
Living Homegrown Podcast – Episode 89 Permaculture 101

Show Notes are at: www.LivingHomegrown.com/89

Theresa: This is the Living Homegrown podcast, Episode Number 89.

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 Living Homegrown podcast. I'm your host, Theresa Loe. This podcast is where we talk about living farm fresh without the farm. We talk about things like preserving the harvest, raising backyard critters, small space food growing and other simple ways that you can live a more sustainable and simple lifestyle. As always, if you want to dive deep into any of these topics or learn about my online canning academy, just visit my website, livinghomegrown.com. Now, I have been wanting to talk about this topic on the podcast for a long time. We're going to dive into the topic of permaculture. I'm having a very, very dear friend of mine come on to talk about this. I invited on Jessi Bloom. Now, Jessi, I've had on the show before. She was on Episode 32. Over a year ago, in my first year of podcasting, she came on my show and talked about her book that is called, Free Range Chicken Gardens.

The book that we're going to talk about today is one of her other books called, Practical Permaculture: for Home Landscapes, Your Community, and the Whole Earth. She co-authored this book with Dave Boehnlein and I have been wanting Jessi to come on here and talk about it for a while, but we both had really busy schedules. It took us a while, a couple of false starts, but I finally got her to come on. She is just a wealth of knowledge. I think you're really, really going to enjoy this topic. Because here's the thing, when you talk to people about permaculture, it can be a little bit intimidating. I, myself, had a little bit of trouble warming up to the whole idea of permaculture. It's been around forever. It's become very, very popular in, I don't know, the last 10 or 15 years.

I had trouble warming up to it because whenever I read an article or spoke to anyone about permaculture, they tended to speak a whole different language and it was hard to make it relatable. In other words, I couldn't just take what they were saying and walk into the backyard and apply it immediately. It made me feel as if I had to really study it for a year before I could even start. That's really not what permaculture is about. Jessi came out with this book, Practical

Permaculture, because she wanted to make it approachable. She did a really, really good job. It's very, very relatable. I have changed a lot of things in my garden because of learning from her. Our conversations and reading her book have really helped me with my garden. I'm definitely a work in progress, but I wanted you guys to have this experience too.

If you're not familiar with Jessi, if you haven't read any of her books or if you didn't listen to Episode 32 on chickens, Jessi is an award-winning ecological landscape designer. She's also a certified arborist and she is the lead designer and owner of a landscape firm called, Northwest Bloom Ecological Services. Basically, what she does is, she creates innovative, sustainable landscape design and construction for people in her area which is up near Seattle, Washington. In addition to designing and consulting on these topics, Jessi also spends a lot of time teaching and speaking nationwide. She has written three books. She has written Free Range Chicken Gardens which was the topic of Episode 32. She has written the book, Practical Permaculture which is what we're going to talk about today. She has another book in the works which will be coming out in about a year. I'll have to have her come back for that one.

I wanted to bring her on today so that she could help all of you understand what permaculture is all about and give you some really practical ways that you can start applying some of it to your own backyards. It's actually a really, really large topic. We're just going to dive into one little slice of it and how you would apply permaculture principles to food growing, mostly, but we delve into some of the other topics as well. I think you're really going to enjoy this. As always, I will have links in the show notes to all of Jessi's books, her website and anything that she talks about in this episode. To get to the show notes, you just go to livinghomegrown.com/89 and everything will be right there for you. Without further I do, here is my interview with Jessi Bloom, the co-author of Practical Permaculture.

Hey, Jessi. Thanks so much for coming on the show today.

Jessi: Hi, Theresa. I'm glad to be here.

Theresa: Me too. You've been on before. We talked about chickens. This time, we're going to talk about permaculture which I only know a little bit about. Mostly, through you. I would love to have you dive deep for all the listeners so that they can learn about permaculture too. We're going to talk about your book and different ways that people can incorporate permaculture into their backyards even if it's just in baby steps. I guess, first of all, I'll have you start off by telling everybody what is it that you do.

Jessi: Oh, that's a loaded question. I do a lot. I run a business. That is Northwest Bloom Ecological Services. We are, essentially, an ecological landscape company that builds outdoor systems for people whether it'd be edible garden or an

outdoor living space. We're now into tiny houses. That's one hat that I wear. I'm also an author. I'm working on my third book right now. Practical Permaculture was my second book and Free Range Chicken Gardens was the first. I'm also a mom. I live on a small piece of land just north of Seattle, Washington. That keeps me very busy and I'm very active athletically, too. I have a lot going on and I'm learning how to slow down these days.

Theresa: Yes. You do have a lot going on. We go way back. We've known each other for a long time. I'm always so impressed with your huge wealth of knowledge and how giving you are with your information. You have a really great way of explaining things but also really touching people's hearts and making them understand the bigger picture. I'm really excited to have you on today.

Jessi: I'm excited to be here and to be talking to you.

Theresa: Great. Oh, and I have to ask you one thing when you were talking and you said, "tiny houses." Tell us about that. Because I didn't realize you were starting to do tiny houses when you're doing your design work.

Jessi: Yeah. We just started. We see a need in the market for this. We definitely have the skillset and the construction crews to be able to build them depending on the jurisdiction that folks live in. Tiny houses are a great way to build a structure that could be very versatile. The first one we built will be an office space outdoors, but also, potentially, an Airbnb location so people can have income generation from it as well.

Theresa: That is so cool. Well, I love all of your design work and I'm sure it's going to have that really cool urban, edgy design. I'm excited to see what you end up doing with that. Why don't we start by having you tell everybody a little bit about what your book, Practical Permaculture, is all about.

Jessi: All right. Practical Permaculture, it's basically an introductory text to permaculture. At the time of looking at writing it, there wasn't a whole lot of introductory books out there that were really applicable and practical for a lot of people. Many of them were very theoretical. This book is really designed for the beginner. It starts out talking about the ethics and the principles of permaculture, moving into how to design systems for ourselves, and then it goes into the systems individually and how to look at those.

Theresa: What I loved about this book was that it stepped away from the theory and it was absolutely practical. It really is explaining it so you can walk outside and apply what you're learning without it getting too up in your head. Just looking at systems but not understanding how to apply it in real life. That's what I loved about the way you designed the whole layout of the book. What made you want to write this book? Is it because there wasn't anything out there that really was applicable to people to really use hands on?

Jessi: Well, I think, at the time, a lot of the books that were out there didn't really work for a lot of people. Either they were very rural based or the theoretical ones or came from different countries. The first permaculture book I got was from Bill Mollison who's the founder of the idea of permaculture. He's from Australia. A lot of the plant list pointed in the wrong direction for me. It was difficult to follow and apply it to my own situation and that was 20 plus years ago. As I talked to a lot of people about what permaculture was and how to apply it, they had run into the same stumbling blocks which kept them from moving forward and actually using permaculture in their lives. This was really a way to inspire people to make it super approachable and digestible. We can all do this and we all should be doing it, hopefully, but the tools to actually get people to understand it weren't as well developed. I think, now, there's a lot more books about permaculture but this one was really designed for the beginner.

The permaculture design courses that are offered, it is now one of the main text throughout, at least, this country. It's printed, now, in four languages around the world. It's getting out there and we're really proud of it.

Theresa: That is awesome. Yeah. More and more people are totally getting this book. That's fantastic. Why don't we have you start by explaining to someone if they've never heard what permaculture is, they don't know what that means. Maybe, step back and give everyone a big picture view of what is permaculture.

Jessi: Yes. This is a huge topic. Let me just preface this by saying, it takes years to learn and develop skills around permaculture. Permaculture is a design system. Basically, if you look at something like architecture or engineering, we use those concepts to build something whether it'd be a house or an airplane, permaculture is designing permanent culture for humans. As a gardener, we might build habitat for birds, butterflies, or chickens. Permaculture is actually designing habitat for ourselves. It's rooted in ethics which, I think, is one of the biggest factors for me to talk about because you can look past the ethics and talk about all the other things but it's rooted there first.

The ethics of permaculture are: (1) Take care of the earth. This seems really straightforward, but this becomes a filter for how we make decisions in our lives. If nothing else, if people walk away from this podcast, I would want them to remember the ethics. The second ethic is, take care of people. This is another decision that, maybe, people might not agree with because they want to make sure that their needs are met first, but we do need to meet our needs. We should be helping other people as well. We can do that. The earth provides an abundant amount of resources. That's the second ethic that we filter all our decisions through. Fair share is another ethic. There's number of ways that it's written in different literature, but basically, that's about giving back or sharing the abundance.

We don't all need to hoard our resources. We should be sharing. That, in turn, gives back to the people and then gives back to the earth. There are lot of ways to share. It's not just about food or money. It's about time. It's about giving our skillsets or our knowledge, volunteering our labor, really having that altruistic sense of living and being here and being a part of a global community of human beings.

Theresa: I think that your explanation is one of the best I've ever heard. I'm really glad that you are able to articulate it so beautifully. Because I think most of the time, when you first hear about permaculture, you think, "Oh, that's just growing sustainably. That's just organic gardening." I don't understand the difference, but understanding that it's really the ethics that is what is the foundation, that is what changes it, that's what takes a whole different aspect.

Jessi: Yes. It goes way beyond the garden. It goes into our homes, it goes into our finances, it goes into our relationships. You can apply permaculture to a bowling alley. It's just a different perspective of how we live, how we interact, how we make decisions. I think it's really important, right now, in this day and age when our resources are being depleted and people don't have what they need around the world. It's really important to think biologically and globally about who we are and what we're here to do.

Theresa: Right. That's what makes permaculture so important. I'm glad you said it's not just about the garden too although, that's what we're focusing on. Anyone who's interested in this can dive into all kinds of ranges of topics. That's why you've said before, it's such a huge topic. We're just only diving in here on a really little, narrow slice of, mostly, focusing on our backyards and our gardens. It's definitely bigger than that. One of the things you cover in the book is, you talk about different systems. I think that people need to understand that you don't have to have a big acreage to apply or use some of the systems in permaculture. Just in your own backyard in the middle of the city or even just a little tiny balcony, you can be applying different systems. Why don't we talk a little bit about what some of the different systems are inside the big world of permaculture.

Jessi: Yeah. If you think about systems in the ecological sense, we have water or hydrologic systems. We have nutrient cycling, carbon cycling. We have all these things that exist out in the nature. Nature has its way of balancing things really well so that there's close loop systems. If you think about waste as a system, now, we can all look at the waste in our lives by just looking in our garbage cans every week, but in nature, there's no such thing as waste. Everything is reused and recycled. Some of the principles in permaculture are really about modeling after nature's systems, ecosystems. If we take ourselves back a few 100 or 1,000 years, we are a biological organism that was just a part of that system, that natural ecosystem. If we were to break down all the systems in our lives, this is

how we approach it in the book, the biggest needs that we have.

Water is life. Without water, we're not going to be here. That's a system everybody can relate to whether it's a gardener who needs to irrigate their plants and crops, a business who needs to make sure that there's a way to have their employees wash their hands. Water is necessary for everything. In the book, we talk about water catchment strategies where the source water that's clean to have resilience with water. This is another big layer of permaculture. It's how to build resiliency in your life. Because we can't always depend on the tap water. Look at Flint, Michigan, for example. Look at some of the other things happening around the country or the world, all these basic human needs, we have to make sure the systems that we rely on are actually safe and reliable. Water is a huge one that's probably the biggest topic near and dear to my heart from my background.

Soil system, building fertility. This is another big one for gardeners. We shouldn't have to import a bunch of nutrients. We should be able to build nutrients on site. We should be able to cycle. We should compost. There's all these things to look at within that system itself. Food is another huge system that humans really need. Again, if you look at the picture nationally or globally, one of our food systems are failing us. We've got all kinds of chemicals being used to grow plants. We have recalls of plants that make us sick or food products, I should say, things that come in boxes. If we go back to that biological context, we're designed to eat food that's coming from the ground or a really natural way of living. Not necessarily going to the grocery store and buying things that are super processed. Having a food system is really important. It's a big part of my work, designing and creating landscapes for people. That's one area of the book that, I think, will resonate most with your listeners because it's really about growing plants. It's about creating that food system in our backyards.

Another system that we need to consider is animals. Even if you don't have pets or livestock, we still have to look at the other animals that are in the ecosystem that we live in whether it's wildlife, sometimes it's pests, and really look at how they can either work for us or how we can protect our food from them, a deer come to mind like making sure we have good fencing. These are all this system is starting to come together; our food system, what are we growing, our soil system, how's the soil really working for us to grow our food and then how are we using animals or taking care of the land so that either animals can do the work for us. I just got done fixing some fencing for my pigs this morning. I can talk a lot about what kinds of animals do different jobs. It goes back to looking at the context of them being biological allies for us. Chickens, as we've discussed in great detail, can do a ton of work for us. They give back to us by giving us food, by giving us eggs. A lot of animals can do a lot of jobs. Looking at that system means making sure that they're taken care of, that they have their needs met in a sustainable safe way.

The other systems that we don't need to go into too much detail but are very near and dear to my heart are invisible structures. That's the word that they used to describe all the systems that we can't see. What fits into this category might be our social systems, our finances, community. We can apply permaculture in so many different ways. Really, all we have to do is go back to those ethics and always be asking ourselves, "Does this take care of the earth? Does this take care of people and ourselves? How can I give back?" It really could be applied to everything. There's other systems to look at which are energy systems. Big topic in politics, right now, but where are we getting resources for heating our homes or for fueling our vehicles. Permaculture looks at all of that.

Well, what's the most sustainable thing to do? What's regenerative? The sun and the wind, of course, are regenerative but also just working with the land like passive solar, using local materials. Again, we could go really far into any one of these topics, but I know you might want to talk about the garden.

Theresa: Yeah. Well, the garden and animals. Because I know that what you talk a lot about in the book is how everything is modeled after nature and how everything is related or can be built off of each other. Let's talk real quick about the chicken's aspect because you have come on the show and talked about chickens on the show before, but I know you use your chickens the way I use mine. You probably use them in even deeper ways than I use mine, but for recycling waste that comes out of my kitchen, there's a lot of different ways that you use your chickens. Could you talk about that a little bit?

Jessi: Yeah. The chickens are a great food digesters for sure. I have pigs now to compete with them.

Theresa: All right.

Jessi: The pigs will eat just about anything. Chickens get the pick of the leftovers. Basically, one of the best things that chickens can do is, keep pest populations down in our gardens. It takes a lot of designing upfront to be able to make sure that they're only eating what we want them to eat and not necessarily the food crops that we want to eat ourselves. They can help weed. This is another really fun way to use chickens. If there's a patio weed, I'll throw out some scratch on top of those weeds and they'll have a heyday digging up and tearing into it as they're digging for the scratch and eating the new seedlings of the weeds. That's another way. They're great aerators.

Sometimes if I put mulch down, they'll help me spread it which is fun. They help compost. They're wonderful animals. They're great entertainment as well. I know you know that. You can appreciate it. They give eggs and that's really their number one resource that they give back, but they also provide manure that's

really nutrient rich. We use that in a variety of ways whether it's composted for a few months and then put back onto the garden. Again, we're creating this close loop system with chickens to give back to our soil the nutrients in order to grow more food which feeds them and feeds us. They feed us as well. Chickens are, I think, the gateway in the permaculture or this lifestyle of living closely with the land and sustainably. I would say, they're like the mascot of permaculture.

Theresa: Oh, I love that. Yeah. They're definitely a gateway drug. I agree with you. There's another thing that you had in your garden that I thought was so cool. I know that you have moved. You may have rebuilt this, but you had a greenhouse where you had your composting right up against the greenhouse so that the heat of the compost was helping to heat the greenhouse. This would be an energy system, wouldn't it? Is that where it would go?

Jessi: Yeah. It's both an energy system and a waste system. Nature doesn't produce any waste. We don't have to either. This involves a lot of consumer habit changes. Not buying a lot of things with packaging, trying to make or grow as much of the things that we use as much as possible. With that system, it's a detailed drawing in the book. It's hard to really describe the visual aspect of it, but basically, the idea came to me from Growing Power which Will Allen has in Milwaukee where they used compost inside of their greenhouse to heat it during the dead of winter. Because the waste of compost actually generates heat. That, we can use as a resource to heat the greenhouses. Here in the Pacific Northwest, it's actually not a really smart idea to have compost inside of the greenhouse because we have more moisture issues which can bring about botrytis.

I decided, "Well, I'm going to try it outside the greenhouse." We put these eco block beams for all the manure and bedding from animals. We built a system, so there's a pipe going into the greenhouse and it coils through the compost and then comes back out into the greenhouse at a higher point. Really easy concept. We all understand as heat rises. As the compost is generating heat, that heat is then being pumped right back into the greenhouse. The first year I did it, it was a really successful effort. The greenhouse stayed about 55 degrees for the majority of winter which dipped down to the teens. That was really great. What I had learned is that you have to really carefully time the compost pile as far as when it gets ready and then you have to be able to use it or I guess, turn it in order to have a finish product.

For summer, we actually grew a root crop in that compost pile. We are able to build another one the next fall in order to heat the greenhouse again. There's some timing and some being able to play with it, but we were able to do a lot with that compost and keep our greenhouse warm. Which here, in the teens, it would be really expensive or really wasteful to heat with electricity or wouldn't quite work as well because it's darker at this time of year. It's definitely

something that I would encourage people to try if they're trying to grow starts and just experiment with it. One thing about permaculture that I have to remind people is, there's no formulas. Every single site and piece of land and every single person is going to have a different situation. We have to use the tools of filtering ourselves with our ethics and following ecological design principles to make decisions.

I think it's really fun to experiment. Some people can get frustrated if things don't work. If things don't work, that gives us more information. That's always a learning opportunity for us. Failure is not bad. We just got to get past the idea that we may fail and that's okay.

Theresa: Right. Yes. No, that's really important. I'm glad you said that. Because when you fail, it's definitely a lesson and it's an opportunity to say, "Okay. That didn't work. What's another way that I can do it?" It's just a matter of pivoting and not feeling like, "Well, I'm going to throw in the towel." It just means you haven't found the exact right combination of what you're trying to do, but it's not ever a fail. I like that, definitely. Well, yes, that was really cool. I know you have a lot of animals. You had quite on that one side of your greenhouse. You had quite a big compost pile. You have horses. Now, you have pigs, chickens. You had turkeys too.

Jessi: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Theresa: Yeah. You can really, with any animal, do some kind of composting to generate heat. That's really good.

Jessi: Yeah. With animal systems, you really have a lot to look at with what you do with their waste. That becomes a really important part of it. If it's treated well or store a compost well, it can all be used to give back to the earth and to give back to that nutrient cycling for growing more plants. That's a big part of it in looking at their food source as well.

Theresa: Perfect. Yes. The system that you talked about in the book, food and plant systems, I think, that's probably where we should talk next because you talk about all different kind of things from forest gardening to alley cropping. I'd love for you to touch on those two topics.

Jessi: Okay. Well, forest gardening is a big conversation. Basically, nature models are some really great examples of good design. If we look at any forest and any ecosystem, we're going to see a lot of layers of different types of plants. We'll have a tree canopy, we'll have a shrub layer, we'll have herbaceous ground covers, perennials and vines. Even roots that are really functional. What we can do as designers of our own lives and our own spaces is create a forest garden to meet our needs. If we look at it from a food perspective, we might pick a canopy tree that's a nut or maybe, a fruit tree. All the layers that we would design

would be something that we could use or eat from.

In the book, we show a lot of examples of forest gardens. I look at it just like edible landscaping, really. There is a lot to consider in design with spacing, with what the plants need as far as sun, shade, or moisture. There's a lot of grouping plants together, but ultimately, we're designing our landscapes to take care of us. When it comes to food, a lot of people think of tomatoes, celery, and all of the annuals that you would grow. What permaculture really pushes people to do is, think about a more resilient food system which is perennial food. That's the trees, the shrubs, the canes. The things that you only have to plant once. Every year after that, the plant will grow more and more and the food source becomes more abundant. Rather than if you look at how we grow tomatoes. There's always going to be a place for that. Don't worry, we can always grow annuals.

Theresa: Yeah. We're not saying, don't grow tomatoes. People get upset.

Jessi: No. What we have to do is, look at the resources that we use and the amount of time that it takes. If you look at how we grow tomatoes, whether it's from seed or from starts and how many resources that plant might need, whether it's the soil, nutrients, and water. What do we get out of that plant? We'll get a good crop, hopefully. In the past couple of years, I've had some great tomato crops, but I've had a lot of years where they're really bad ones. Then that plant dies. We have to start the process over again, year after year. It takes a lot of effort to do that. If it fails for whatever reason, whether it's weather or disease-related, all of those resources went into a period that could've been put towards something more resilient.

Out of my designs, I usually allocate an area for annuals, but by and large, I'm pushing people towards more and more perennial food because it's more reliable. It's more resilient and it requires less resources. We have to be able to balance that. Not everybody has room to grow a food forest or a forest garden. Really, how can we make best use of the space that we have and the resources that we have.

Theresa: Very good. Yeah. You could always do something on a small scale but you don't have to do your whole backyard as a forest garden. You could just have a section that is a forest garden and still do your annuals separate or on the periphery or in one little section of your forest garden, but not have your entire backyard be annual where you're starting over every year from scratch which is how a lot of my garden is. I have added a lot more perennials. You're right, it's like my blueberries. I've planted them once and every year, I have this great crop. Actually, I have a couple crops throughout the year. It's been really great. Now, talk a little bit about alley cropping because that was something I thought, "Well, yeah, I have seen this before but I had not heard that term. It was planting down rows of fruit trees or down rows of trees." Is that what I

understand it to be?

Jessi: Yeah. One of the best examples that we have in the book which, I think, is a really awesome example, there's a lot of orchards out there. There's a lot of trees planted in rows on center. There's a lot of space in between those trees. The example in the book that we had used was from the Bullocks Homestead which is one of the most beautiful permaculture sites I'm convinced on the planet. In between those rows, they have different plants. They have crops of vegetables, berries. We're making use of all the space. We're really diversifying what we can grow. One of the things that I'd like to encourage people to do is, look at all the bare space. Because nature does not have expose soil, unless there's massive disturbance. This is a very simple principle from nature.

If we leave expose soil, something is going to grow there. Generally, it's not something that we want and we'll call those weeds for now although, that's another topic. There's all this space and even if you're growing rows of plants in your garden. There's probably going to be a space next to them. We can use those spaces. We can really start to maximize the footprint of our gardens as much as possible.

Theresa: Very good. A lot of the plants that they pick to grow there are things that are very conscious. They're very conscious or very intentional with their choices so that they're actually benefiting off of each other. I thought that was really great. That's a whole another section in your book about companion planting and plants helping each other. That's a whole another topic. I think the best way I could describe it when I'm describing it to someone is, every part of what you do in permaculture is very intentional. It's not just haphazard. There's a lot of thought put into every choice. That's what makes it bigger than just being organic or sustainable. It's bigger than that.

Well, if there was someone who was thinking that they wanted to start applying some permaculture into their backyard, I think, they might not realize that they're already doing a lot of things that are related to permaculture like composting or using their chickens in relation to their garden. What are some simple ways that people could, maybe, take a few baby steps into the world of permaculture?

Jessi: Well, some of the things that I like to share with people are really about evaluating what you're doing in the moment; taking an analysis of how much waste are you generating and this could be for the garden, this could even be inside your home, looking at working on one system at a time. Again, applying the ethics first. That's the biggest part of permaculture and making sure that you're thinking through like, "Okay. I'm having to haul away or pay to have all of my leaves sent away to a compost facility or the city takes them. That waste is actually a resource. How can we take that resource and then put it back into the system? How can we create closed loops? That's one of the biggest things that I

encourage people to look at.

Of course, we should all be composting by now. That's given, but really making sure like are we having to buy nutrients or buy things? How can we create those on our own? How can we make sure that we're not relying on some external resource to meet our needs? These are big, big topics for all elements in our lives. If we just pick one system whether it's our food system or our waste system or water. Water is becoming more and more a hot topic, thankfully. If we really start to look at, "Where does our water come from? How are we using it wisely? How can we make sure that we have it in case of an emergency?"

I don't like to throw out the doom and gloom very often, but one of the best tools or ways to really look at this is, "Well, what if this resource became unavailable? What if the drought became so bad that my city water was cut off or there was an earthquake and the water mains were broken? How would I make sure that I still have that resource that my life depends on in order to function?" It might not be the baby steps that you're looking at, but really, it gets us thinking. It gets us trying to understand those systems in a different way. That's where I would encourage most people to start.

Of course, just more education, taking classes, meeting people in your area who are practicing permaculture is a really great way to get started. Because even if you read a book, you might feel overwhelmed or not know where, what the best application of different techniques and systems is for your region. Because of course, everywhere around the globe, we have different climates, we have different soil conditions, we have different plants we can use. It's different everywhere. Finding people like your tribe in your background and your community, those people are going to help you and share what's worked for them and what hasn't. There's a lot of meet up groups, there's classes, organizations. That's another area I'd encourage people to get started with.

Theresa: Yeah. Community would be big because you would learn what's already working for someone else in your area and get ideas that you can pitch off of each other for what is working and what isn't working. That would be huge. I really liked what you said about, imagine if that resource suddenly wasn't there the way you're using it now. That is probably the biggest eye opener. It's like what would you do. If you have some other system setup, if you had solar power, for example, then you'd already have it already setup. Like "Yes. I'm using solar power and I can still survive if that were to happen." Looking at your systems that way is a great way to look at it. I guess we should all start by really stepping back and analyzing each type of resource or system that we're using. That would be the best place to start. I think that's good. Great.

Jessi: Awesome.

Theresa: Well, thank you so much, Jessi for coming on the show today. You have covered

a massive topic and just gotten our feet wet with it, but I really appreciate that you took the time to do this. Thanks so much for coming on the show.

Jessi: Thank you for having me.

Theresa: I hope you got a lot out of that interview. I know that whenever Jessi speaks, it is always a packed room. She is really, really good. She knows so much more than we could even cover in this episode. We literally only scratched the surface. If you are, at all, interested in learning about permaculture, I could not recommend her book enough, *Practical permaculture: for Home Landscapes, Your Community, and the Whole Earth*. She co-wrote that with Dave Boehnlein. Their book is so good that is actually used as a textbook for a lot of permaculture courses. It's definitely a great place to start. If you are, at all, interested in learning how to have your chickens cohabitate with your garden so that you can actually use and enjoy your chickens without them destroying anything, then I highly recommend her book, *Free Range Chicken Gardens. How to create a beautiful chicken-friendly yard*.

If you look in that book, you'll find that I'm one of her case studies. This was actually how Jessi and I first became friends was because she approached me and asked me to be one of the case studies for that book. We got to talk a lot and we became really fast friends. That was many years ago, but I have been so impressed with everything that Jessi has put out or put together. Now, if you want to learn more about Jessi or her books or visit her website, then just come to the show notes for this episode at livinghomegrown.com/89. I'll have links to everything there. Be on the lookout for the next year or so because she has a really fabulous book coming out. I'm not even going to talk about it because it's still in the works, but when that book comes out, I will have her back.

Thank you so much for joining me today. I really appreciate that you took the time out of your busy schedule to listen to this podcast. Until next time, just try to live a little bit 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.