

Speaker 1 ([00:00](#)):

Welcome to the old fashioned on purpose podcast. I dunno what has gotten into us lately, but I think Christian and I have lost our minds. We can't stop talking about homestead plans. We're walking around the yard two or three times a day talking about where we're going to put new things and dreaming and planning and brainstorming. We're talking more chickens, more cows, maybe a greenhouse. Finally, maybe some honeybees. I don't know where we're going to end up. It's kind of crazy. But we are definitely ramping up our food production this year. And here's why. I'm your host Jill winger, and this is the podcast for the trailblazers, the Mavericks, the makers, the homesteaders, the modern pioneers, and the backyard farmers. If you're ready to boost your food security and your self sufficiency, well you have found your tribe. As you know, uh, we've been doing this for a while.

Speaker 1 ([00:59](#)):

We've been living this homestead life, we got our first milk cow back in 2011 like almost a decade. I've had a milk cow in the garden and the whole nine yards. So sometimes I feel like I'm kind of a grandma in the homesteading movement, but I think kind of a side effect of, of being in this lifestyle for so long is that we kind of have gotten a little bit in a groove or a rut or routine or I don't know what you want to call it, but maybe just maybe we've been lulled to sleep a little bit as the years have gone on. And we kind of do the same thing every year and we know how many vegetables we put in and how many calves we have. And we're just kinda have been doing the same old thing. And there's nothing wrong with that.

Speaker 1 ([01:45](#)):

Right? And it's, you can't have everything new and exciting all the time. But like I talked about back in episode 97 the state of the world right now and has, we've watched things shift like never before. As I record this, in case you're listening to this at a later date, right now it's April, 2020 so obviously we're in the mid of midst of the covid 19 upheaval and the empty grocery store shelves. But this has been a very welcome and needed, I guess you would call it a wake up call just to remind us why we're doing what we're doing. And I see humans responding to this uncertainty all around us in all levels, right? Health wise, economically, uh, family, all the upheaval. But people are responding to it in different ways and I'm realizing that Christian and I respond to uncertainty by wanting to grow more food, which Hey, it could be worse, right?

Speaker 1 ([02:50](#)):

It could be worse things. But anyway, all this craziness in the world has simultaneously inspired both Christian and I kind of separately and then we came together to discuss it, but we want to seriously improve, ramp up, increase our food production this year. And I think this is what we needed is I felt like we have a breath of fresh inspiration flowing through our homestead right now. I feel like this is kind of the catalyst that will help us get some of these lingering to do's that have been just hanging out on the list for a long time and never just got done. I think that this is going to be the year. So I thought it would be fun to share some of our dreams, homestead dreams for 2020 maybe this will inspire some of you get your creative juices flowing, but regardless, there is no better time than now to start growing food.

Speaker 1 ([03:46](#)):

And you know, I was reading this article, I can't remember, it was on a major, it was like a big news, hub online and they were like trying to break down psychologically why everybody right now is feeling the need to bake bread and knit and grow vegetables. And they're like, well, it's just a response to humans. You know, what they do when they feel uncertain and, and yeah, of course. But they were almost trying

to write it off as though it was simply just a coping mechanism. Like kind of like sucking your thumb when you're feeling nervous. And I, I get what they're saying, but I kinda also disagree because not only is getting some chicks or planting some seeds right now, is it a coping mechanism? Absolutely. Makes us feel better. It makes us feel like we can control something when the rest of the world is going nuts.

Speaker 1 ([04:34](#)):

But beyond that, this is just human existence, right? Like it's almost as though sometimes our modern world places more value or they treat this fast paced, modern rat race of a lifestyle as true living. And then all of these little quaint old fashioned skills are simply just hobbies. I don't know if I'm making any sense, but I know my gut tells me that when we strip everything else away, the simplicity of living a lifestyle close to nature and growing your own food, it's not just a coping mechanism, it's just being human. And perhaps we're getting that chance to reacquaint ourselves with that at this point in history. So like I said in my other episode, I think there's a silver lining to this and getting back to nature, getting our hands dirty again and starting to actually understand where our food comes from is a big piece of that silver lining.

Speaker 1 ([05:36](#)):

So that was my soapbox that I don't even know if it made sense, but I just blurted it out. So there you have it. Here's what we're doing this year. Hopefully fingers crossed, it's on the list. So I'm feeling hopeful. So first off we are expanding the garden and if you've seen my garden, you know that it's kind of fenced in so I don't have a ton of room to just obviously add more rows cause it's fenced off. But we have a couple little spots on the outskirts and outside the fence that we're going to use for things that the dogs and the chickens can't destroy. So like potatoes, I had been growing my potatoes in raised beds. It's okay. But I kinda like to put them out of the fence and then use my raised beds for other things. So we have this little plot next to our existing garden and that's going to be the new potato patch.

Speaker 1 ([06:31](#)):

So we can, I don't know, maybe triple our potato production this year. Add more onions, do more root vegetables, things that are going to store well, right? Those are easy to grow. And you can do these too. Even if you live in town, you can grow potatoes in garbage cans. You can grow them in mounds and in your backyard, like potatoes are really easy and they're a great storage food. Another thing that we did slash are doing is in, I think I told you about this on a previous episode, I totally broke my promise to myself that I was going to keep my laying hen population to a reasonable number. So we got 22 more chicks, you know, and what actually happened, full disclosure, I sent Christian to the feed store. I was like, we need some more chicks. Need being a very loose term. I said get 15 I said that very clearly, right?

Speaker 1 ([07:26](#)):

Very clearly. And he heard it as 15 of one kind. So he got 15 of I think golden lace Wyandots and eight of the cuckoo Muran. So we ended up, or seven I guess we ended up with 22 I still don't really understand it's chicken math, you guys. It's just chicken math. That's all I can say. But anyway, we have 22 chicks. We already have 30 or so mature laying hens plus 25 meat birds, which we'll butcher in a couple of weeks. So the chicken house is full and we have a lot of eggs right now. We actually sold seven dozen eggs to a local grocery store this past weekend, which I just have to say, felt really good because I'm like,

the industrial food system needs me, the homesteader girl, which I know that's totally silly, but that's, it was just like this victorious moment and I don't, we're not gonna continue that.

Speaker 1 ([08:21](#)):

That was just like the grocery store was desperate. They put out a post on Facebook. But they paid us for them and it was, it was great. So we have a lot of local egg customers that we're starting to collect and I'm really excited. We also are looking at building our first chicken tractor. Previously we would just free range our chickens around the barnyard and then we got tired of them being destructive. So last year they were locked in all summer and now we're going to do the hybrid of a chicken tractor. We can actually control where they go. So we'll see how that goes. Christian is working on designs as we speak, but obviously the other benefit of a chicken tractor is it will kind of help clean up after the cows and hopefully keep down bugs and do some fertilization of grass.

Speaker 1 ([09:07](#)):

So I'm excited to see how that all plays out. Get that whole permaculture type of, not permaculture, that's not the right word. Sustainability system. Right. Get that rolling. Okay. So I'm mention the meat birds. We probably, we have 25 of those. We may end up getting another batch of those later in the year if we can find them. I think meat bird chicks are a little bit scarce right now cause everybody is kind of feeling like we are. Ooh, a big product. I'm very excited about, a hail net for our garden. And you may remember last year our garden just got decimated by hail and it was heart breaking. It was late or no, it was early July. So everything was looking pretty good and happy and things were growing well and a giant hailstorm came through one afternoon and just massacred things like my onions never recovered.

Speaker 1 ([10:04](#)):

It shredded like literally you cry, I cry, you go out to the garden and cry because it is so beautiful. One minute and is absolutely devastated the next and I can't, it's just the worst feeling ever. If you've had a garden hail out, you know what it's like just Ugh. So I told Christian, you know, we get so much hail here we, we are probably one of the most hail prone places in the United States. Lucky, lucky us. And we, I'm like we can't keep playing Russian roulette with the vegetables. I put all this time and money and sweat into the garden and then it's literally just like, I never know when it's going to be completely demolished and I'm tired of that risk factor. So we have this crazy design. I think I, maybe I've told you about it in an older episode. We want to get like a cable with some orchard netting and see if we can put it on rings.

Speaker 1 ([10:56](#)):

And like pull it over the garden when we know a storm is coming through and then retract it when it's not needed. That's kind of our best design thus far. We have brainstormed this forever. Putting little individual covers on all the beds is just not feasible for us. So I'm hoping this netting works out. Our fingers crossed. We'll definitely let you know how it goes. But if we're going to grow vegetables and actually depend on our vegetable, vegetable production, we got to do something. Another thing we're doing is, I think I say this, this might be a lot of optimism coming through that may not be fully realized. I don't know. I think we're going to be milking several of our Brown Swiss cows. I believe at this point in time we'll have three who will be calving the end of this month and I've never milked more than one.

Speaker 1 ([11:52](#)):

And heck I milk one when I feel like it. We do our once a day milking routine so the calf stays on her a lot. I milk when I feel like it, which is a couple of times a week and I call it good. But I would love to be

able to provide milk for our neighbors and friends and local folks. And so I would like to get maybe a milking machine and start milking two, maybe three, three feels like a lot, maybe two. We'll see how many customers I get, but I like to get that routine going as well. Now we also have our grass fed beef, which we had in place long before, not in place. We had that started rather I should say before coronavirus even existed. And so we have been selling grass fed beef. Our first batch was available a couple months ago.

Speaker 1 ([12:42](#)):

We've been selling that. That's been awesome. We hope to continue that. We will continue that. And then as far as, I guess I've been jumping around, but as far as other vegetable growing strategies, we're looking at putting in a few cold frames and I'm scared to even say this out loud. I'm afraid if I say it out loud, it won't happen. We've actually been seriously like for reals, contemplating a greenhouse finally. Ha. Like how many years have I told you that I wanted a greenhouse and I just was not on the list. So Christian is feeling very motivated towards a greenhouse. I am hopeful that he will not change his mind. We've been walking around the yard repeatedly trying to find a good spot for it. And I think we have to like move some fuel tanks and then get them out of the way and then we're going to put the greenhouse where they are.

Speaker 1 ([13:33](#)):

That's kind of by our garden. But I think we have a design we like that appears to be durable for crazy Wyoming. So I'm really excited. I'm trying to be cautiously optimistic, but man, if that happens, it's going to be the best year ever. So yeah, all in all, lots of stuff happening. I just feel like it is our time right now to serve our community with food, if that makes sense. You know, we, I got an interesting comment on the blog, uh, or actually my Facebook page this past weekend I was, I was sharing about my homestead master pack, which was available last week. It was just basically all my resources that I put into a single offering for a really low price. And someone commented and they weren't being rude at all. They were just more making an observation. But it stuck out to me and they said, you know, I like that you're doing this, but I'm a little concerned that you're going to be encouraging people to homestead.

Speaker 1 ([14:31](#)):

You're going to make people want to homestead. Whether that means growing a garden or getting chickens or whatever, and then they're going to hoard everything and it's going to create more of a hoarding problem. Then there already is. So they said, maybe you shouldn't be promoting this right now. And I had to, I had to kind of think about that for a minute. And here's the thing, here's why I disagree with that comment because it's not the homesteaders who are doing the hoarding right now. If we see the hoarding pictures on, on Facebook and everyone's kind of shaming the hoarders, which yeah, is not, not appropriate, right? To be stocking up on toilet paper, but it's not the homestead folks who have that mind toward preparedness. They're not the ones needing to hoard because they already have a measure of preparedness already in place. Right? And actually what's happening right now, the homesteaders, and when I say homesteader, I'm not talking about someone who just lives in the country with cows.

Speaker 1 ([15:30](#)):

I'm talking about all of you. Those of you who have a mind that is geared towards self-sufficiency, doing what you can, understanding your food supply, that that's what I mean by homesteaders. But folks like you and I, we're the ones who are able to feed others right now, right? We're the ones who are able to

share from our pantry and share from our freezer and share with our eggs and share with our milk and all of those things that I see homesteaders across the nation right now. They say they're planting extra vegetables, they're getting more chickens, they're doing things to help feed their communities. And the thing about canning, like I said, there's a lot of shaming around hoarding and I am not a fan of hoarding, but when when a homesteader or someone who is preparedness minded, you stock up when there's abundance, right?

Speaker 1 ([16:23](#)):

When you're canning tomatoes in the summer, it's because you have tomatoes coming out of your ears and it is your only option other than throwing them at cars. You got a can them and you end up with 58 million quarts in your basement because there was so many in your garden and then you get to enjoy those during the times of the year when tomatoes are lean. And this homestead lifestyle, this old fashioned lifestyle, we only stockpile when there's a lot. When there is an abundant source, we don't stock pile when it's December and the tomatoes at the store are few and far between and they taste like mush. That's not when we're canning and that's not when we're, we're stockpiling. So this idea of taking the abundance and taking the harvest and saving it for later, that's just good old fashioned food security, right? That's what our ancestors have done since the beginning of time, whether they were doing it with cured meats or dried foods or fermented foods or canning. That is, that's what you do and that is true food, food security, food security is not hoping that the grocery store has enough or hoping that, the powers that be will supply us with the food we need. Right? True food security is taking an element of personal responsibility and doing what you can with what you have.

Speaker 1 ([17:51](#)):

And so I'm inviting you my friends to see where you can increase your food production this year. I'm guessing you probably don't need to or don't want to go as crazy as we are, we just feel really, really called to do what we can to help feed those around us. But what can you do just in little ways? Could you add a little bit more room to your garden in the backyard? Maybe dig it up for the first time. Maybe you could get bees, you could add some more chickens. You could try out those dairy goats. Heck, you could even just find local farmers in your area, get to know them and buy from them when they have an abundant supply of the tomatoes or the cabbage or the corn or whatever else it may be. And you can use those things to stock your pantry for later.

Speaker 1 ([18:40](#)):

So I want to leave you with this quote from Joel Saletan is this his in his book "Folk, this ain't normal", which I'm rereading now. I read it a long time ago and it's one you need to reread I think frequently. But I love this quote and hopefully this inspires you. Food security is not in the supermarket, it's not in the government. It's not at the emergency services division. True food security is the historical normalcy of packing it in during the abundant times, building that in house larder and resting easy knowing that our little ones are not dependent on next week's farmer's market or the electronic cashiers at the supermarket. It's not too late. Do what you can with what you have and you can start now. Okay. My friend. If you are ready and inspired to do some of this homesteading stuff and get a little bit uncomfortable and push outside of what you're doing now and boost your food security.

Speaker 1 ([19:37](#)):

I happen to have a wonderful library of resources I have put together for folks just like you has everything from raise bed guys to how to start seeds. Setting up your first chicken coop and everything

in between. You can get complimentary access over theprairiehomestead.com/grow and you can check the show notes. We'll stick that link in there as well, and that is it. Don't forget to hit subscribe so all of the new episodes will show up in your podcast player and if you found this episode helpful, I would be so grateful if you could leave a quick rating or review. It just helps more people find the podcast in the future. Thanks so much for listening. We'll catch up next time on the next episode of the old fashioned on purpose podcast.