

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

Welcome to the old fashioned on-purpose podcast. So I recently got a comment over on my Prairie homestead Facebook page. I had posted a video of me walking through the kitchen talking, I think it was about canning tomatoes or something, and this person saw the refrigerator and the stove and the dishwasher in the background of the video. And they said in their comments, you're not a real homesteader. I saw the appliances in your kitchen. You're not living off the land, you're just a hobby farmer. Right? So I saw the comment, it didn't really upset me because honestly, I've had people say this to me before, but it got me thinking. It got me thinking about definitions and where do we as homesteaders, modern day homesteaders, where do we fit in this world of commercial farming or off-grid living and kind of where is our place? So I'm going to answer that question in today's episode.

Speaker 1 ([01:02](#)):

I'm your host Jill winger, and for the last 10 years I have been helping people just like you who feel uninspired by modern life. I'll show you how to create the life you really want by learning how to grow your own food and master old fashioned skills. So like I said, I've had this comment before so it didn't necessarily freak me out or make me really upset. I think it just more shows a lack of understanding, but it does bring up this important points or this important discussion. I think we need to have about the definition. What is a homesteader, what does that equal? Especially if you are new to this lifestyle or you're just exploring this lifestyle. Now, the tricky part is the definition can vary, right? Like what is homesteading? Now to me, I define modern homesteading or a modern homesteader as someone who is trying to be self sufficient, maybe not 100%, but they're shooting for at least partial self-sufficiency.

Speaker 1 ([02:13](#)):

And that usually means they're growing as much of their own food as possible. And I've kind of joked about this in the past, but I call myself a homesteader cause I don't know what else I'm supposed to call myself. Right? We don't fit in the commercial farming world. And I'm sure most of you don't either, right? You're not producing crops or animals on a large enough scale to make a living for yourself. I mean, I know some of you are cause you email me and tell me about your operations, but most of us are just producing enough meat or milk or eggs or vegetables just to feed our family. We're not selling it to the big conglomerates or the corporations. So we're not really commercial farmers or ranchers. And I don't really consider myself a full on like off-grid survivalist. I mean, I'm just not, not that I don't consider myself that, I'm not, right.

Speaker 1 ([03:08](#)):

We have electricity. I have the intention of probably always having electricity unless the zombies come and they eat the power grid or whatever they're supposed to do and then we don't have it anymore. But we like electricity. Like I am a fan of baths that are hot and you know, all the things like lights at night. And I love having skills that would sustain us in the event of a prolonged, uh, lack of electricity. But as long as we have it, I'm probably gonna keep it, which that might not be your goal. Your goal may be someday to be completely off-grid, which I think is so dang cool. But that's not where I'm headed. So we are on grid. We still are somewhat involved in a modern life, right? We do homeschool, we do have home businesses, but we still, uh, go to town and get different supplies and we have activities in town and friends in town.

Speaker 1 ([04:05](#)):

So we're not super isolated. We're still a semi modern family with chickens and a garden and a milk cow and all these weird things that we do. So for me, the title of modern homesteader is the easiest way I know how to describe it, right? So that's why I call myself that. And I think there's this bit of misunderstanding often with folks who aren't familiar with our world, with our homesteading tribe, and they associate the word homesteader with just someone who is living completely off the land. It is 100% self-sufficient. Now here's the problem. If we try to make this definition too rigid because I, I can tend to be a purest sometimes I can be a perfectionist in things that I do and I usually want to go whole hog with whatever I'm doing, whether it's riding horses or baking bread or running a business.

Speaker 1 ([05:04](#)):

I want to be the best and I want to be the most intense. And I wanted to have, you know, the highest level of knowledge that I can. And I think when I started out into this homesteading world, that was my underlying intent and I've really ratcheted that down a bit because when we get so rigid with our definitions of homesteading, it definitely restricts the people who can come participate, right? If we say a homesteader is only someone who is fully off grid, solar power, you know, generator, water Wells and they never buy anything at the grocery store and um, they'd grow everything themselves and they don't need anything from anyone else. They're fully, you know, their own unit. Like there's nothing wrong with that, but that rules out a lot of folks, right? It discourages a lot of folks, which is the last thing I'm trying to do as a homestead mentor.

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

I see homesteading, it's, it's more than a hobby. Right? Which is why I don't like the term hobby farmer. It's just not my preferred title. To me, a hobby farmer is someone who is keeping maybe a miniature donkey or some peacocks or some chickens, just more for, for pets, for fun, for pleasure. We're kind of taking it to the next level. Like raise your hand if you agree. Cause I would say that most of you listening, if you're anything like we are, you're kind of into it for a little bit more than that. Right? It's about health. It's about better food. It's about a different lifestyle for our children and our families. And it's about this sense of fulfillment from a hard day's work or the sense of peace that comes from being not in the middle of the rat race 24 hours a day.

Speaker 1 ([06:57](#)):

And that's why we're doing that. It's not just this, Oh, you know, novel token farm. I have a donkey, I have a chicken, I have a pet cow. You know, there's a little bit more to it than that. I would say for most of us, so if we get so rigid, like I was saying, we discouraged folks from accessing the benefits of this old fashioned lifestyle and that is why I like to leave the definition broad. I hope that makes sense. Right? I may be on my soapbox just a little bit, but I'm really, really passionate about this homesteading. Like I said in a previous episode, the homesteading manifesto, it's more than the sum of its parts. Homesteading is not just for folks who want 10,000 acres and a bunch of cows. Homesteading is for everyone. I realize that's a bold statement because there's some people out there who are like, I don't want it.

Speaker 1 ([07:52](#)):

I don't want the work. I don't want the sweat. I don't want the animals and the food production. I just want to go to Walmart and buy the stuff. So I realize that's a bold statement, but I believe everyone can benefit from this, but you don't have to go all in hardcore crazy to get the benefits. Even if you're just growing a few things in your backyard, you're ahead of the game. Even if you just have three chickens,

you're ahead of the game. You're still intentionally taking that step in to a better lifestyle for you and your family. My friends, it's not just about the chickens. This is deeper. Right? When I was at the Homesteaders of America conference a couple of weeks ago, I was just struck with the enormous mission that this movement has and I was listening to different speakers, all different types of speakers, homesteading, influencers and vloggers and bloggers like me.

Speaker 1 ([08:51](#)):

This isn't just about how to keep a chicken and your garden and how to have a and how to have the little token a bucket of milk. This is a movement that is challenging, a lot of societal norms and it's got a big mission, and while I was at that conference, I heard people talk about getting out of debt, which is definitely counter-cultural, right? We're taught that debt is normal, but I heard people talking about freedom by getting out of debt. And I heard people talking about drastically changing their health through better food and better practices and sweating and, and having manual labor and getting that exercise. And I heard people talk about how to inspire their children to get off technology and get back to their roots and be outside and be healthier and more active. So this movement has a lot to accomplish and there's a piece of it that I believe could benefit every single person, whether you live in the middle of New York city or LA or Texas or the Midwest.

Speaker 1 ([09:49](#)):

Which is why I like that definition to be broad and inclusive because we've got a lot of work to do. And here's the other little side note. Another comment that I get often, and I don't believe this, this comment is meant in a malicious way. It's usually just someone saying it in passing, but it always kind of just like, sticks me a little bit. It just bugs me a little bit. But a lot of people will say, I don't know why you call it homesteading. I don't know what the big deal is. I've lived this lifestyle forever. My mom and dad raised me like that and we always had a milk cow, and I don't know why you guys act like it's such a new thing because it's not. Now I understand what the person's saying, right? They're saying, I have ownership in this lifestyle and I knew about it before you did, which totally cool.

Speaker 1 ([10:37](#)):

I get it. Right. That's fine. I respect that because you were in it before. It was cool, which is so awesome, and if you had parents or grandparents or whoever that brought you into this lifestyle and you were fortunate enough to be raised on a farm or on a ranch, and this was just life canning was just what she did, and milking a cow was a thing, and raising your own food was just part of everyday life and you didn't even think anything of it. That's fantastic. And we need more families like that. Here's the deal. I didn't have that option, right? Like I was raised in little tiny neighborhood on a little tiny lot, and I didn't have parents who were farmers or ranchers or who wanted that lifestyle. And I didn't have exposure to all of these practices and growing big gardens and canning a whole bunch.

Speaker 1 ([11:34](#)):

And I'm keeping cattle. Like that wasn't a part of my childhood, but I wanted it right. I would have killed for it. And if you listen to the very first episode of this podcast, I talk a little bit more about my background and my story. I was this weirdo child that was obsessed with horses and cattle and the land, like at the age of three years old. It was just the weirdest thing. But my whole childhood I craved and I cried and I prayed to be somehow involved in this rural agricultural life. So that's all I ever wanted, but I wasn't born into it. So what did I have to do to get it? I had to create it. Right? And one of the biggest lessons I've learned in my life that I hold very dearly to is the idea of personal responsibility, right?

Speaker 1 ([12:28](#)):

If I want something, it's up to me to create that thing. If I want to have a rural lifestyle, I'm not going to sit around and feel sorry that my parents didn't give that to me or I wasn't born into it and say, Oh dang it. Like too bad. Like would have been nice. Like no, I'm going to say fine. I'll go create that. Which we did and if our budget's too tight and I, there's things I want and goals I want to achieve and we can't afford those things, instead of just saying, Oh man, that's the way it is. Oh well I'm going to go create different income streams. Right. And take charge. And it's not easy. I'm not saying any of this is easy, but it's the choice to take responsibility for the things I want. And that is why I am obsessed with homesteading because it is a movement of people who are consciously creating what they want.

Speaker 1 ([13:26](#)):

They're not just saying, Oh, dang it, I can't get raw milk or good eggs where I live because the stores don't have them. So, Oh well, we're just going to consume those options. I don't feel are very good for us. No, they're saying, fine, I'll create it myself. I'll get a milk cow, I'll get the chickens, I'll figure out how to butcher if I need to to get good grass fed meats. People are creating what they want inside of this movement, which is powerful. And that lights me up. I love it when people take responsibility. So if you were raised in agriculture or in farming or ranching, so awesome. And I'm a little bit jealous, right, that you got that experience growing up. And if you're like me and you weren't raised in that world, but you crave it, good news is you can still have it, right?

Speaker 1 ([14:20](#)):

It might take a little bit of sweat and blood and tears and creativity and finagling to figure out how to get there. But it is possible. And I promise you, if I can do it, you absolutely can do it. So that is my rant, my soapbox for today. There is a reason I call myself a homesteader. You can have a dishwasher and be a homesteader. It's okay to mix a little bit of the new with a little bit of the old, if that helps you get to where you want to be. Right? And if you don't want to have a dishwasher and you want to cook over a open fire, more power to you, that's fabulous, right? But you get to pick, and that's the magic of modern day homesteading. We do get to choose, and like I've said before, I am pretty sure if Ma Ingles could have fit a dishwasher through the door of her log cabin, she probably would have.

Speaker 1 ([15:18](#)):

So if you are ready to do this homesteading thing, but you're just filling a little bit of unsure, a little bit unsure of where to start. Well, that's my specialty. I just so happen to have an entire library of resources that I put together for homesteaders and you can get complimentary access to this library over theprairiehomestead.com/grow we'll drop that link in the show notes one more time. It's theprairiehomestead.com/grow and that is it for today. Don't forget to hit subscribe, so all the new episodes will show up automatically in your podcast player. And if you found this episode helpful, I would love it if you could just pop over and leave a quick rating or review. I think so much for listening. I always enjoy hanging out here on the podcast and I'll catch up with you next time.