
Living Homegrown Podcast – Episode 100 Setting Mid-Year Farm Fresh Goals

Show Notes are at: www.LivingHomegrown.com/100

Theresa: This is the Living Homegrown Podcast, episode number 100. Woohoo.

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, and this podcast is where we talk about living farm fresh without the farm. That just means 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 lifestyle no matter how big or how small your space. As always, if you want to dive deep into any of these topics or learn about my online Canning Academy or my other courses, just visit my website, livinghomegrown.com.

I'm super excited that this is episode 100. I'm so honored to still be here and have you listening. I never really knew what it would feel like to reach 100 episodes, but this is it. This is how it feels, and I couldn't be more thrilled and excited that you're here, and still going along for the journey with me. We have, getting close to a million downloads on this podcast, so that's kind of exciting. I am trying to change it up all the time and talk about different topics that you guys have written in that you're interested in, so I have a lot more planned out and I'm just very, very honored that you are going along for the ride, so thank you so much. My voice is still a little off. I'm still recovering from all the wind and allergies that I've been having, so forgive me if my voice gets a little raspy as I'm talking, but today's episode is all about setting mid-year farm fresh goals.

This episode today is going to be coming out, I think it's June 2, right at the beginning of June, so we are halfway through the year and this is a fantastic time to reevaluate any goals you may have set for yourself at the beginning of the year, so maybe you didn't set any goals at all and you're like, "Ugh, I never had time. I never sat any goals." Well, this is the time to set those goals, or maybe you set some goals and you didn't quite hit the mark. This is a great time to regroup and start over. It's like hitting the reset button. Or maybe you

accomplished some of the things that you wanted and they've been crossed off your list, so this is a great time to make a new list for the rest of the year.

I just thought this would be a perfect time to do this because this is usually when I do this. I do my goals by quarters, and so June 1 is when I do start to do the next set, so I thought, "This is a great time to do this, so let's do it." Now one of the things that happens when you talk about goal setting is, people start to feel a lot of guilt and I want to address that right off the bat because you may have had goals at the beginning of the year or wanted to set goals, and something got in the way. You're still committed to what you wanted to do, but you just didn't get it done, or maybe you changed your mind. Maybe you had a goal and you thought that was what you wanted, but as the months went by, you went, "No, I don't really think that's what I want to do." Or maybe you got a little lost. It got hard and you copped out.

I want you to know that all of those things are totally okay and they're totally normal. You have to remember that what we're talking about here are your goals, so I want you to push all the guilt aside and realize that life gets busy, life gets complicated, life is unpredictable, so this is a total restart. We're going to start with a clean slate and we're going to regroup and set goals again right now. As you're thinking about goals, when I say farm fresh goals, what is it that I mean? Well, there's lots of different types of goals. They could be personal goals. They could be goals about your diet or your health or losing weight, things like that, or they could be homesteading type goals like you want to grow more food or you want to get chickens in your backyard, things like that. Or maybe you just want to do something really life changing like eliminate all processed food from your diet, or they could be really simple things like you just want to reduce the stress level in your life and you're looking for some goals that will do that.

I've talked about goal setting on the podcast before and I'm always refining how I do it and changing the way I do it, so I have some of the same methods that I've used and talked about in the past, and then I have a few new techniques and a few new things, new elements that I've added. What I'm talking about today are the way I set my goals right now. Some of this might sound familiar if you've heard me talk about goals before, and some of it might sound new because there are some new elements, so I just wanted to say that. This is not exactly how I've always done it. I'm always changing the way I set my goals. I'm going to go through seven steps of goal setting and I will have more information in the show notes for this episode, so when you listen, you can be taking notes or you can get the transcript or any of the other information in the show notes. To get that, you would go to livinghomegrown.com/100. It sounds so funny to say 100, but yes, you would go to livinghomegrown.com/100.

All right, so the first step is to do a brain dump. You're going to brainstorm, and get out a piece of paper and a pencil. I want you to really think through what it

is that you want between now and the end of the year. These shouldn't be things that are random. They shouldn't be things that you feel are the proper things to want. They have to be things that you really truly want in your heart, in your gut. These are what you are motivated to accomplish in the next six months, so think in your head, "What it is that I want by the end of the year? I want to blank."

Just write down all the different ideas that come to your head. You can include any goals that you had in January that fell by the wayside. Write them down again. Just because you didn't reach them yet, it doesn't mean that they can't be added now. What usually works here is if you don't overthink it too much. Just write down everything that comes to your head, everything that comes from your heart and get them down on paper. You may even notice that there are some trends. There's several things in a row that are very similar. They're all going towards the same goal, so that's fine. Write down everything that comes to your head.

All right, after you've done that, the second step is to just look through your list and just pick three to four goals that you're going to work on for the next three months. We're not going to try and do a six month sprint here. We're going to just do three months at a time and I'll talk more about that in a minute, but what's most important is that you pick three or four goals that really resonate with you, that you can work on because here's the thing. You can't do all of these things that you've listed, so you have to pick some place to start, and three to four is a good number. If you feel like all of those are really short, quick goals and you want to have more, you could have up to six, but I really recommend three to four. That's usually the best.

Or if a couple of them are really life changing, huge, massive goals, like you want to become a vegetarian and you know it's going to be a big leap for you, then you might only want to pick one or two because it's hard to do several life changing things at the same time. I know it can be hard to only pick three or four things, but remember, you can always come back to this list as you get things crossed off. If you accomplish one of your goals in two months and you cross it off, you can come back to this list and pick something else, and add it to the list of your main goals that you're going to be working on. It's not like you only pick three or four and that's it, you can never change it. You can. This is your list, so just pick three or four for now and we're going to work through those, and then you can always change and adjust as you go.

Now let me talk about the timeframe here for a second. Some people like to lay out their goals as a yearlong activity, but I like to lay mine out in quarters because I find that working in three month increments is so much more manageable for me. Anything bigger than that and I kind of get a little bit lost or I get overwhelmed, or worse, I feel like I have all the time in the world and so I procrastinate getting started because I'm like, "Oh, I have a year. I don't need to

start that now." When you work in three month increments, it gets you a little bit more motivated to the finish line and you also get a little bit more of a fire under you because you can see the deadline approaching a little bit faster.

The other reason that I like to work in three month increments is that most of the farm fresh goals or goals that have to do with homesteading or your home or your garden, most of those are kind of seasonal anyway, so working quarterly fits perfectly with farm fresh goal setting, so that's why I like to work in quarters. Okay, so step number two is you picked three or four goals off your list — you can just put stars by them — that are the ones you're going to want to work on for the next three months.

Step number three is to rewrite those three or four goals on a piece of paper and leave a space underneath, and under each one, you're going to write down what you are willing to give up to reach that goal. What do I mean by that? Every time we are going for a goal, there is a price to pay, and people don't usually talk about that because it doesn't sound sexy and it certainly doesn't sound motivating, but let me explain what I mean by it. When I say you're going to be giving something up, it doesn't have to be a painful thing, although it can be, but it doesn't have to be a painful thing. It can also be part of the motivation. For example, if your goal is to lose weight, and we'll get more specific with that goal in a minute. That's kind of a general goal, but let's just say you have written down that you want to lose weight.

You're thinking, "Okay, what do I have to give up?" Yes, you would have to give up things like sugary snacks or if you drink soda, you'd have to give up soda. You definitely want to write those things down because it makes the goal more real and it makes you have a reality check of what it's going to mean to reach that goal, but you can also list down some other things that you're going to be giving up to reach that goal. Like, you're going to give up feeling sluggish and tired. You're going to give up having your clothes fit too tightly. You're going to give up not having energy at the end of the day. You see what I mean? You're giving up those things too, so you want to list all the things that you have to give up to reach the goal. You're going to want to sit down, and take some time and write those out.

All right, step number four is we're going to get really specific with those three or four goals that you've listed. We're going to get very specific and we're going to dial them in so that you know exactly what that goal is, and you can wrap your head around it and really get started and know when you've completed it. This is where you take your goals and you're going to turn them into what's called a SMART goal, S-M-A-R-T. This is a very standard goal setting method. It's called the SMART goal method and you've probably even heard of it before. It's an acronym and I'll explain what each one of those things mean in a minute, but the reason that it works is because it gives you a really clear picture of your target and it kind of forces you to take action because there's a date associated

with it and you're able to actually know when you reach it or not, so you can either check it off or not check it off. Each letter of the word SMART has a meaning, it stands for something, so that's what we're going to go through right now.

S stands for specific. You want to be very, very specific with your goal. An example of a non-specific goal would be, let's say you want to learn about fermented food. I want to learn about fermented food. That's my goal. Well, that's kind of not specific, right? An example of a very specific goal would be that you want to be fermenting vegetables as part of your weekly routine by July 15. That goal is much more specific so that you know if you're doing it or not. It's not general like, "I want to learn about fermenting." It feels more like a real actionable thing rather than just a pipe dream. Right now you may have a very vague list when you wrote down your three or four goals. You might have something that says, "I want to lose weight." That's totally okay, but what we're going to do now is each one of those goals, you're going to go through and you're going to transition it into a SMART goal, and you're going to go from vague to very specific.

The S stands for specific, and the M stands for measurable. Having a goal that's measurable means that you're going to know for sure when you hit it because you know how many, how far, how big. You know exactly what the measurement is of if you reached it or not. Instead of saying something like, "I want to lose weight," which really isn't measurable ... I guess it is. You could say, "I lost a pound and boohoo, I hit my goal." You don't want to just say, "I want to lose weight." You'd want to say instead, "I want to lose 10 pounds by August 1," because you have a very measurable amount and a date. Yes, I keep mentioning a date with this. We're going to talk about that in a minute, but right now just make sure it's measurable. 10 pounds or something like that.

Okay, so the next letter is A and A stands for actionable. What I mean by that is that you want to have an action verb with your goal so that it's something that you would actually do. An example of a non-action verb would be if you said, "I want to be more sustainable at home." Well, being more sustainable is not really that actionable. It's also not very specific. It's like, sustainable in what ways and how do you want to be sustainable? It's not really measurable because you haven't listed out what you will accomplish by how much you will be sustainable by a specific date, so you really don't know for sure when you reach the goal, is my point.

To make the goal more actionable, you would need to say something like, "I want to reduce our green waste by 30% through composting by August 15." You can totally hear the difference, right? By saying, "I want to reduce our green waste by 30% through composting by August 15," you have numbers to it, you have a date. It feels a little bit more out of your comfort zone. It feels like a real goal, and the word reduce, "I want to reduce our garden waste by," that is an

action verb. That is actionable, and this is why it was so important to do that brain dump first because you're going to list a whole bunch of things that might be related and several of them might actually be heading you towards being sustainable. By looking those over, you can find specific ones that you can dial in and make actionable to make it happen, and you are being more sustainable.

Otherwise, it's just kind of a dream. I want to be more sustainable without having a specific goal that is reachable and able to be checked off or crossed off your list, so the A in the SMART goal is to have an action verb. Let me give you some more examples. Like, learn. "I want to learn how to ferment sauerkraut." Or raise. "I want to raise a small flock of backyard chickens." Or grow. "I want to grow 25% more vegetables this year." What you don't want to say is, "I want to be. I want to be more sustainable," because that's not really actionable or measurable or specific. It's just hard to know when you reach it, so we're just trying to make it so that you'll know for sure when you get there. All right, so we've gone through the first three letters. We've gone through S, M and A, specific, measurable and actionable.

The next letter in SMART is R for realistic, and I found that there's a lot of different definitions for the R in SMART goal in the business world, but most of them are usually saying realistic. I prefer to say realistic as my meaning for R because it forces me to give myself a reality check, and make sure that I'm not overestimating what I can accomplish or underestimating what I can accomplish. It just keeps it real. Now just a side note here. We're setting goals for your home, your garden, homestead or your overall life, but there are instances when I think you would want to throw the realistic part out the window because it can limit you, when you say, "Keep it real."

In other words, if you're working on affirmations or manifesting more abundance in your life, keeping it real is not the name of the game in that case, but in this case we're working towards habits and accomplishments, and we're working on holding ourselves accountable. In those cases, you want to keep your goals real and not too lofty or impossible, or it ends up sabotaging you because it's something that's unattainable. When I say, "Keep it realistic," you have to do a judgment call here. You want to give yourself something to work towards, but you don't want to make it impossible. You want to push yourself a little bit out of your comfort zone, but you want to make it something that you can actually do, so it's a little tricky, but I think you'll understand as you get going that you can adjust your goals.

That's something I should talk about right here. You are setting these goals for yourself. These are your goals, so you have permission to adjust and change as you see fit. If you start out working towards a goal and you realize that you've made it too easy or too hard, it's totally okay to change your goal and adjust your numbers or adjust the date. It's you. There's no goal police looking over your shoulder that are going to come and dock you for doing that. I feel what's

most important is, as long as you are making progress in the forward direction, then you're golden and you don't have to beat yourself up if you have need to make adjustments. As long as you're moving one foot in front of the other and you're still headed in the right direction, then you're doing really well, so don't beat yourself up and don't worry if you need to adjust things along the way.

All right, so T in a SMART goal is for time-bound, and you've probably noticed that I keep mentioning specific dates. Every time I gave an example, I gave a date and it's so important to have a date. The date sets a fire under you and it helps you prevent procrastination, at least it does for me. It also helps you plan, especially if it's a really big goal that has a lot of little goals associated with it. Knowing the date lets you map out a strategy either in your head or on paper, but I think to me, the preventing procrastination is what's most important. When there's a date associated with it, it's like, "Oh. Oh, this is real. I have to ..." and the date keeps getting closer, like time keeps passing you're just ticking away, and getting closer and closer to that date. It keeps me from putting it off and saying, "Oh, you know, I got to couple of months. I don't even need to start that." Having that date looming in my head makes me keep working on something, so it definitely helps.

All right, so just to recap, you have had four steps so far. Step number one, you did the brain dump of all the different ideas of the goals you want. Step number two was to pick three or four of those goals. Step number three was to write out what you're willing to give up to reach those goals. Step number four what to take each goal and write it out on a piece of paper as a SMART goal, so you're going to really create a SMART goal with all three or four of your goals so that's it's specific, measurable, actionable, realistic and it has a date or a time code associated with it.

Once you have done all of those things, then the next step, step number five, is to get really clear on your why. What I mean is that at this point, you've laid out some really specific and smart goals, and if you don't have your why, it can jeopardize you ever reaching those. Every goal we work towards, you have a motive. There's a reason that you want to do it. Maybe it makes you feel better or look better or be healthier or it saves the planet or it makes you a better person. Whatever is the reason that you put that goal down on paper and that you're trying to work towards it, you really need to be clear on what motivates you for it.

Here's why. At some point while you're working on your goal or on your journey towards that goal, you're going to hit a roadblock or you're going to hit a wall. There will be times when that goal is a little tough. Maybe you don't feel like getting out of bed and going for a workout or maybe you don't feel like being a vegetarian when you can smell a steak in the other room that someone is cooking, so having your reason why, having that list, it will help you when you get stuck or when you find yourself wavering. You can go back and refer to that

list, so I recommend you do is on the back of your goal sheets or on a separate piece of paper, list out all your reasons why you want this goal and make that list really passionate.

I want you to feel those reasons why and use really powerful language when you're describing it because keep in mind, this list is for you. No one else should read this list. This is a note to yourself so that when you get stuck and you have this list handy, you can refer to it at some point along the way to help you get through that roadblock or around that wall that just landed in front of you. Write yourself a note, on the back all the passionate reasons why you want this goal. Why is it important to you? List those out and hand write them, don't type them. Something about the connection of writing things out longhand make it feel more real and more from the heart, especially when you're reading your own handwriting to yourself later, so write it out by hand.

Okay, step number six is to reverse engineer your goals. Each one of your goals that you wrote out, now what you're going to do is you're going to list out all the steps that need to happen in order for you to reach that goal. Some of them might only have three or four steps. Some of them might have a long list of steps, especially if this is a goal that you really won't finish in three months. You're only going to get partway through, and that's okay. Some goals take some six months, some goals do take a year, but you're going to work on the mini steps or the smaller goals in reaching that goal within your three month period, all right?

For example, if, let's say ... I don't know. You want to grow 80% of your tomatoes in your own backyard by the end of summer, by August 31, let's say. Then you would list out things like, you need to pick a sunny location in your garden. You need to clear the area of plants and weeds. If it's time of year, then you need to go get transplants from the nursery because there's not really enough time to grow the tomatoes from seed. You're going to need a support system for those tomatoes. You might need a book or you might need to do some research on how to care for those tomatoes if you've never done it before. You might need to research how to preserve those tomatoes because if you want to have 80% of your tomatoes for the whole year grown in your backyard, you're going to have to preserve some of them for later or you're not going to have any tomatoes in the winter time, so you're going to have to look into preserving some of those. That kind of thing.

You want to list out all the different things that have to happen for you to reach that goal and that's called reverse engineering. You know what the outcome is that you want and now what you're doing is you're just listing out what has to happen to get that outcome. You're going to use this list for step number seven, all right? You have your list. You've reverse engineered all of the things that have to happen to reach that goal, and so now you're going to schedule those smaller steps. Now if it's something that you have to work on every day, like

lose weight, where you're actually changing your daily routines or changing a lifestyle, then you're going to be mapping out the list of things you have to do every day.

You're going to be listing out routines and strategies in order to reach that every day or every week, but in most cases, your goals have a lot of smaller steps. What you want to do then is get out a calendar and you're going to list the different dates that the different steps have to happen in order to get to the end of the line within three months, so you're actually writing them on your calendar that by this date you need to have the tomatoes in the ground. By this date, you need to have the stakes on the tomatoes or you need to have your watering system set up. You actually write them in just like you would schedule a phone call, okay?

Once you have that done, you have scheduled all of your steps or you have mapped out your daily routines, that if it's a major thing like a lifestyle change, now the thing to do is to implement it. The final step is just to do those things each day in order to reach your goal, so if it's a daily routine, then you want to set yourself up so that every day you can follow that routine. If it's like, "I need to exercise every day, I need to drink water every day," you want to set yourself up for those things, but if it's things like, "I need to go to the nursery and I need to get the tomatoes in the ground," you have a certain day, you have it scheduled on the calendar and you'll take care of that smaller step along the way.

What I recommend that you do is one day a week, you review all of your goals. What I do is I review on a Sunday. On a Sunday evening, I look over my goals because most of my goals are business related, as well as garden related, so I look over my goals and make sure that I'm still on track. I look to see if there's anything that is on the goal list, that any of the smaller steps that have to take place in the upcoming week and I make sure that they're on the calendar. Then I just don't worry about it until the next week. I don't fret over it every single day, but I definitely revisit it every week. Just one day a week, I review my goals, I review the list of steps that I have to do. I review my why, why I'm working towards this.

Then I don't look at it again until the following week. In one three-month period you have 12 weeks, so you'll be revisiting your goals and checking them 12 times within that period. It's just a way to check in with yourself. I hope this helped. I know that was a lot. It may sound a little overwhelming, and if that's the case, then just work on one goal. Just do this for one goal. It's a simple routine once you've done it once or twice. It doesn't sound as daunting as it does listening to a whole 30 minute podcast on how to do it. That's it for this week. Thank you so much for listening. I really appreciate that you took time out of your busy day to listen to this podcast. Until next time, just live a little bit more local, seasonal and homegrown. Take care.



Live farm fresh without the farm®

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.