



7 Ways We Change The World Growing Our Own Food

Gary & Valerie – [GrowFoodSummit.com](http://GrowFoodSummit.com)

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M Wildcraft:

Hello and welcome to the Home Grown Food Summit. This is Marjory Wildcraft, I'm your host and guide through this amazing series of adventures that we're going on.

I like to think of the summit as if we're up on a mountaintop and we're getting to look down into an amazingly productive valley. From our height up here, we can look into the backyards and over the fences and into all the small farms.

Like look over there, we saw Paul Wheaton with "Six Ways to Keep Chickens." Then there's a group Katrina Blair is leading and she's showing them the "Thirteen Wild Weeds," incredible source of food and medicine that's probably just showing up in your yards and gardens already. Over there, Jill Winger, who's a wonderful homesteader, and she's showing a group how to do mulch gardening.

Right now though, we're going to pop on down to Gary and Valerie's place. Let me tell you a little bit about Gary. Gary Heine and Valerie Kausen enjoy creating community and transformation. They co-founded the non-profit 15Thousand Farmers in Louisville, Kentucky to help people grow healthy foods sustainably in whatever space they might have.

Gary and Valerie also created the Food Growing People and the Grow Your Own Food Summit, which reached 45,000 people worldwide. This dramatically expanded their ability to be of service teaching people how to change the world by growing healthy food at home. They love to show small steps that people can take that make big changes in their lives.

Gary co-founded Heine Brothers' Coffee and has traveled extensively to the coffee-growing countries of the world. He's helped raise awareness and implementation about fair trade and organic growing practices. He's started three non-profits dedicated to sustainable local agriculture and food growing locally, nationally and internationally.

Valerie has also done a lot of work supporting creativity, sustainability and healing in the world for many decades.

Gary and Valerie can be reached at their website at [www.growfoodsummit.com](http://www.growfoodsummit.com) and you're going to get to listen to them here talking about the "Seven Ways That We Change the World by Growing Our Own Food."

Welcome Gary and Valerie. Thanks so much for joining us.

Gary Heine: Hey, thanks for having us talk with you today. It's a pleasure.

Valerie Kausen: It really is a pleasure to be with you, Marjory. You have such an amazing voice, it's so welcoming. Thank you.

M Willdcraft: You all are doing such good work with the Grow Food Summit and all the people that you've interviewed. I guess we have a similar genre, but, and just let everybody know, this is very cooperative space.

Today you're going to be talking about, and you definitely live this and work it, of the seven ways that you change the world by growing your own food.

Valerie Kausen: We have experienced it in our own lives. It has really changed us over these past seven years that we've really been focused on it. We're excited to share some of those stories with you and help to inspire people to understand that it's not just putting the seed in the ground, that it really is changing the world. To look at it from that perspective gives us so much more hope and so much more excitement about what we're doing.

M Willdcraft: What would you say is the number one way then?

Valerie Kausen: Number one. We put it in, of course. Have more fun!

M Willdcraft: Have more fun by growing your own food.

Valerie Kausen: To reconnect with the natural world. Because so many of us are just stuck in our little boxes of technology, like we're doing right now with you and these wonderful ways that we can connect with the world. We forget that just connecting with the natural world can enliven us, can bring us back to that sense of connection with people that we love, people that we're interacting with.

It really does juice us up again. It's like our recharge.

Gary Heine: I just returned a couple days ago from a trip out of town. I was in the airport and just was noticing how much everybody's looking at their phone. Texting and reading their messages. We just really have lost that ability to just play in the dirt like we did when we were kids. It's so healthy for us.

There's this earthing idea that's really spreading about how we get electromagnetic energy from the earth that really enlivens us and helps us stay more healthy, and protects us from some of the-

Valerie Kausen: EMFs.

Gary Heine: EMFs that are rolling around in the atmosphere. Just getting out and playing in the dirt, connecting with the dirt, is just so, so healthy for us.

M Willcraft: I'll tell you, some of the best times I've ever had with my kids was when we were digging potatoes. You're just digging. Who's got the biggest one? Who's got the littlest one? Who found the ugliest one? Didn't that potato look like Uncle Frank? It really is.

That's the real juice, I find, in growing food. Of course, the strawberries. Growing strawberries, what fun that is. Of course, I never got any of the strawberries. The kids-

Gary Heine: They ate them all.

M Willcraft: They ate them all.

Valerie Kausen: That was the way with the blackberry bush this year too. They feed the birds or whoever was out there first, or in the day, got the blackberries.

It is, it just brings a sense of joy, so instantaneously, to go out and see what's happened from yesterday to today. How much has grown. How much the pea shoots have gone up the trellis. How many peas you can get before somebody notices.

Gary Heine: That was so fun, planting peas last year. They were real successful for the first time. They started growing. Then we tied them up to this makeshift trellis that was made from the bamboo that we cut from our neighbor's yard that was leaning over the fence. They just started growing.

It was just so exciting to go out every day and watch how they were growing. Then when the peas started coming in, it was so much fun to just pop those peas and eat the peas inside. It was just really nice.

Valerie Kausen: Makes us less serious, I think. Gets us out of the tech world and back to our natural self, which obviously we know is what makes us healthy.

M Willcraft: It'll definitely humble you too. It'll definitely humble you.

Valerie Kausen: Another way that we feel like it really changes the world is that part about health, like I mentioned.

M Willcraft: Yeah, that's a big reason.

Valerie Kausen: Huge.

Gary Heine: Improves our health, that of our families, our neighborhoods, communities of the world.

Valerie Kausen: Communities, yeah.

M Willcraft: Talking to a friend of mine that is dealing with cancer, and she says, "You know, I eat healthy," and she does try. I know her dad real well. I said, "When your dad was a little boy, his mama went down to the store and she bought carrots and he'd eat a carrot," and I said, "Today, for you, when you go to the store, you have to eat 11 carrots to get the same nutrition that your dad got when he was a boy."

I don't know if you can get enough nutrition out of a grocery store to be healthy. It really is to the point where you got to start pulling that nutrition out of your backyard.

Gary Heine: You're totally right, Marjory. We've spent so many years eating nutrient-deficient food and food with chemicals. Food that's not actually food, but pretends to be food.

Were you telling me that somebody put some Hostess Twinkies on a plate, or something, for a year and they hadn't changed? A year later they looked the same.

M Willcraft: Twinkies went out of business, but then I heard somebody bought them and they're coming back in business again. They were tying that to the legalization of marijuana. I'm not sure.

Valerie Kausen: That is funny.

Gary Heine: Anyway, all those years of eating poor food, chemicalized food, has really done a number on our health. It's created all this inflammation in our bodies, which causes all of these diseases that are now epidemic in the United States. Heart disease, and diabetes, and so many things.

Really getting back to, like you were saying, real food from the garden that has the nutrients you need, just has a massive effect on how we feel,

our energy, how we sleep, how we connect with those we love. How we become more resilient to difficult situations in the world when you have a good basis of nutrition in your food.

Valerie Kausen: It's just our health. Our health in general, just directly, as you say, we're getting those nutrients that a lot of our biologists say that it's 1000 times more effective when you eat an herb from your backyard than if it was grown someplace else because it's surrounded by all the same elements you are. It has the same vibration, impact, all of it, that we have inside our own bodies. It's a huge, huge increase.

M Willcraft: Growing those plants. You've connected with them. You've tended them. You've watered them. You've nurtured them. There's definitely a potency in the food you eat with that connection of love, I feel. You're right, I'd say a 1000 times more.

Valerie Kausen: It seems like it. I just thought that was a very interesting perspective on the herbs, just the effectiveness of how they work with us. I think with the distance between the back door and the garden being a few hundred feet, to the average food coming in the grocery store, processed foods, and even our foods from other garden sources that are coming 1700 miles, I think is the average distance that it's being trucked in. Thinking about how little nutrition is actually left in anything that we're putting into our bodies, if it comes from a store.

Gary Heine: Huge resources of our families, and of our communities, and of our countries, are being spent on health care. Trying to fix people who have gotten unhealthy from our lifestyles, from the food we eat. If we can begin to reclaim that health, then we can have some of those resources for other things that we need them for.

M Willcraft: Beautiful.

Gary Heine: Then the third of our seven is building community around growing and eating healthy food, and all the ways that can happen.

Valerie Kausen: I wanted to tell a story about our last one that I forgot. Because it is so graphic and amazing.

When I first got into eating healthy food, I started a macrobiotic diet. In that time when I was eating whole foods, for really the first time in my life. I had been so much processed foods when I was growing up. It was the 70s. We're all about that packaging, and candy, and all that stuff. The dairy, so much dairy and everything.

When I changed over to a whole foods diet, that my body started detoxing. I won't describe them as graphically as they actually happened, but things started coming out of my body that we're obviously from the processed foods that I had been eating, and all of the cooked dairy. All of the things that the body doesn't really have the opportunity or the understanding of how to actually take in to health and well-being, so it just stores a lot of this stuff because the organs can't get rid of it fast enough. It just stores it in the body.

To see, in my early 20s, that my body was letting go of all of these toxins and all of this disgusting stuff, that it really made a huge impact on me. I feel like anybody who changes their diet to a more healthy one is going to have a healing crisis, is what some people call it. That the body just has an opportunity to let go of the things that are unhealthy.

Gary Heine: Just would like everybody out there to know that when you start eating healthy food, you're not going to have giant blisters all over your body.

Valerie Kausen: Shh, you weren't going to say that!

Gary Heine: That's just an unusual-

M Wildcraft: The worms crawling out.

Gary Heine: It can be a much gentler process, that's what I've experienced.

Valerie Kausen: I just wanted to share that because it was very personal to me. It impacted me so deeply, to know that that much change can happen when we change our diet. That food is not just some superfluous something that's going on that our health isn't tied to. That our health is absolutely intricately tied to the food that we put in our body. I think that was a good one.

Anyway, the community building. We, seven years ago, knew very little about growing food. In Louisville here, there's a lot of trees. The house that we were living in at that time had many, many trees in the backyard. We decided to do our first garden in the backyard of this house with a lot of trees.

On top of it being a shady yard, on top of us choosing seeds that were more better suited for full sun, on top of us using way too little soil, on top of the grass that was in the backyard, and added to that we had 72 different kinds of things that we wanted to plant in a very small space,

that all of those things made for us having less than optimal output at the end.

Gary Heine: We learned a lot from making mistakes.

M Willcraft: It sounds like a disaster coming. The recipe right there. That's the classic. I know we all make these huge mistakes [crosstalk 00:14:23].

Gary Heine: When you make them you never forget them, right? This idea that every article on growing a garden and every class on growing a garden talks about how much sun you need, and full sun. I now know what that means. I'll never forget that. It was a great learning experience.

Valerie Kausen: This also gave us the inspiration to want to connect with other people. Because we thought if we don't know how to grow food, if we've not been taught from our grandparents how to do the most basic self-supporting, self-reliant act, then maybe other people were also having a difficult time.

Because, and nothing against any Master Gardeners out there, but the Master Gardener program was so overwhelming. There was so much information on the pH balance and the this and the nitrogen. It was just too much information for a beginner. We were beginners, we were beginner minds. We needed it to be very simple.

We decided if we were having problems, then probably other people were too. We put out a call to our community and said-

Gary Heine: We created a non-profit called 15Thousand Farmers. The idea was to teach people simply and easily how to grow food in their backyards, or on their deck, or on their windowsill, wherever they had.

Valerie Kausen: Our very first meeting.

Gary Heine: Our very first meeting we copied out 75 sheets thinking that was a huge amount of people. If we got 75 people, that would be amazing.

Valerie Kausen: On a freezing cold, snowy February morning.

Gary Heine: Freezing, snowy February day. Anyway, on a Saturday, lots of snow outside, we had the first meeting. It ended up being-

Valerie Kausen: Three hundred people.

Gary Heine: Three hundred people.

Valerie Kausen: Just pouring out of the basement of the church that we were in.

Gary Heine: Of all sorts. Beginners. There was Master Gardeners there. There was intermediate people, advanced people, permaculture people. Just people that were interested in talking and sharing their knowledge about growing food. Asking questions about problems they're having. It was amazing.

It started a very amazing experiment in community. We had monthly get-togethers to really celebrate food growing and to learn more about food growing. People loved to come to that.

So many people just really expressed their gratitude for being able to come together with other people and ask questions, share their experiences, and-

Valerie Kausen: Celebrate.

Gary Heine: Yeah, celebrate.

Valerie Kausen: Celebrate. 15Thousand Farmers was a wonderful success. It's reached over 5,000 people here now in these past six years in Louisville, which is a great community that's still thriving here.

We wanted to reach more people. We wanted to have a bigger community, so Gary came up with the idea of doing an online summit.

Gary Heine: Right. Get some of our heroes. Talk to some of our heroes about growing food and what it means to grow food, and what it means to the world to grow food. How do you compost and all the details. How does community grow.

Valerie Kausen: Mostly we just wanted to talk to really cool people, so we put out an invitation.

Gary Heine: You were there, Marjory.

Valerie Kausen: You were there, Marjory.

M Willcraft: You have such a great line-up of folks too. I hadn't heard that story though. That's so amazing. That's so inspiring.

I tell people all the time that you just put up some flyers. If you don't want to do it in your living room, rent the community center or the cafeteria at the elementary school. You can get it for 50 dollars or something. Try to have a little bit of food to hand out because if people will have a drink and some food, they'll stay around and network. That's incredible response. You printed up 75 flyers and got 300 people.

I think that just points out to me that the pendulum has swung. We've gone all the way to that extreme of having the corporations spoon-feed us and now people are really responding and going, "You know what, we think we need to go back to another model where we're producing a little bit of our own." People are hungry for it.

I think we miss community too. The old neighborhoods where everybody would sit on the porch and you could watch what was going on with your neighbors. We don't have that anymore and I think we long for it.

That's such a great story. I hope that inspires other people to do it in their neighborhood.

I've found there's always somebody that you think could be the perfect role for the Grinch who stole Christmas. Some really grumpy guy. He's either a Republican and you're a Democrat, or vice versa, right? You would never talk to them. He probably likes some other football team.

When he's in his garden, if he's a gardener, it has just astonished me how it flips a bit in their brains and they're totally different people. You can really approach anybody in their gardens.

Gary Heine: I remember thinking that very same, Marjory, at some of these 15Thousand Farmer meetings. Thinking I would have never met these people in my life if it wasn't for this common interest in growing food. Just amazing.

Valerie Kausen: That really does go beyond our differences that so often decide who we hang out with, who we talk to at all, who we are interacting with. Because our beliefs, we want our-

M Wildcraft: We all like to eat!

Valerie Kausen: Yes, that's exactly. [crosstalk 00:19:50]

Gary Heine: Yeah, we do.

M Wildcraft: That's what we have in common, we all like to eat, right?

Valerie Kausen: We all like to eat good food. That's the common thread here. That community building of growing food and healing the planet, really, with our efforts, is such a huge thing. We love community building. We're connectors. We've always been connectors.

Gary has a great background in bringing community together through his nine cafes in Louisville, Kentucky, Heine Brothers Coffee, fair trade organic cafes that he's done so much work around. We both have had lots of experience with it. Just applying it to this has been so much fun.

Gary Heine: Definitely.

Let's see where we've been. Seven ways we change the world by growing our food. We talked about having more fun.

Valerie Kausen: Yeah, we like that.

Gary Heine: Reconnecting with the natural world. We talked about number two, improving our health and that of our communities and the world. Then building community around growing and eating healthy food, we just talked about.

Number four is sequestering carbon and localizing food production.

Valerie Kausen: A lot of the people we talked to, Joel Salatin, Vandana Shiva, Paul Stamets, Will Allen, lots of people that we talked to for this past Grow Your Own Food Summit, said that this is the number one thing that any of us can be doing to be changing the world. Localizing our efforts, obviously, the amount of nutrition in the food is paramount.

There's also these other things that we're doing, which is sequestering carbon by actually planting plants in the ground, which we know from trees sequestering carbons, but also plants sequester carbon. Put the carbon into the soil and utilize it for other things than just flying around in the atmosphere.

All the transportation costs, all the packaging, all of the chemicals, all the things that are used in store-bought foods, are huge in the impact that they have in this world. Look at your neighbor's recycling bin and how many packages there are for the foods that come into their house. It's designer trash. It's obnoxious.

M Willcraft: Gosh I love that, designer trash.

Valerie Kausen: It really has this impact on our world that is so detrimental and so unnecessary. What a beautiful thing to be able to bring the basket out to the backyard and walk with your own two legs and not use any fossil fuels to get there. To be able to bring it back and have that bounty of nutrition and aliveness that's not needing to come on the back of a truck.

Gary Heine: There's something about localizing food production that really builds up our community in these strange times we're living through. A difficult economic times and so many challenges. To be able to localize your food production and grow your own food, have individuals and families be able to grow their own food.

There's a lot of farmers out there who are having a pretty tough time. When they can start selling some of their food because people are getting turned on to healthy food and they can't grow all their food. We love to grow food, but we can't grow all the food that we eat, and so we get connected to farmers markets and then start supporting the farmers, so they don't lose their farms and get a job in the city or something. It really strengthens the local community.

Valerie Kausen: Close connections.

Gary Heine: People are making value-added things out of the food they grow, creating all sorts of small businesses and just very healthy.

Valerie Kausen: We choose not to grow all of our own food because Marjory could teach us how to do it all ourselves.

Gary Heine: That's true.

M Willcraft: I can show you how to do half. I got that half down.

I really don't recommend doing it all. I actually had a group of students from Colgate University come out to my research center to do a tour. They said, "Marjory, what are you going to tell these kids? They're all getting liberal arts degrees and everything. Should they be farmers?" I said, "Probably not." We need to see more farmers, but just grow a little bit, or just grow half. You'll be going a long way, as you don't need to grow all of it. Just do what you can.

There's that classic story, and of course iceberg lettuce is the extreme, but really it takes 10 calories of energy to get one calorie of food on your

plate. That clearly cannot go on forever. Localizing it and cutting down your carbon footprint by growing your own, you can make a huge difference there.

Not to mention that commercial agriculture is one of the biggest pollutants on the planet.

Valerie Kausen: Nasty. So nasty. All of the whole GMO topic, which is huge. Not our level of expertise, but it just is rampant. The injustice that's been happening in our food system for so long. Being able to, as a community, take back our power in this way, it's huge.

M Willcraft: That interview you did with Vandana Shiva was very interesting. I highly recommend folks listen to that one. She had a lot of insight into the seeds. Very potent.

Valerie Kausen: Exactly. That's one of the things that people get when they opt-in on our site now too, is to listen to four talks. Hers is one of them. That's a nice incentive.

The fifth thing, decrease your stress.

M Willcraft: Yes!

Gary Heine: And grow surprise in your life.

M Willcraft: Tell me about that. Grow surprise in your life.

Gary Heine: A perfect example of that is, I remember when my kids were growing up and I would go to their school to work on the playground. There was a teacher there who used to talk about Jerusalem artichokes all the time. He would just go on and on about Jerusalem artichokes. I just thought, "Man, what is this guy going on and on about Jerusalem artichokes?" I wasn't into growing food that much at that time.

All these years later, we got some Jerusalem artichokes-

Valerie Kausen: At the store.

Gary Heine: At the store. Put them in the ground back by the garage. Lo and behold, they grew.

M Willcraft: Beautiful flowers too.

Gary Heine: Yeah, beautiful flowers, which I wasn't expecting. Surprise. Then digging them up, they're so tasty. They're so different and tasty. I'd never had one before. We didn't get a lot.

Then the next year, twice as many came up because we left so many artichokes in the ground that we couldn't find, or whatever.

M Willcraft: Super hearty plants.

Gary Heine: I think the third year even more came up. We're expecting this year to get a bunch. That's more to eat. We know that they're coming up and we're waiting for those beautiful flowers. It's just a beautiful surprise.

Another example is these little blue flowers started growing on the fence around the garden a few years ago. I didn't know where they came from. I just felt like they were wild, or maybe I dropped some seeds at some point. It had been a couple of years and they just started growing, and they were so beautiful. They'd stay closed in the morning and then in the afternoon they'd open up more. It was just beautiful. Sure enough, they kept coming back.

They come back every year. They spread around the garden fence even more. It's just this incredible surprise that if hadn't have had this fence there, it wouldn't have been able to show itself to the world so beautifully. It's just one of the things about growing food in your backyard that I would have never been able to tell people.

You're going to get surprised a lot.

Valerie Kausen: Like volunteers. Like the squash that comes out inevitably of the compost pile every year. You don't know what it's going to be until it actually gets there and it takes over half the yard.

M Willcraft: I have a great surprise story. My neighbor has these canna lilies. They make these beautiful, beautiful red flowers. We just put them out on this gray water system because we haven't got time to turn that into a pond or anything. I dumped the tubers out there and sure enough, they make these beautiful flowers. It's a beautiful green spot in August when everything else is brown.

This friend of mine, Carrie gave them to me. She's kind of apologizing, she said, "This is kind of an old lady's plant, Marjory," and I'm like, "Well, some day I'm going to be an old lady. If it's hearty, I want it."

I got to looking at it, and digging them up, and experimenting with it and doing a little research. It turns out the tubers and the tubers of most lily plants are edible. I cooked them up and fed them to my family, which is the first test, right? They were like, "Yeah, this is pretty good, Mom." Which, if you can get a thumbs-up from a teenager, you're doing good, right?

Gary Heine: Lily tubers?

M Willcraft: Yeah. I went back to my neighbor who gave me the thing. I said, "Hey, did you that those were edible?" She goes, "Ahhhhh." It's like wow, here's a whole nother food source. It was a surprise. It makes these beautiful flowers and just isn't a lot of work, so that was a real delightful surprise.

Gary Heine: That is delightful.

Valerie Kausen: That's wonderful.

Gary Heine: All of this surprise and working in the yard decreases your stress levels. We're really over-stressed in this world today. Our fight-or-flight mechanism is kicking in all the time when it doesn't need to. We're always on alert, waiting for the next time have to fight or flee because over millions of years of evolution, that's how we survived to be here today talking with you. Always being ready to fight or flee. That's still in our brain and in our nervous system.

When you get out in the yard and get your feet and your hands in the dirt, you just start relaxing. You starting calming down. Your heart beats slower. You breathe slower. The dog is running around with a tennis ball in his mouth and wants to play. It's just a beautiful way to relax.

Valerie Kausen: It brings our curiosity out as well, which I think is part of this getting out of our stress patterns and getting into that sense of wonder that the garden and growing food really brings out in us. This sense of wonder, "I planted that seed and look what happened. Look at all of these unexpected beautiful outcome that [crosstalk 00:30:36] come with it."

M Willcraft: Another more down and dirty angle on the stress is, and my story, as you all know, is I came out of this more from the survival and preparedness [inaudible 00:30:46] we could envision collapse. I was very concerned. Went through a period of panic. Talk about stress.

More and more so, because I can grow my own food and I have some basic self-reliance skills, I'm just noticing none of those news stories really

trigger me anymore. I have a deep sense of security that I do know how to take care of some of my own basic needs. There is an incredible amount of relief in that.

Valerie Kausen: Those senses of surprise and those little stories. The nasturtium that comes up in a place you didn't think about it, or the tomato plant that was your best one and it was a volunteer from last year. Whatever it is.

M Willcraft: Or the things the birds bring.

Valerie Kausen: Yes. Right. Those little packages of joy.

The sixth thing that we're really feeling in ourselves is this growing our own confidence.

Gary Heine: Like you were just mentioning.

M Willcraft: There you go, yeah.

Valerie Kausen: That for us, we really do feel like it translates not only from our growing of our food, but into our lives. That if we do have a sense of self-reliance, and a sense of being willing to continue to learn, like so many people I am one of those people who have gotten out of learning as much as I did when I was younger.

This brings back a sense that we do not know what's going to happen. We don't know what the world's going to be doing. We don't know exactly what that plant's going to do in this particular environment. There's a constant sense of learning. That does increase confidence.

Gary Heine: Like we had said before, we started off seven years ago with an almost completely unsuccessful garden, but learned a lot. To last summer, we put on the Grow Your Food Summit, where we talked to some of our heroes and leaders locally, regionally, nationally and out in the world in the sustainable food growing. To share the knowledge with thousands and thousands of other people. How cool is that? That's [crosstalk 00:33:10] cool.

Valerie Kausen: That people that are not experts at growing food can actually create an environment where people can learn how to grow food.

Gary Heine: We tell people we're not experts, but we're enthusiasts.

Valerie Kausen: We're enthusiasts.

M Wildcraft: I love that. There you go. Yes. Years ago people were trying to call me an expert and I just cringed. Anybody who's really growing food, you know better than to mess with Mother Nature like that. She'll throw that hail storm at you and wipe your garden out, or whatever.

The confidence is, you're right. It always fascinated me that we're the only species that does it right from the beginning. Teach our young the most basic need of taking care of food.

Gary Heine: I know one of the things that was really a milestone for me in growing my confidence was I had that first tough year. Then the next year we tried a community garden, which had sun. We had a lot more success.

I didn't really understand about garlic. I love garlic, but I didn't really understand how to grow it. I'd heard stories of plant it before the first frost, or plant it after the first frost.

I was at one of these 15Thousand Farmers meetings and a local farmer was there. I said, "What's the deal on garlic anyway?" He goes, "Plant it now." I have some down at my store, so I went down there and got a bag of those little garlicks and planted it. Sure enough, it just grew and came up, and came up the next year.

Ever since, we've been saving some of the garlic and planting it again. Now I can tell other people how to, and I have actually told other people how to grow garlic. It's just an amazing thing. Once you get a little bit of knowledge, gives you confidence to get a little bit more. Which is kind of cool the way that works. Then you can eat it.

Valerie Kausen: I know, that's the benefit, you get to eat it.

M Wildcraft: You get to eat your success and your failure.

Valerie Kausen: No matter how small or how big the bounty, that you enjoy. We enjoy that so much because the history is there. We know what it took to actually make that happen, or to allow that to happen, I should say.

Gary Heine: Our seventh way that we change the world by growing our own food is we grow hope. I think that's one of the biggest reasons, that's we've touched on a little bit.

I think a lot of people are looking for a little bit of hope. It happened in my lifetime, that all the climate change really became understood, and

just all the declining species and all that kind of thing. When I was growing up, it was just a different world than my kids growing up.

I'm troubled for them sometimes, that they have to worry about these kind of things growing up, when they should be having fun and playing. I think people are looking for a little bit of hope. Growing your own food is a great way to get some of that.

Valerie Kausen: Just like planting an olive tree, not the grafted ones they probably have now, but way back when, when you would plant an olive tree, you would be planting it for your grandchildren to enjoy the fruit. To think that just planting a seed, you do believe in the future to even a small degree. Even if it's six weeks, even if it's six months. That we're believing in the future. That there's going to be a world for us to enjoy it in and that we're doing it for our future self or for those that we love, their future self.

In this world, as you said, there's just so many stories about war, and poverty, and system collapse, and all of the things that are happening in one way or another that could happen in a much bigger way. That we can have something tangible that is right in front of us that we can-

M Wildcraft: If you've got a hose and a backyard, there's something you can do about it. There's something you can do.

Gary Heine: When there's so much bad news, we're looking for a way to make a difference. It seems like there's so much, the problems are so great, but if people can realize that if you grow a tomato in a pot in your backyard, you're changing the world in so many ways. Not only your personal health, but your family's health, your neighborhood.

Sequestering carbon, on a small scale, but you multiply that tomato by a bazillion tomatoes that are being grown all over the world, and all of a sudden you're sequestering some carbon. You're making a difference.

You can step into your backyard and create hope. You can make a difference in the world. That's huge. That's very huge. I think about that a lot.

Valerie Kausen: The world can be a depressing place, so let's make it more beautiful and more hopeful with our food growing.

M Wildcraft: Absolutely. That's a really lovely message.

How can people get in touch with you? What's going to be the best way and how can they find out about the summit that you put on?

Valerie Kausen: Thank you. [Growfoodsummit.com](http://Growfoodsummit.com). [Growfoodsummit.com](http://Growfoodsummit.com).

M Willcraft: That'll be the big button we have over there on the right.

Valerie Kausen: Yes, that one.

M Willcraft: They can connect up with you. Some of the interviews you've done are available.

Valerie Kausen: Our one with Vandana Shiva and with some of the local farmers here of how to make compost, how to actually do a step-by-step of a year of gardening, food growing. You get four talks. Those are all almost an hour long.

Gary Heine: Then a bonus, Basic Food Growing 101, where we just go through how do you grow a garden.

Valerie Kausen: Those are all great resources and they're all there. We also do weekly videos and helping people to stay current with the food growing, and offering our own flavor of how to change the world in small steps.

Gary Heine: We're going to be working with a local compost maker and farmer to really create videos of step-by-step instructions through the growing season this year. We can tell people more about that when they get connected up with us.

M Willcraft: Nice. Thank you so much for spending time with us and the "Seven Ways You Change the World by Growing Your Own Food." I love it. It's really what it's all about, isn't it? Everything from your own inner world to the globe around us.

Gary Heine: Thanks, Marjory, for all the great work you're doing in changing the world.

Valerie Kausen: It's been delightful to be with you and we really appreciate everything you're doing.

M Willcraft: I will be sure to let folks know when the food growing summit comes up and we'll get that information out to everybody.

Valerie Kausen: Thank you.

Gary Heine: All right. Bye. Love you.

M Willcraft: Talk to you later. Bye.

That was a very interesting discussion with Gary and Valerie. Again, you can reach them by looking over at the button over there and clicking at that, and that'll take you to the Grow Food Summit, and listen to that interview with Vandana Shiva. They've just got a nice, really gentle and spiritual approach to the whole aspect of growing food.

If you liked Gary and Valerie, some other topics that we have at the Home Grown Food Summit.

Leslie Parsons is doing a presentation on "Detoxing Your Garden Soil." If you're concerned about nuclear particles, or heavy metals, or agricultural drift, Leslie is pioneering a lot of work on how to keep those kind of things out of your garden soil.

Mike Adams is with a group on "Eight Reasons You Are Insane if You're Not Growing Some of Your Own Food." That's the Health Ranger. Mike runs the [naturalnews.com](http://naturalnews.com), what a crazy site.

Then Doug Simons has got a presentation on plant communication. How to connect directly with the wisdom of the plant kingdom. Doug really is an amazing healer and gifted teacher. You definitely want to catch that presentation.

Lots of amazing topics here. Listen, I'm going to run. I'll catch you at the next amazing presentation here at the Home Grown Food Summit.