and look for them, 90% of them are round. And so what you need to do with that is you take the stick of butter out, you set it on the counter, let it get soft, and then you have to scoop it into this round container. Because they've just traditionally been made round. But when I buy butter in the store ... You know, I guess I've made butter before, but I don't typically make my butter. I normally purchase my butter. And when I buy it in the store, it's in cubes.

So this particular butter keeper that I like is oblong. It is shaped in the same shape as a cube. Much easier to get it into the butter keeper. Now the one I like is called, Butter Bay. Again, I will have a link in the PDF for you. It comes in different colors too. That's another thing that's kind of fun. But it's oblong, and you just place like a quarter cup of water in the bottom tray. And then you place the butter cube into the oblong section. I do let it soften a little bit, but it presses right in. And then you just peel off the paper of your butter. And then you turn it upside down into the little tray of water. And you can set it on your counter.

Now butter out on the counter like this will last from two to three weeks. They say three weeks, but I always use it up before then. And with four people in my family, that's really not a problem. We go through butter, you know, with two teenage boys. And we go through butter pretty quickly. But if I was gonna go on a trip or something, I think I would probably stick it in the refrigerator, you know, if I was gonna be gone for a week or two.

So it stays on the counter at room temperature, and then you have nice softened butter for your fresh-baked bread. It's really quite nice. So again, it's called, The Butter Bay Butter Keeper. Boy, that's a tongue twister.

All right. Number six is Kraut Source. Now Kraut Source I have mentioned on the podcast all the time. It's one of my favorite fermentation tools. In fact, on Episode 153, I talked a lot about the Kraut Source because I had Karen Diggs on, who is the inventor of the Kraut Source, and we talked about fermenting real pickles. So if you missed that episode, Episode 153, all about fermenting cucumbers and making real pickles. And she talked a little bit about the Kraut Source there. But what it is is a little tool that you can set on top of any Mason jar, so you know, most of my listeners have a ton of Mason jars, or canning jars. And this tool sits on top of the Mason jar, and it creates the water barrier, just

kind of like the butter keeper does. So you have a moat around the top, and you add water there, and it has this little spring inside the jar that pushes all of the food below the brine. And if you've ever done fermenting, you know how important it is for the food to stay below the salt-water brine in order to keep it safe and fermented so that it doesn't spoil.

So this little tool's super easy to use. I love it because you get to use a clear glass jar. You can see through the jar, so you can watch the fermentation. You can also be making sure that everything's working properly, but most importantly, you can ferment in small batches. Before having the Kraut Source, I was using a big giant crock, and you couldn't see inside of it, and I kind of always felt like I needed to be fermenting a lot at a time. And we just wouldn't get through all of that particular food. You know, I would much rather do smaller batches, and experiment with different flavors. So each jar could maybe have different spices. Even if you're making sauerkraut, you could make several different batches, and each jar could have some different spices, so you could see what you like and what you don't like.

And, if something doesn't work, or you decide you don't care for it, you haven't wasted a lot of food because you did small batches. So Kraut Source is this tool that I just love. So that's probably my favorite fermentation tool. There's a lot of different tools out there. They're all good, but this was my favorite, 'cause I get to use my Mason jar.

Okay. Number seven on the list is a reusable water bottle. It's so, so important that we stop buying little plastic bottles of water, because we're just filling up the landfills. I try to always use my reusable bottle whenever possible. But we started off having a lot of plastic bottles that were reusable bottles, and that's not good either. Because, first of all, we're still using plastic, but secondly, the plastic can leach things into the water. And, we know, so many times we take our water bottle and it's sitting in the sun, and that can accelerate the leaching, having the heat or the warmth of the water inside the warm plastic. So I have just recently switched to a glass reusable water bottle. It was actually a gift from a friend of mine, who sent it as a thank you gift, and I was like, "This is so cool, because the glass is super thick, and it's shatter-resistant. So the brand that I'm talking about is called, "Soma," S-O-M-A. And the bottle is ... So the glass is thick, it's shatter resistance. The lid is ... It's made out of bamboo, so the cap, the screw-on cap, is made out of bamboo.

And what I also love about it ... Oh, it has this grip thing around the glass. 'Cause that was my other thing, was I didn't want the glass to slip out of my hands, especially if you're using it while you're working out, and you know, you go to grab it, your hands might be all sweaty. Or even out in the garden, you know, you might be wearing garden gloves, when you pick up your bottle.

So this particular one has a grip, a silicon grip, around the outside so that the glass doesn't slip out of your hand. And that comes in different colors. But what I also loved about it is that with every purchase of one of these bottles, they make a donation to a charity to provide drinking water globally. I love it when a company does that. So I love supporting that type of company. So, it's just my favorite right now. It was a gift, and I'm really enjoying it. But I'll have links in the show notes for you on where you can get a Soma Glass Water Bottle.

All right. Number 8 are EcoJarz lids. Now let me spell that for you. It's E-C-O-J-A-R-Z. There's a Z at the end of that. EcoJarz. So EcoJarz are these lids that you place on top of your Mason jars to turn them into travel mugs. So again, it's another way to use glass instead of plastic to put your drinking water or iced tea, or iced coffee, fruit water, just about anything. You can put it into a small Mason jar, and add one of the EcoJarz lids to it, and it turns into a sipping cup, or a cup with a straw. They have several different styles, different colors, different sizes, wide-mouth, small-mouth, everything. So, they're one of my favorites because they have so many choices and options. They even have one that's kind of like a flip top that you can put on top of the jar.

So, if you love using your Mason jars to drink out of, getting one of these EcoJarz lids is really handy because then it turns into a travel mug that you can take in your car. So, I think you'll like that.

All right. Number 9, which is an over-the-sink colander. Now I ... For a long time, I had a favorite basket, a metal basket that I still do like to use out in the garden. I'll add that to the list, the metal basket. It's a metal basket where you harvest and then like you can rinse everything off while it's in the basket. And, you know, shake the basket a little bit, and then bring that fruit and stuff inside.

But once I get it to the counter, I really love having this over-the-sink colander. It's kind of long and skinny. And the reason I liked that was the round colander is nice, but if I was like, let's say cleaning a root vegetable like carrots or beets, and I wanted to use the round colander, I would usually have to have the round colander on one side, and all of the fruits and vegetables on the other side. But if I'm doing just a small handful of things, it's kind of nice to have a colander that just sits over the top of the sink, and I can have everything, all the vegetables and everything, underneath.

So, in other words, like I'll reach under the colander, I'll grab a carrot, I will rinse it, and then put it into the basket over the colander. And so it works really, really well.

Now, what's nice about this particular one is that it has these extension arms, so it doesn't matter what size sink you have. I think the arms go out to about like 21 inches. So you can use this on any size sink, and it will set over, and it's

oblong. It still gives you space in the front to reach under for whatever you have in the sink that you're pulling out. If that makes sense.

So I love it for when I'm doing my greens or my root veggies. And as I rinse them, I put them into this over-the-sink colander. Now they cost about 30 bucks, so they're not super cheap, but they work really, really well. And I get my particular one from Peaceful Valley Nursery, which will ... You know, I've mentioned in some of the other ... with some of the other items, so they are definitely in the PDF in our show notes.

And I'll be sure to add, for number 10, my outdoor basket for harvesting. I didn't even have that on the list. But since I'm talking about it, I will add that as number 10 on the list. And I think you can also get that at Peaceful Valley as well. But it's also usually anywhere that you can buy garden tools, they usually have these heavy-duty metal baskets that you can put like, you know, your tomatoes in, and then hose them off before you bring them inside. Really convenient.

So I started off with nine, but it looks like I have ten things that are my favorites that I ended up sharing with you today. So I hope you got something out of that. I hope you enjoy using some of these things. Check out the PDF, and then please find me on Instagram, either @theresaloe or @livinghomegrown and let me know some of your favorite things. I'm serious about that. I love discovering new things, and if it's working for you, it might work for me. So I wanna know what are some of your favorite things in the garden, in the kitchen, or in the home?

And as a reminder, today's podcast episode was brought to you by my group-coaching program, Level Up and Leverage. And if you would like the free PDF, The Five Signs If You're Ready to Digitize Your Expertise, there's a section at the end that will help you narrow down a good topic for your online product, whatever that is. And to get that free resource, just go to livinghomegrown.com/free and you can download it there to get started.

Now, the PDF that is listing all of my favorite things is in today's show notes, and the show notes are at livinghomegrown.com/156

So that's it for this week. I hope you got some ideas from my list. And, until next time, just try to live a little more local, seasonal, and homegrown.

Take care, everybody!

Announcer: That's all for this episode of The Living Homegrown Podcast. Visit LivingHomegrown.com to download Theresa's free canning resource guide and



Live farm fresh without the farm®

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.