
Living Homegrown Podcast – Episode 131 Farm on the Roof

Show Notes are at: www.LivingHomegrown.com/131

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Theresa: This is the Living Homegrown Podcast, episode 131.

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 the farm. Now, that includes preserving the harvest, small space food growing, and just taking simple steps towards living a more sustainable lifestyle, all the different ways that we can live closer to our food, even if we have little or no garden space at all. If you'd like to learn more about any of these topics or on my online courses or my Living Homegrown membership, just visit my website, LivingHomegrown.com.

On today's episode, we're going to talk about rooftop farming. Now, I'm not talking about a few containers on top of a roof. I'm talking about an actual farm that is acres large on top of buildings in New York City. Now, this was a story that I produced for Growing a Greener World, the gardening series that we have on PBS. This was an episode that I produced a few years ago, and it was a really inspiring story. I was fascinated by what these group of entrepreneurs had put together, and I wanted to bring on one of the founding members of this organization to the podcast today.

Now, what I'm talking about is Brooklyn Grange, and they have created a rooftop farming business that has actually been in business for many years now, and it is completely entirely done on top of these rooftops. They are growing produce, they are selling produce, and they are bringing the community together to learn about farming in a way that really wasn't possible before they started doing this.

Now, I brought on Anastasia Plakias to interview her, because she recently just wrote a book called *The Farm on the Roof*, and because I was so excited about what they were doing in the first place, when I found out that she had this book, I couldn't wait to dive in. If you are at all interested in becoming a farmer or just interested in farming in general, I really highly recommend this book because she pulls back the curtain and tells the entire story of what they were trying to build and what happened that went well, what went wrong, and really what their vision is for this farming business. I have to tell you that these people are truly making a difference in the world through agriculture and organic farming in a way that is not typical at all.

This is a very different episode for Living Homegrown. We're not going to be talking about the latest recipe. We're not going to be talking about some gardening tip or hack, but I do hope it brings for you is kind of an inspiring story of some people who are trying to educate and teach more people how to be close to their food. I just found them to be so creative and hardworking and I do truly believe that they are making a difference.

Now, when I interviewed Anastasia, we have to remember that this is a working farm in an old industrial building, and we did have some sound in the background. You can sometimes hear the heat turning on and off while she's talking, and I just told her we're going to go for it, because as you can imagine, it would not be quieter out in the farm if she were to go up on the rooftop. Plus, we are recording this in wintertime. She can't go out there, anyway. We just went with it. There's a little bit of sound in the background, but it is what it is. It's real life, and I think you'll still really enjoy the story.

In this interview, we talk about the big picture of what their purpose was or their mission was with Brooklyn Grange and exactly what they grow on top of every rooftop that they are farming, what they do with that produce, some of the education and community aspects that they have going, and believe it or not, they even have honeybees and chickens on top of these buildings.

Now, before we get started, let me tell you a little bit about Anastasia. Anastasia is a native New Yorker born and raised in the West Village, where her experience in gardening was limited to growing Lima beans on her sixth floor apartment windowsill. As a founding partner and the vice president of Brooklyn Grange rooftop farm, the leading green roof farming business in the United States, Anastasia has worn many hats over the years. She developed the farm's event program, she ran the sales department, and continues to manage its communications and external affairs, focusing on creating strong and meaningful connections between the farm and the community it serves.

In 2016, she published *The Farm on the Roof: What Brooklyn Grange Taught Us About Entrepreneurship, Community, and Growing a Sustainable Business*. She co-founded the farm's sister nonprofit organization, City Growers, and continues to serve as a board member. Her passion for educating others about food, farming, and entrepreneurship is only outweighed by her enthusiasm for obscure vegetable trivia. A published writer and photography, neophyte bird nerd, and an avid home cook, Anastasia is a dedicated to making her native city a greener and more sustainable place to live.

As always, I will have in the show notes for this episode links to everything, including the Brooklyn Grange website and a link to our PBS episode on the Brooklyn Grange from *Growing a Greener World*. I will link to that in the show notes so you can watch the show in its entirety right online. To get to the show notes, you go to LivingHomegrown.com/131.

Now, I have one more thing to tell you before we get started, and that's that this particular podcast episode is brought to you by my group coaching program, Level Up. Now, you may already know that I have a canning academy, some other online courses, and an online membership, but you may not know that for the last few years, I've been quietly coaching on the side fellow garden writers, foodies, and wellness authors and experts to help them create their own online digital courses and memberships. If there's one thing that I have noticed from all my students over the years, it's that they all start out with a huge amount of doubt, and I totally get it because I've been there, too.

If you happen to be an entrepreneur or a wannabe entrepreneur in the farm fresh space and you're considering sharing your own expertise in an online course, but you're a little unsure if you're ready, I've created something to help you decide. It's a Pdf called *The Five Signs You're Ready to Digitize Your Expertise*. It has this great section at the end that will help you narrow down a good topic for your own online product, whatever that may be. If you'd like a copy of this completely free resource, I have it set up for you over on my website. You just go to LivingHomegrown.com/free, and you can download it right there to get started.

Okay, so are you ready for today's interview with Brooklyn Grange? Then let's get started. Here's my interview with Anastasia Plakias of Brooklyn Grange. Hey Anastasia. Thanks so much for coming on the show today.

Anastasia: Oh my gosh, thanks for having me.

Theresa: Well, I've been following you guys forever, but ever since we did that episode of Growing a Greener World, I've really been following everything you did after that. You guys are just doing an amazing job, and when you did this book, *The Farm on the Roof*, I was really inspired by what you wrote. You're a natural storyteller. I don't know if anyone's told you that before, but you are.

I just wanted to bring you on because I really think that what you guys are doing not only is really changing the world, I think you guys are right at the forefront, and you're really making a difference in the city. We're going to talk about everything that you're doing, but I also wanted to bring you on because you guys, you work through every problem that comes along. You figure out a workaround. You don't let anything stop you, and I find that really inspiring, so thanks for coming on.

Anastasia: Oh. Well, it's just a pleasure to be here, and what an intro. Thanks for your kind words. They really mean a lot.

Theresa: Oh, sure, absolutely. Well, I guess we should start by having you just kind of give everyone the big picture of what it is that you guys are doing with the Brooklyn Grange. What is the Brooklyn Grange?

Anastasia: Brooklyn Grange is, at its simplest, a rooftop farming business, but we started this business because we believed that urban agriculture had the capacity to drive positive change. We started Brooklyn Grange because we wanted to create a model for a triple bottom line urban ag business, meaning a business that's profitable, sure. The first bottom line is are you making money, can you pay your staff, can you pay your rent and your bills, but we also wanted to start a business that was good to the community and good for the planet, so respects all three Ps, profitability, people, and the planet.

It was a pretty ambitious project. We knew that from the outset, and the journey that we've taken in the eight years since launching has been an exciting one. We still have loads of progress to make, but we feel like we are starting to figure out what a triple bottom line urban ag business looks like.

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- Theresa: Well, I think what was most magnificent to us was that you guys really dove in a big way. How many acres are on the rooftop farm, the main two farms that you have?
- Anastasia: We're farming about two and a half acres on two rooftops, one in Brooklyn and one in Queens, and we're actually about to expand to a third site that will more than double our square footage.
- Theresa: Wow.
- Anastasia: Yes. From a rural farmer's perspective, this is backyard garden scale, but for anyone who's lived in a big city like ours, you know how difficult it is to find two and a half acres of usable, farmable space.
- Theresa: Right. Just so everyone's really clear, you guys are literally on top of these buildings, and you put together this whole special drainage system, and you actually put soil on top of the roof and you are growing in soil. These are not container gardens. It's literally like a farm on the roof.
- Anastasia: That's exactly right. I think we really urge people to come visit if they're ever in town so they can see it for themselves, because it is a little bit hard to describe. We're talking about massive buildings. When you stand on one end of our Brooklyn, Navy Yard Farm for example, you can look down the length of that building and it's clear rows straight across. You do kind of feel like you're standing in the middle of a field, and it's a really unusual and unique experience for an urban dweller to be up on one of our rooftop farms.
- Theresa: I know one of the components that has happened from you guys doing this is you have this wonderful food that you are actually growing in the city, so there's nothing fresher, nothing closer for the people who live there than what you guys are producing, but it's really created this whole community. Talk to me a little bit about that. What ended up happening after you got started? You really started drawing in people.
- Anastasia: Yes, and that's the goal, because I want to be honest that I don't think that urban farms really have the capacity to feed entire cities, nor does it really make sense for us to do so. First of all, we have whole rural economies that are based around agriculture. We have agricultural families who've been growing on their land for generations. They're doing it more efficiently than we ever can in cities. The idea is not to replace our rural counterparts by any stretch of the imagination.

We have two and a half acres and we're producing a pretty impressive quantity of food out of that space. We're growing 50,000 pounds of produce a year, the vast majority of which is light leafy greens, so I think we can be proud of our output, but that's not really the full picture of what we're trying to achieve. We started this urban farming business in the heart of the city because we believed that urbanites were hungry. People in our community, our neighbors, were hungry for a connection, not just to food and farming, but to nature, because there's just increasingly limited opportunities for city dwellers to get out and connect with the natural world.

That alone has been a huge draw, and we have found that there are families who will visit our Saturday open house every single week through the season to really experience what that season feels like and the changes that it brings. They'll bring food scraps for our chickens. They'll check out what the bees are foraging, what pollen is coming back in their pollen baskets, and they'll see what crops we're going from spring into summer, and then into fall. For a city dweller to have that opportunity to really engage with an ecosystem throughout the span of each season, it's a rare opportunity.

Theresa: Absolutely. You guys have your open houses. You have your farmer's market, and you have chickens and bees. We should talk about that, because I don't think people really would think about it, but when you're way up there high, I remember when you first got chickens and I was like, "Well, they can't hop off, right?" You guys were like, "No, no, they're good. They're all safe." Yes, so way up on top of these buildings, you have chickens, and then you have a whole system of hives. What is it that you're doing with the animals, the eggs and the bees?

Anastasia: Yes. The bees are a little bit more self-explanatory. Every farmer knows your crops do better when they're well-pollinated, and when we first started Brooklyn Grange, beekeeping had just been legalized, if you can believe it. It was illegal in New York City for many years. We had a mayor who was very afraid of bees and he placed them in the same category as crocodiles and tigers in terms of creatures you're not allowed to host in the confines of New York City. Ridiculous.

Many, many beekeepers and advocates really paved the way for us and made a racket down at City Hall and petitioned to come out from behind their veils, so to speak, and legalize beekeeping. We really did see, especially in those early years when there were very few beekeepers practicing in New York City, there were very few pollinators, especially honeybees, in New York City, we really did find that keeping bees was an important way of increasing pollination. The honey was a great shelf stable product to add to our offering.

That was simple enough, and now we keep bees for clients all over the city. We try to practice minimal intervention beekeeping. We really try and keep it as natural as possible, and we do find that our bees are pretty healthy, because there's not a lot of agricultural pesticide use in cities.

The chickens are a little bit more complicated. We brought them up to the farm, our first round of golden comets, to lay eggs, but we really didn't have tremendous plans to sell those eggs. Those of you who may have tried to do so in the past know that selling eggs in the United States requires a whole lot of infrastructure and it's pretty highly regulated.

It didn't make sense for us to sell the eggs from such a small number of chickens, but we really brought them up because there are a lot of New Yorkers who unfortunately are not privileged to be eating fresh healthy foods. In our country, it is unfortunately more often than not a privilege rather than a right to eat fresh, healthy foods.

I think particularly for the kids who come visit the farm, they might look around and think, "This is a nice park on a roof. These are nice plants." It's hard for them to identify it as a farm. They have very limited exposure to farms. They're picturing a red barn on a milk carton, but as soon as they meet the chickens and interact with them, it really clicks into place.

We are very proud to partner with an organization that my partner Gwen and I co-founded called City Growers. It's a 501C3 nonprofit organization that has brought almost 40,000 kids up to the farms since we launched that program in 2011. We've been running after school programs for kids in the community whose parents can't afford traditional after school activities, summer camps, and these are city kids.

I grew up in the city myself, so I'm keenly aware of what it's like to just really have no connection to where your food is coming from, who's growing it, and not just food. It's a gateway for thinking about other things, like the clothes you're wearing, the shoes on your feet, and really the production chains that make our economy.

Theresa: Wow, yes, that's lot of kids. That's really commendable, because I know education was always a very important component of what you're doing, and teaching the kids is probably the most important of all of that. Kudos to you for that. That's really good.

Anastasia: Thanks. I will say when we started City Growers, it felt at first almost a bit like we failed. We were bringing kids up ourselves. I was doing all the education myself, and we were charging field trip fees. The private schools were able to afford them, but so often, the kids who I really wanted to get up here the most, the title one schools, the struggling public schools did not have field trip budgets to pay for their visits.

I was hesitant to turn them away, and I would make an exception and offer them a pro-bono visit, but it really started to add up. We realized at a certain point this is not a product that we're offering in a marketplace. Yes, we are a for profit business. That was the model was to create something fiscally sustainable as well as ecologically sustainable, and what we were doing, this education work was not fiscally sustainable.

When we made the decision to stop offering educational visits and actually form a 501C3 and make it a fiscally distinct entity and just turn over that whole side of our work to another organization, it was a difficult decision because it's such an important part of what we do. It did maybe seem at the time like we'd failed to figure out how to do it ourselves.

I think that any organization, for profit or nonprofit, large or small, in any industry that's mission-driven, that has ambitious goals, really needs to consider a fourth P. We talked about profitability, people, and the planet, but I think there's a fourth P that needs to come into play, and that's partnerships. Our partnership with City Growers works because they're not farmers. They're really good grant writers. They're incredible educators, but they don't need to worry about making sure there's a flourishing farm for kids to visit. That's what we're good at, and we're entrepreneurial, so we're able to sit down and negotiate these huge 80 page leases with commercial landlords and leave them to really focus on the parts that they're good at, which allows us to not worry about the education piece, to trust that they're doing a great job at it and just worry about the things that we're good at.

Partnerships with organizations who complement yours, who struggle with the things you excel at and who excel at things with which you struggle, these partnerships are critical to allowing any ambitious organization to really hit their goals.

Theresa: That was really, really smart of you guys, so basically, it kept you from spreading yourself too thin and you could focus on your area of genius, so that was really smart.

Anastasia: That's exactly right, yes.

Theresa: Let's talk a little bit about how the farm works up there, because I know when we did the episode on you, a lot of people were curious like, how is it that you're able to grow food on this rooftop? The first question people were asking was, "It must be really heavy."

You guys were very careful in making sure that the buildings that you put these farms on were structurally sound. You have a very special soil mix that you use, but how exactly does it work? You have the soil up there. It's not in raised beds. I think that was the part that surprised me. You do it in mounds, and so what's the depth of actual soil?

Anastasia: Yes, so we look for buildings that, like you said, are strong enough to support the weight of the soil. That typically means older buildings, and of course, we have a structural engineer come in and really assess the site and assure us and the city that these buildings can support the weight of our saturated soil. We always want to look at wet soil.

Then, we lay down a green roof infrastructure. The goal of a green roof infrastructure is to create transmissivity for your water, for rainfall that's passing through your farm, so meaning to allow it to get to move across the roof and get to the drains, which are usually ideally located in low points of the roof, and then additionally to create some sort of drainage layer that holds a little bit of moisture in reserve, so your plants can wick that up in dryer conditions. That drainage layer could be small stones, it could be monofilaments, it could be a cup system.

It is sandwiched by the bread of this green roof infrastructure is a filter fabric, so basically a layer of basically felt that separates the drainage layer from the soil. That protects the roof from the drainage layer. We're really looking at a sandwich of fabric and a drainage layer, and that helps move moisture through the farm so that your roof isn't filling up like a bathtub every time it rains heavily, and then it also slows the rate at which moisture passes through that system and hits the drains.

That's important in big cities because big cities struggle with storm water management. Basically, we reach a point in New York City, for example, where 20 to 30 minutes of light rain is more than our system can handle. Instead of routing that rainfall to sewage treatment plants to be processed, it's actually merged with human sewage use and some of that is vented directly into our local waterways untreated.

This is not unique to New York. This is common in cities, especially older cities, all over the world whose increased population density and development, the paving over of formerly pervious surfaces, has placed such a burden on the storm water management system that we're no longer able to process everything that falls on our cities or is used by humans.

This is a big problem. We're really degrading our local waterways and our marine ecosystems. Green roofs that you're going to see cities all over the world really prioritizing the building of green roofs in the next couple decades because of their capacity to really mitigate, to slow down the rate that rainfall passes through them so that the cities have time to catch up with the rainfall that's hit the rest of the city before processing what has hit that rooftop.

We also mitigate urban heat island effect, that effect by which sunlight is absorbed all day by impervious surfaces and then emitted at night so cities never really cool down. It's 2018. We live in a first world country. We should not be seeing our senior members of our community imperiled in heatwaves. It's insane. We really need to cool down cities, and also help manage our storm water, and green roofs are a really wonderful way of doing that.

Theresa: Yes, you guys are such a great example, and I know a lot of people look to you just as a perfect example of how to do it right, and that's what you guys set out to be. You guys are doing a fantastic job there. Now, I know that you guys grow a lot of different things. A lot of leafy greens is probably what people think is the only thing that you can grow on a rooftop like that, but you grow a lot of different produce. What are some of the things that you grow on these roofs?

Anastasia: Yes. I'm endlessly impressed by our farm team. I will say, I have not farmed out roofs in a couple years. I spend most of my time down in the office, so I feel I have total rights to brag without caveat about the amazing produce that our farmers are raising up on the roofs.

We grow a lot of salad greens. They're high yield, high value, quick turnaround crops, particularly arugula and spicy mustard greens. Lettuces tend to get a little bit hot in midsummer, but we also grow everything you can imagine.

Tomatoes, our tomatoes are really popular. They're super flavorful. We pick them ripe because we can, because we are so close to our consumers. There's not a whole lot of travel happening, so we're able to pick a lot riper than some of the bigger producers who have to ship their fruits long distances on the back of bumpy trucks. We grow phenomenal peppers, flavorful, sweet peppers, and really spicy, fun chilies that we blend into a Brooklyn Grange hot sauce, which is actually available in the continental US for shipping now.

Theresa: Wow, that's awesome.

Anastasia: That's a new development. That hot sauce is really a special and delicious blend of peppers and herbs. We grow pretty much everything you can imagine, with a couple exceptions. Corn, with its six foot tap roots, not going to grow particularly well on our farm, although we have had a couple cheeky corn patches that people have planted just for giggles over the years.

We have tremendous success with any of the heartier greens, that chard and kale, herbs, really flavorful herbs, and then all sorts of zucchinis, all the nightshades, really fantastic eggplant. Eggplant love our conditions. The flowers can be a little bit challenging to grow long stem varieties, but we have had tremendous success with wildflower cultivars. Ground cherries are always fun to introduce people to that are not super familiar with them.

We don't do a lot of perennial fruits or berries, because space is at such a premium. We always have our little sun choke plot that is nice because you don't have to think about. It's just there. No work involved, but it really does make more sense for us to grow things like salad greens that are a 30 day to maturity crop or radishes, Hakurei turnips, these small root crops that are really quick turnaround. Even carrots at 80, 90 days grow super well in our soil. We get really nice beautiful 10, 11 inch roots that span the entire bed if we let them grow that long. We just have to be mindful about what makes sense to grow with the little bit of space that we have.

Theresa: Sure. I know you guys are really careful about making sure that what you're growing has a profit. You talk about that in your book, *The Farm on the Roof*. I guess one of the things I was wondering, I know you do the farmer's market and you do some restaurants, too. What is the full scope of what you do with the produce that you grow?

Anastasia: The vast majority of it is wholesale, and that's really shifted more and more every year in that direction, because of the fact of the matter is when you sell wholesale or directly to a chef or a retail grocery store, you're getting probably 20 to 30% less for your crop than if you sell at a farmer's market directly to the consumer, because that chef or that grocery store is marking up that product.

The fact of the matter is there's so many costs that go into farmer's markets. If you think about it, we're paying somebody to come to the farm, pick up the harvest, pack the van, bring it all to the market, pull the table and the tent out, set it all up, put the price tags on. Maybe it starts raining an hour into the market and nobody shows up. Now you're on the horn with the chef trying to unload all that produce at a discount because it's been sitting out for hours.

It's a lot more efficient to grow for wholesale clients, and we're also able to put folks on standing orders. Every Tuesday, we might have an account that takes 10 pounds of salad greens and 15 pounds on Fridays. We know exactly how many square feet of salad greens we need to plant to fill that order, and then we can add to that order as other crops come in and out of season. That's really been the bread and butter of our sales program.

With that said, one of our favorite ways to move our produce is through our CSA, or community supported agriculture program. If there are folks out there who love eating local, eating fresh, farm fresh foods, I urge you to check out a CSA. There's probably one not too far from you, but this is where you sign up for a whole season's worth of vegetables early on before the farm is producing anything at all.

We're starting to sign members up next week, and then mid-May through October is our season. Folks will come and pick up whatever's being harvested that week. We aim to get folks more than the value that they paid for those vegetables, so it's somewhere between wholesale and retail. It's a really fun way of just really participating in that season. Some years, the tomatoes are just crazy prolific and you get a ton of tomatoes. Other years, the cucurbits might really take off and you're swimming in zucchini and cucumber. It's a really fun way to participate in your ecosystem and in its particulars over the course of whatever season it is.

Theresa: Yes. I think a CSA is also really great not only just for connecting with your farmer, you really get to know them and what is growing, but I think you also get introduced to something new. There's always something in there that maybe you have never grown yourself or never bought, so it can be a lot of fun to experiment and learn to eat seasonally.

You guys also hold a lot of events, and that was something that when I first heard, it kind of surprised me, but then when I was reading your book, it made so much sense that you guys do everything from yoga to dinner parties and even weddings. Tell me a little bit about that. What about the events that you hold?

Anastasia: Yes. My background is in the hospitality industry. I worked in the restaurant industry for years before we started the farm, and a big part of what connects me and frankly my partners to food is sharing, sharing with community members, having people up to sit around a table together and take joy and pleasure in the food that we're eating. I think it's one of the reasons that we're able to have difficult conversations about the changes that we need to make to our food system is that we're able to temper those difficult challenging conversations with the joy and the pleasure of eating really wonderful food.

From an urban farming perspective, again, I'll say it again, we are not growing food in the most efficient way possible. Being at ground level in a rural area, when you can enjoy efficient measures like tractors and mechanized equipment and when the value of land is not so high and the cost of labor is not so high, it makes a lot more sense to grow food in agricultural areas.

Why farm on a rooftop? Why go to all this trouble of hauling the soil up there and farming in a city in a less efficient way if you're not sharing that work with your community? At the end of the day, if you just want to be left alone with your vegetables, go somewhere really rural where nobody can find you. We farm in the city because we really believe that it is central to connect urban dwellers with food farming and nature and give them an opportunity to visit a farm and think about, "Where does my food come from? Does that farm look like this? Who's growing it? Are they being paid fairly?"

We try and get visitors to ask those difficult questions without sucking all the joy out of food. That's the other thing is you don't want to turn people off. It can be so overwhelming to know, "Oh, do I need to find non-GMO this or that? What are the most important crops to buy organic, and where do I get them? Can I afford them?" It can start to feel like, "Maybe I'll just a bottle of Soylent and call it a day."

We don't want people to do that. We want people to really take joy in going the extra mile to walk to the farmer's market or pick up a CSA share and bring home an unusual crop and look up how to use it, because that's really where the real pleasure is in eating.

Our events are really a way of engaging people, engaging as many different people from our community as possible. You're going to get a very different crowd at a compost workshop or for Monday night yoga than you will at a fancy dinner party, but even the woman who shows up in white stiletto heels to our dinner events, and I promise, she does exist, I have seen her more than once, she eats three times a day, too.

Theresa: Yes.

Anastasia: We need to get her on our team. If we can do that with a really beautiful dinner event and she's able to take a couple selfies with a sunflower in front of our fabulous view and then go home thinking about where her food comes from, then we feel like we've won. We feel like we've made some progress. Our events are actually really, really a central part of our mission up here on the farm.

Theresa: I love it. I absolutely love it. Well, Anastasia, I love what you guys were doing when we first told your story a few years ago, and I really love what you guys have grown into. I really do believe that you are making a difference with your work, and I know not only that, but you're inspiring urban dwellers who want a more organic life and you're also inspiring people who maybe are wanting to go into this type of lifestyle, some sort of a business in the gardening or food world. I do think you're making a difference, and I just want to thank you for coming on the show and thank you for what you guys are doing with the Brooklyn Grange.

Anastasia: Oh my gosh, thank you so much. The work you're doing is democratizing growing. You're creating opportunities for people to have access to information that they need to feed themselves. We might be feeding our community members fresh healthy veggies, but you're teaching them how to grow them and sell, and that's a really, really powerful thing.

Theresa: Aw, thanks.

Anastasia: Absolutely.

Theresa: Well, I hope you enjoyed that interview with Anastasia Plakias of Brooklyn Grange. They really do have a very inspiring story, and if you want to learn more about what it is that the Brooklyn Grange is doing in New York or about how they got started, I have everything for you in the show notes for this episode. Just go to LivingHomegrown.com/131. I'll have links to their website, I'll have links to our PBS episode that we did on Growing a Greener World on their story, and I'll have links to Anastasia's book, *The Farm on the Roof*.



Live farm fresh without the farm®

I hope you enjoyed that episode. It was a little bit different for us, but I like to change it up here every once in a while on the podcast. Until next time, just try to live a little more local, seasonal, and homegrown. Take care.

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