

## **FINAL EP 5 Alliso Dehonney**

**missy@womeninfood.net**

**scribie**

Audio Transcription, Perfected

<https://scribie.com/files/a13a2f3404b941dbb5bbac37728844e4c9dc3cb9>

**0:00:06.3 S1:** Hello and welcome to another episode of women in food. I'm your host as Missy singer do Mars. This podcast is all about the intersection of three things food, business, and the feminine. Each episode, I invite you to sit down with me in my interview guest, as we dive into this intersection to your food curiosity, share their favorite recipes and give you some fun food explorations along the way. I am super inspired by these women, these farmers chefs, bakers, cooks, writers and food makers, who all bring their passion for beauty, nourishment, community, pleasure, connection and deep care to others through food. These are women who advocate and take action towards increased food sovereignty for themselves, their families and their neighborhoods. Before I introduce today's guest and our topic, I have one request for you, if you could go over to iTunes or whatever app you're using to listen and give us a rating and review, it's a simple act that helps us so... So very much, thank you. Today, I'm really excited to introduce to you my friend, Alison Dhoni, also brings together her culinary training and passion for food with a super strong background in printers and business leadership.

**0:01:23.0 S1:** She's built and run both for-profit and non-profit organizations, and currently feeds underserved communities in the Buffalo-New York region through a variety of urban farms, Nutrition Education programs, culinary classes and school programming, all through her urban agriculture business, urban fruits and veggies. And it's many, many projects. She also builds corporate wellness programs with local companies and universities and sells produce and a handful of local farmers markets, she is a super busy woman, there is nothing she doesn't do, so also, welcome to women in food. I am so honored and so happy to have you join us today. Oh, thank you, Missy. I'm so happy and honored to be here, and I appreciate in all that you do that you had time... Well, yes, I have to make time for number one, special friends and number two special things that just promote what you and I love in what we do, speaking of special friendships are started in such an interesting way. And we were talking about this just the other day. I'm at Allison, attending some kind of presentation and talk about produce and re-selling it wholesale in the region, and I remember being at this networking event, I was a very, very new farmer, barely had a farm, and it was my first kind of time reaching out in this community I had newly moved to, and I know I was asking a lot of questions of the presenters of to learn about how to get my produce into these markets and avenues that they were talking about locally.

**0:03:02.5 S1:** And I noticed that Allison was the only other person in the room who was asking lots of questions that were really smart questions also, obviously questions that shared her passion for organic and four interesting varieties of fruits and vegetables and unique varieties of fruits and vegetables. And she was also the only other person in the room who was writing notes on a computer in front of her, like I was, and I was like, Okay, this is a smart woman who I need to go... Me, I have no idea what featured the risk for us, but I have to go introduce myself, and that's been the start of a wonderful friendship and connection, even though neither of us have the time to see Ah other all that often. We do try our best to stay connected... Right.

**0:03:45.1 S2:** That is so true. And you did like when the presenter, I think it was in between presenters and we had a little bit of networking time, and you came right up to me and introduced yourself and I was so happy because I too was a relatively new farmer, like you said, experience business woman, but farmer, not so much. And so I needed a lot of help, I needed a lot of friends in this space, and... We just had that chemistry. Right when you came up and we said hi and... Yeah, you're right, things. Just took up from there.

**0:04:24.6 S1:** Yeah, and just watching what you've created and built here, I'm impressed and completely inspired because you found this fascinating path of... Inspiring path of farming and sustainable business and profit and non-profit, and making major change and making major impact in your local communities, tell me more about that whole combination and a little bit about how it all works together. So

**0:04:57.2 S2:** Yeah, so I spent the majority of my career in insurance and finance, and I really wanted to do something different, and someone came, someone in city government was talking to me about lack of food access and food desert situation and health disparities... Right. In the Buffalo community. So I started to do some research, and I realized that this could probably be a good business, but I needed help on the technical end because I historically am not a grower, so I was fortunate enough to have a horticulturalist take me under his wing and my farm manager who was an amazing grower, was... I asked her If I did this, would he wanna do it with me? And she was like, Oh my goodness, yes. And actually, we came out to your farm is years ago? Yes, I remember meeting her. She was so amazing, so lovely. Which I had someone like her to help me around here. Three, I know when she's like... At the time, I think she might have been 79. And yeah, I mean, the energy at a lot of 25-year-olds would beg for it, but in any case, as I was doing my research, I realized that the best way to be successful in this space would be to have an infrastructure that was a hybrid, so for-profit and enough for profit, and that allowed me to just get going in the for-profit space, and it took several years before our not-for-profit got going because we needed to have some history, some data, be able to tell some funders what we were doing and how effective we had been, and then we started to get grant funding, which is kind of now taken over the for-profit space, which wasn't really the intention, but it's how it's shaking out and it's allowing us to do good work and employ people and just do the programming that is so necessary in this space...

**0:07:13.5 S1:** Right, so I wanna rewind in your life a little bit to where your love and passion of food started or came from, and I know you have some culinary and wellness training on top of all your business knowledge and experience, so tell me more about... A little bit of your history of... The history of your relationship with food. Besides

**0:07:38.9 S2:** His, I am... That was, I am fortunate enough to have a mother of Caribbean descent, and trust me when I say... And this is all on a relationship to food, that there was a time in my life when I would not have said that I had a mother who was adamant about cooking and nutrition, and she took that role very seriously in our household, my brothers and I used to feel so denied and neglected because we couldn't go to McDonalds and we didn't get to eat out at restaurants a lot, and you know, my mother was always like, I can make whatever they're making at the restaurant 10 times better, and that is not what children wanna hear that's just... That's right.

**0:08:29.3 S1:** I have that conversation in my own head as an adult all the time, like, Why am I eating out, I can make it better at... Except if I eat out, they do the dishes, that's really the reason I eat out is 'cause I eat...

**0:08:40.8 S2:** Absolutely received me too. And it is true because I say that now too, but having Caribbean roots, like food is central to our lifestyles, and my mother grew up going down to the standard, the ocean and buying fish, and then that's what they had for dinner. And when we would

visit Trinidad, that's where my mother's from. As a child, my cousins would kill the chickens in the backyard and then that's what we have for dinner, so the idea of getting your food from grocery stores and buying food like January 1st, that you be... January 31st, it was just of... Or in to us. So yeah, so that's one of my relationship with food started, and then also on my father's side, my uncle had this little garden that I used to just plan with him, it had absolutely no meaning to me except for a place to play and a place to bond with my uncle. So those are my childhood relationships with food, and so we've always... I've always been interested in eating clean, fresh food that's just been my way, and then when I got married, I married into a family of amazing cooked, mostly Southern style.

**0:10:25.1 S2:** My ex-husband's family was from the South, so that brought a whole another spin on to my relationship with food, and my ex-mother-in-law, she was so excited to teach me all her recipes and everything, so yeah, very strong history with a relationship to food and then to come full circle, to realize how many folks... Maybe he did not have that relationship. And what that means for your health, and what that means for your family dynamic, when those kind of natural built-in relationship isn't there.

**0:11:06.2 S1:** Yeah, I love that. Oh gosh, there's so many things that I love that you brought up. But I love that when you think back to your childhood, building your relationship with food, you go back to two women in your lifetime, your own mother and your ex mother-in-law, this is women in food and besides being a woman yourself, I notice that these traditions and passion for food and feeding others really comes through our female and feminine lineage and ancestry in our history, and I love that you bring that up and then that informs how eating... You said eating fresh food, eating food like that, or awareness to what your eating is related directly to your family dynamic and your family relations, who... Don't you say more about that piece, what you see there...

**0:12:01.9 S2:** Sure, and unfortunately, there's this really young gentleman who came into my professional world by word of mouth, and he struggles with... And I can't say the name of the disease. The word is so long. It's a kidney disease. And long story short, through lots of horrific relationship with the medical community and his inability to get treatment and help and acknowledgement of what his symptoms were, he kind of took on the research and trying to heal himself upon his own... And this is a very young man in his 20s and doing research, he realized because he came from a family that did not cook, and he realized that he had been heating chemicals his whole life, lots of fast food ever since he was a young, young boy. And what he did was change that, he started to go plant-based and was able to change his symptoms, his blood work changed, which caught the attention of his position and the hospital of where he was being treated, and he had to change his whole relationship with food here's a young man who doesn't cook, doesn't know how to cook, and he realized that if he didn't start doing that, that he probably wasn't gonna be around for a long time, so it's such a powerful, powerful thing to look at your history, look at what your history has been with food and what space it has you currently in, and where do you wanna go forward? And do you need to make changes? Is it working? But we really need to get that message out that folks need to spend some time evaluating their relationship with food.

**0:14:04.9 S1:** Absolutely true. I've been thinking a lot and writing a little soon to be a lot about just my own thoughts on beauty of food, and to me, the beauty of food is more than visual beauty, but it's exactly what you're talking about, it is the depths of relationship to your food and where it

comes from. And in fact, I'm actually de-frosting for dinner tonight or story that I raised here and then had butchered, and I haven't done that many times, but I decided to raise and my own animals for me at least once because of that, recognizing a need to have deeper awareness or connection with that relationship that you're talking about, of where my food comes from, and I was like, If I'm gonna eat animals, then I wanna at least once raise them and take their lives myself and be part of that entire process and recognize all of it.

**0:15:02.7 S2:** That's amazing, Sean, I'm gonna tell you that chicken that is really done good. When I was in Trento, you know that I still have not tasted a piece of chicken that tastes like that...

**0:15:21.0 S1:** I'm sure, I'm sure I remember traveling and Carvana southern islands and wherever I was on some chore, they took us to a very local lunch spot and we were eating chicken and there's chickens wandering around the pad while we're eating, and we knew where the chicken on our plate came from a like, Oh, that's really real. That's right, that was on before I had the passion for food that I have now, and long before I had the awareness and been part of the food system and the way I am now, but... It's funny that you shared that story. So you remember those exact experiences as being Caribbean Islands myself. Right. And speaking of your background and tradition, why don't we... Tell me about some of the foods that you grew up with. Traditional food, you grapes and some of them are. And tell us more about what that food is.

**0:16:15.8 S2:** So when my mother left Trinidad, she kind of really severed a lot of her time, so for a long time, we didn't eat a lot of traditional Caribbean food, the one thing we did eat curry, we had a lot of Currier courier, Koreans, we did a lot of curry, but then as we grew up and more of our family migrated from Trinidad to New York City into Toronto area in Canada, we started to spend more time, and so we started to eat more traditional additions from Trinidad because unlike my mother, the rest of the family who migrated here, kept strong in their households, that's pretty much all they ate or traditional western Dean dishes, and also two in New York City and in Toronto, there are so many Caribbean folks that there are so many Caribbean restaurants and the community is strong. So everywhere you go, you're getting those traditional meals, so things like... Let me think, I call... The way my mother prepared Curry compared to some of the other folks, is a little different, it's a real... It's a harder dish with Sweet Potatoes and onions, just a ton of things in the dish to make a really thick and healthy and wholesome core sauce for your chicken and your shrimp.

**0:18:07.7 S2:** So a lot of those dishes, I was still learning actually, and I'm fortunate to have folks to help me teach me how to make those dishes and things like that, so it's really fun to... Even at this age and not growing up with all of those dishes is really fun to be able to learn them again, partake in them, and then my sister-in-law is... She's Canadian, but her family's from Jamaica, so they have kind of a different spin on a lot of things, but not really really great dishes, fresh king fish. And so we... Indians, like if you have fish, you have fish with bones in them and with the head still on the fish, like everyone's plate has a whole fish on it, so that's traditionally how we eat our fish, that's worth...

**0:19:14.0 S1:** Love that. And talking about the cure, just getting hungry listening to you, but talking about the cure, you talked about how it was really healthy with all that stuff in it, and I think that's something I've been thinking about recently, reading a few different things, the awareness that our cultural foods, whatever culture you're from, are actually healthy and that to eat healthy, you don't

have to deny traditional and cultural foods from your own background. A lot of people think, Oh, I have to eat Kallen Kila to be healthy. And that may not... And deny themselves their own traditions and their own cultures, and I don't... I'm starting to rethink that, and I love that you brought up about talking about the core.

**0:20:02.9 S2:** You know, that's so true, messy because we're a long... Not a long time, but for a couple of years, I was thinking that too, and I've had to rethink that as well, now we may have to alter some of the things that are in those older traditional recipes and maybe do a little bit of substitution, but to abandon it. 100%, you're right. I don't think that that is necessary. I was starting to think that a little while ago.

**0:20:35.2 S1:** Right. My own culture, which is very Eastern European based, and a lot of heavier foods and things like that, but this winter eating and it makes perfect sense, 'cause in the winter, I wanna eat, I need to stay warm, I need that kind of energy. That's the kind of food that's available when you can't grow under the snow, those things, so there's a place for it and a rightness to it. Oh

**0:21:00.9 S2:** Yeah, I totally agree. And I think that turn some folks off, and the last thing we wanna do is know what we're trying to get these messages out about local and healthy options, you don't wanna kinda turn folks off from what they traditionally have been eating and their experiences with food.

**0:21:27.3 S1:** Exactly, exactly. So speaking of culturally appropriate food and traditional dishes, dishes, do you have a restore gonna share with us on this call? Is that right? Yeah, yeah, let's

**0:21:38.3 S2:** Talk about that. Let's cook something is the recipe for callers Calamus alibis. Like if you can imagine, and I don't do a good description, but trust me, it takes a lot better than it sounds in a lot better than it looks. It's like a sassy spinach. Now, traditionally, you would use a thin bush, which... I don't know, Missy, have you seen that grown here?

**0:22:17.0 S1:** Maybe not, but that doesn't mean it can't happen. I would probably to do some research on other names for it or what the scientific... With cultural plans like that, I often go back to the scientific name to find it outside of its... Then you know what I mean? Yeah, but I do that with the number, grow a number of Asian vegetables and a grow a number of various specials from other parts of Europe and all over the world. And so when I'm curious about something like that, I usually go back to scientific name if I can, and I find odd resources recedes like Etsy, believe it or not, things like that for traditional seeds in the Decimus is a trolley. Okay, okay, that makes

**0:23:05.7 S2:** A... I haven't seen it grown here and I have that grow in...

**0:23:09.4 S1:** No, Tarot. I lived in Hawaii, where Taro grows a lot and it definitely it needs water and tropical tropical climate, I believe, but they grow in water kind of... It's like a rod that's in a very wet, but I've never heard of the leaf being in, I've only heard of terror being used, at least that's how they use it in Hawaii. Maybe they leave too, but I don't know. So... Well, substitute at first, finish. Got it. Yeah.

**0:23:42.9 S2:** Just to make it easier and it's really just as good... The one thing about making calls way is it helps to have an immersion blender, 'cause like I said, it's like a sassy type dish that you could put over rice, something like that.

**0:24:06.9 S1:** Okay, cool, so we're gonna want an immersion blender, cause just a regular blender, if I don't have an emerging, just be careful for those of you who might be cooking along with us, if you put something hot in your regular blender, don't put too much in at once, and keep the lid loose so steam can escape, otherwise it will... I promise you explode everywhere. Bernicia, that mistake a few times in my kitchen, which is how my kitchen got a complete cleaning and... So what are the ingredients we need... We need how much

**0:24:39.4 S2:** We need to channel packages as Rosen chop spinach, about half to one pound of pumpkins or pumpkin squash, you can buy it in the can and freeze

**0:24:56.1 S1:** Pump in pre... Yes, one carrot missed one medium funan and four to five scallions to about one and a half cups of scallions finally chopped. Okay, so just to say it again, it's two bags of frozen chop spinach, one can of pure pumpkin or other Winter squash and scallions, one carrot and one medium onion and is in like a yellow or white onion. Yes. Yellow on yellow. You okay, now what do we do? Okay, as we're not done, I do need about eight springs of fresh time, if you can get it that way, if I'm gonna use dry... Can we use dry... And if so, how much...

**0:25:45.2 S2:** Yeah, you can use dry. So maybe like a table bone.

**0:25:48.7 S1:** Okay, cool.

**0:25:51.3 S2:** And eight very large clothes of garlic, and so I wanna stop here and talk about the guy just for a sec, I'm always a fan of talking about... Karla, what do you wanna say about ERI love garlic? And I just want folks to kind of be aware that there's so much girling coming into the US from China, I'm not sure about other countries, but here, so you wanna pay special attention to where your garlic has grown, if you can get it local, that would be... Phenomenal, but if not, I have noticed that grocery stores are starting to label their garlic Made in the USA. O. Yeah, so that's important. The other thing about garlic is I am taking a food as medicine class, which is phenomenal, loving every second of it.

**0:26:52.4 S1:** Based on what traditions is a drawing on Western food as medicine. Eastern Petco.

**0:27:00.3 S2:** And it's from the University of open Seattle is from the University of Portland. But yeah, so the thing I'm so excited to share with everybody I know, and especially my customers this season, 'cause every year we try to teach... We try to teach about a new plant or crop that we're growing, or we try to teach like amazing... Something with nutrition. So this year, we're gonna have it all over our website and stuff, and more detail about it, is that to get the maximum nutritional value out of your garlic, you need to appeal it Chet and set it aside for 10 minutes before it touches heat in order for the oxidation process to take place and release what's called the Allison, so you can't forget it because I'm Alison and there's Alison and garlic, and that needs to be oxidized

**0:28:09.9 S1:** By oxygen. Got it, got it. First thing we wanna do with our garlic is pula and Trope and then let it sit while we do everything else.

**0:28:18.2 S2:** Absolutely. So usually I do all my other vegetables and that 'cause it's so quick, my girl, I know I'm gonna throw that and I'm never gonna forget my garlic last time that it's right in the pot, ready to go. So we really kill off that oxidation process when we put our garlic straight from clothes to heat, so we wanna just take some time and not do that.

**0:28:42.5 S1:** Right, which if you go to culinary skills, I guess if you do your MES on Plas fully with Amazon is basically setting up your space, then you would prepare all your ingredients ahead of time, including chopping the garlic and peeling it, and then once everything's prepped and out then you start heating up your pan and cooking, which would probably just about give you your 10 minutes. Absolutely.

**0:29:11.7 S2:** Yep. So just make sure you do your garlic first instead of the side and then do all your other veggies...

**0:29:18.7 S1:** Garlic has become such a thing, I actually... I try and limit the amount of Allium, so onions, garlic, etcetera, that I cook with and eat in general, for a lot of reasons, but starting to grow are and learning about all the different varieties and kinds of garlic, and the past two years, I've done tastings with a professional chef for someone on each variety and will taste them wrong, we'll taste them roasted. It's so amazing, the flavor of so many different kinds of garlic, there's really such a wide range, some are space here in summer sweeter and summer earth IAR, and some roasts and some lose all their flavor when they rose, but they're great raw, others are too hot in their raw, but then you rose them and they get delicious, it's blowing my mind about... Girlie could talk about that

**0:30:11.8 S2:** A. Randi encourage, and I haven't even gone that far. But I know that path that you're talking about, Missy, and I encourage folks to just pay attention to it and learn as much as you can, there's a woman who is like 9000-ish and... Oh my gosh, if you see her, she looks like she's like maybe 60, late 60s and... Do you know what... So everybody, I was asked for her secret, what's your sacred? And so she'll say, Vaseline and castrol head-to-toe, like her skin, her hair all the way that, and a couple of cloves of garlic every day in a little shot of whiskey

**0:30:58.2 S1:** That... I love it. I love it, I love it. I go... My grandparents lived pretty well into their 90s, and they had a glass of wine every day, pretty much our whole family knew we could fund my grandparents at home at about 5530 having their wine time, a glass all high every single day. And a little snack, and then they would have dinner, but it was like the one time we all knew we could call earned, they would be there having a glass of wine, so... Okay, so let's not a track of a recipe 'cause I'm... So everyone's like poise with their pen writing, so how many clothes of garlic are repealing and trapper peeling eight. Eight big ones. You said areola ones. Okay. Attack of salary. A stock. A salary. Okay. Yep.

**0:31:47.6 S2:** Two comes up. Fresh coconut? No.

**0:31:51.4 S1:** Plus two cups of water. Okay, and coconut milk, you said fresh, but we can get it



from a can, right?

**0:31:58.5 S2:** Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. Or... Yeah, carton. Yeah, I don't know why Rush is there, but... Yeah, okay. Three tablespoons of fresh ground pepper

**0:32:14.1 S1:** And two tablespoons of solo... One, have an arrow pepper. Okay, and if we don't like hot, can we skip a hub and her own...

**0:32:23.8 S2:** Yeah, just put a regular racer on.

**0:32:26.2 S1:** Have you ever tried... Have you heard of The Habana peppers? I have not... Oh, so it's a human aero pepper that has all the flavor of a human arrow and now he after on them for a few years, if you can find them. They're really, really fun. They're delicious, they have a lot of flavor and no heat for the other, and they came out with a... They're calling it a... Not a penta thing, it's a holiest, like it's Habana. It's a not a pain, that's also a helipad and it's open pollinate and everything, Halpin without the heat and all the flavor, so why I would be game to try having out of peppers, and

**0:33:06.3 S2:** You know what, for those that don't like heat, but traditionally, I mean, most folks who like Caribbean or Indian food, but their heat people like the hot or the better, but yes, a regular green pepper would suffice and agree. And you would be fine. Okay, two cement papers. And then you decide, are you going to put this over... And you're gonna put it over a chicken in, you can put it over sea food or you can put it over... Right. So that's outside of the Trinity, but then you decide.

**0:33:48.3 S1:** Okay.

**0:33:48.8 S2:** Now what we wanna do is get yourself an and one tablespoon of of oil, and then we wanna add our puking or cars or spend gains, salary, onions, time are... And your peppers.

**0:34:13.2 S1:** It sounds like everything... Except the coconut milk. Yes, then after you do that, you'll add your coconut milk and your Salonika, so it sounds like probably more of a small stock pot or some kind of pop pop Osaka flat pan. Okay, so put everything in the pot, heat up some oil and put everything in the pot except the coconut milk. Yep.

**0:34:34.1 S2:** You're gonna add that last with your son Pepper, and then I like to put in... I use that Canadian state pepper mix instead of just the regular regular pepper, but that's... Again, if you want a lot of SPICE, you wanna keep it mild, just do your regular black Pat pepper.

**0:34:57.9 S1:** Okay, so how long do we cook everything before we add the coconut milk.

**0:35:02.1 S2:** We're just gonna help all the cooked down for about three to four minutes. Okay, okay. And your coconut moan, you're gonna cover that I'm low, hit reduce your heat and stir, Sir, you need to start... You need to be like on top of this posturing every 10 to 15 minutes or... I'm sorry, you're gonna stir, but you're gonna let it cook for about 15 minutes... Okay, because if you don't stay on top of the pot, things are gonna stick.

**0:35:37.8 S1:** Got it. Okay.

**0:35:40.6 S2:** Let's see, so now, you want to... When you're all cooked down, you wanna take out your hub, an arrow peppers. Okay, 'cause

**0:35:52.3 S1:** We just wanted them to flavor on it, so taking out the human are... So don't cut those into small pieces... Yeah, no. Leave them big pieces. Yes, yep. And you can also, I don't know if people... Our listeners know this about hot peppers, but if you maybe have it a long ways, you can scrape out the seeds and not... Well, reduce the heat a little bit too.

**0:36:16.7 S2:** Absolutely. And when my boys were little, I wouldn't even put those in because they weren't... They're not big heat, people now that they're older, they like a little heat, so that's another thing to be cognizant of, if your children are gonna partake in the dish, you wanna make sure that turn them off by a lot of...

**0:36:43.8 S1:** Okay, so 15 minutes of cooking, take out the peppers, know it, and then you can put it into your food processor or get out your immersion blender... Okay, 'cause... You want a nice smooth consistency. Cool. Okay, yep.

**0:37:03.7 S2:** And then you can... Then you're making... If you're going to add meat to this TIFF, cook your meat, so now, traditionally, the way this would be done as you would stew down your chicken and stewing chicken is like you start your pot with oil, a little bit of brown sugar, your garlic and your anions and you're gonna cook that chicken in that, so you can get that chicken to about probably 10 to 15 minutes before it would be Dick on, and you can add that to your kelaniya.

**0:37:50.5 S1:** You're talking about chicken on the bone or like a whole... Absolutely, yep. Add it into the canal after it's been mostly cooked...

**0:37:58.2 S2:** Absolutely, and then you've got your whole dish and you can do your rice on the side or put your kept, which is what we would call it, meaning everything is already in there, with the exception of your rice...

**0:38:13.9 S1:** Got it. So you can put the caliber rice, you can cook up a piece of chicken on the sign, and then for the top, whatever. This sounds delicious. I'm so curious to try making this... Yeah, and what inspired you to share with us this particular recipe, because all the things you know how to cook

**0:38:35.9 S2:** When I was little, you could not pay me to eat this, and now you beg people to unite... Absolutely, and again, it comes from probably my mother was like too much on that side, like I didn't wanna eat anything else that was good for me, I didn't... I didn't want that at all. And so, don't tell me it's good for you, because then I'm not gonna want it. Don't tell your children, this is good for them. Just we're having chicken for dinner, right, Mike.

**0:39:11.9 S1:** It kinda makes me think of how parents Purnell kinds of veggies into regular tomato sauce to get the ridges in indicus, this seems like another way to do that.

**0:39:22.8 S2:** Absolutely, and you know what a intranet dish is huge over crap.

**0:39:30.7 S1:** That sounds good. Yeah, yeah.

**0:39:34.3 S2:** That's the way I like to make it now, especially when your children are out of the house and you're not looking for a lot of family members, you can do this over crab and it's just delicious, and of course, your crap, you would either... Depending on how you're gonna buy it, if you buy it already shell and cut up in the little jars in the seafood department, you're just gonna warm that, you're just gonna roll that in like at the tail end of your call and then your Kelapa will be done with crab in it.

**0:40:11.1 S1:** Nice, okay, cool. It seems like you can kind of take any me even left over me and throw it in a way, a great new way to re-purpose left overs. I might have to save this as a thing to do with my leftover Thanksgiving Turkey this year, to shred up the turkey and throw it in the pot at the end... Mormon up. Yeah.

**0:40:36.9 S2:** And you have to say that too, when you're done, it has to be your call Pocahontas.

**0:40:43.8 S1:** Alright, callao on the table atlases. So we're gonna take a quick break. In a moment, I'm gonna ask you more about what you're doing now with your business and a little more about being a woman doing what you're doing, but before we do that, I wanna take a quick break and talk about sponsorship of women in food. So our sponsors are a growing community of people who are passionate about food and supporting the diversity of women's voices in our food cultures, so we don't have external sponsors that sell products or services that we're promoting, our sponsors are people like yourselves... If you're not a sponsored women in food, I invite you to become so by joining the women in food community, access this community of food lovers like yourself to share in additional resources beyond the podcast to feed your curiosity and love of food, while also supporting global community of women in food businesses. So this is what the Women in food community is about, whether you're looking for a recipe or a woman made food product, a new restaurant, or help with your garden, this community is a place for all those kinds of resources, so if you're interested in sponsoring this podcast and becoming a woman in food community member, you can go check it out at women in food dot net forward community.

**0:42:04.2 S1:** And I look forward to welcoming you to our community. So Allison, let's talk more about what you're doing now, 'cause I'm just... I'm totally fascinated me. We've kind of touched on it in our conversation thus far about how you have woven together this purpose of nourishing people in community who don't have access to quality, fresh food and fresh ingredients based on this conversation you had a number of years ago, and doing it in a way that's making a huge impact, I see your name in this region all over the place more and more every day and every month, so you are definitely making a difference and make an impact on what you're doing, and you're also finding a way to still sustain financially as a business, and so I think that's just a code that many of us myself included, or trying to figure out and crack. So share a little bit more about how the for-profit non-profit work together.

**0:43:09.8 S2:** So yeah, when you have a not-for-profit, if you or anyone were to call me and say, Hey, I'm having this event on Thursday, can you do this, this and this? I have to do... Yeah, no problem. We'll be there or No, we can't do it. But when you're taking on projects in a not-for-profit space, you really need to consult with your board and you need to have buy-ins so that you know everyone knows what's happening. Because I'll just take an example. Last year, during covid, the need for emergency food and food on the spot was so massive, so we decided... I decided, no, let me take that back. A group of urban growers wanted to come together to respond to the USDA program to get emergency food out, to prepare food boxes and distribute them specifically and underserved communities where people were struggling to put food on the table, lots of jobs except for... We all know the stories. So unfortunately, we did not... We were not selected to receive grant funding, so... Fine, so the organization or the entity, I should say it's not an organization, the entity that did receive the grant was forced kind of to partner with community-based organizations, because the USDA knows that those community-based organizations are boots on the ground, they know where the need is however, those organizations were not allowed to receive one dime of compensation, not for fuel and maintenance of vehicles, not for transportation, to pay staff, not for time.

**0:45:10.9 S2:** Nothing, no compensation whatsoever. So we had to make a decision. I was concerned that if we did not take this on, those food boxes were not gonna get to the neighborhoods that I needed them the most, so that requires a conversation with your board because guess what? We don't have any money to do that, and we're not gonna get any money to do this. Or can we eat away at some of our restricted funds to make this happen, and you know what, the Board said, We will... We will help you, tell us where we need to be to help you distribute these boxes. We'll drive our cars. So those are some of the things that if I didn't have the not-for-profit, I would not have had that. However, I had to take the time to have a meeting and figure it out, whereas on the Not-For-Profit side, we could have just said, Okay, if we meet for-profit side, you could just say to the for-profit... Yeah. Okay, could I just said? Okay, I hate that. So I give that as an example of the pros and cons, a

**0:46:28.5 S1:** Curious what... Taking that on within the community, what has that led to since that... Since doing that.

**0:46:39.2 S2:** Yeah, it has what it has led to additional funding for more programming for capacity building, and of course, that wasn't our intent, nobody was even thinking past the next day last year during covid, let alone what would happen, but it really did. It elevated our business, it met our mission, we were totally in line with what we are set up to do, and it propelled the organization.

**0:47:08.4 S1:** Yeah, and I wanna point out, 'cause a strong value of mine in business and farm and everything I do is to lead with generosity, and that's really what you're talking about here, is that when you lead with giving, you lead with generosity, the opportunities return tenfold. That's a story you just told. A, I think that's actually a very feminine perspective that we as women, we step up to nourish and take care of our community and ten relationships, 10, the harvest, 10 the family, tend, everyone, we lead with that, and then what we need in return comes back.

**0:47:51.0 S2:** Right, and I don't think that answered your initial question, no, but I love where we went with it anyway, so that's okay, that

**0:47:59.7 S1:** It's a job of the conversation that's part of... I like to tell my listeners that you're sitting with me and my guest around the kitchen table as we have a chat and shoot the breeze, so whatever our conversation goes, it's like... That's just where it goes.

**0:48:15.1 S2:** But to get back to your question, which is a very important question, and leads me to a space of humbleness, honesty and vulnerability, which I'm not very good with vulnerability, like I don't like to be in that space, but you're asking a valid question and how can you sustain a business, because we all know farming can be... You're not gonna become a multi-millionaire doing it, however, you can weave that into other things that allow you to be sustainable, so the reason we're sustainable is not just because we're growers, but we're also distributors and we also on the education front. So putting together the programming along with the growing has allowed us to get contracts, has allowed us to have speaking engagements and do a lot of things that bring in revenue that if we were just growing, we would not be able to do that, and I realized that from the beginning, and I attribute that to just my business background and knowing, looking at the numbers and having that, yeah, we might be a not-for-profit, but guess what, you need money to keep the lights on, so having that align with our social mission, I think has allowed us to continue to grow year after year, but I will be totally honest there...

**0:49:47.7 S2:** In the early years, I was like, This isn't gonna work. You need to just get a job. And I always had great jobs, I have an MBA, so I could go get a job, but then I would say, Hey, but this is the only thing you wanna do. So what job are you getting that's gonna allow you to do exactly what you wanna do. So it has been a real emotional kind of roller coaster, and there is a great... Psychology Today had a couple of years ago, their monthly magazine, and on the front cover was entrepreneurship, and there was this man curled up in a fetal position on a messy bag, and it was entrepreneurship, and it's true, it's a psychological battle sometimes when you're in those growing years and you're trying to figure it out, and you're like, Okay, that doesn't work. But maybe this will work. And still trying to keep the lights on. It's not something that's easy. And in the early years, during the winter, I would take a part a job where I would take a job where there wasn't understanding that when... In May or April, I have to leave.

**0:51:21.7 S2:** Now, where do you find that job? And where do you find a job that you know you are not emotionally tied to the position because someone's paying you and you owe them time, attention, mental capacity, it's only right to be invested when someone is paying you, so where do you find a... I'm trying to figure that out. I'll let you know if I come up with an answer.

**0:51:55.2 S1:** Well, I know for me, my business coaching fills in the blank, so would have another business entrepreneurship of recline or... I think that's probably part of where you come to having so many different enterprises and projects and paths to revenue as well as mission, that they all add up. And you

**0:52:18.5 S2:** Know, I feel like I've been very fortunate that outside of that whole taking the winter job piece, you know, I've been able to align those things, and so people... Usually if I say, Okay, I'll take this consulting job from November to April, because of what we do for the majority of the year, folks were kind of understanding, but I mean, there's not many places you're gonna go where you're gonna say, Okay, in April, buddy, I'm out of here, just so you know, and while I am Him

here, I'm really gonna be thinking about building by this...

**0:53:06.2 S1:** Right, right, right. So one of the things that you mentioned is, for you, staying connected to your mission is super important in anything you do, tell us more about this mission, 'cause I know you wanna talk about that, that's like, You're a supreme ultimate driver and inspiration. Tell us a little bit more about your overall mission, the mission of all the enterprises and projects you've got going on.

**0:53:36.5 S2:** So being an African-American woman and living in one of the poorest cities in the country, and seeing how opportunities are so limited and exposure to potential opportunities are so limited for black and brown children and just forget about the rest of... Forgot everything else. Just right where I am. He's heartbreaking, it's 2021. And we're still in that space where a lot of young folks don't understand generational wealth and why so many families of color don't have generational wealth. The idea that, you know, there was a time in this country when agriculture was paramount and we needed to figure out how to feed ourselves as a nation, and so many black people being experts in that, number one... Because they did it in Africa, then number two, they had to come to this country and perfect it, or without compensation in a horrible system, slavery and then not getting any land after slavery, not getting the real 40 acres and a mule. I mean, it was on paper for what, eight months and then a new administration took that away, so where does that leave us? That breaks all the chains of wealth and education and learning a skill and that that's never taught in school, and that having that block of knowledge and understanding...

**0:55:33.7 S2:** And where does that take you? Now, that's really where we are. So a huge passion of mine is to help young people understand that our relationship to the land is not what was violent and horrific, it was people... Our relationship to the land is strong and always has been, and so doing what we do right in an underserved community, seeing that every day and trying to get that message out and re-learn or however you wanna put it, get that education piece there is huge because there are 57000 farmers in New York State, and 139 of them are black, and 125 of them are indigenous and or Hispanic. So it's a dire situation, and it's a dire situation because of systemic racism, so that is really totally intertwined in the social determinants of health, which where we are squarely in the food space, food insecurity, lack of access, and trying to educate folks on the relationship between what you eat at your health outcomes, all of that is a huge challenge is...

**0:57:11.4 S1:** Yeah, I've been thinking about that cycle of the systemic poverty, systemic illness, systemic poor food cycle and how it feeds each other for years, and I don't understand how to break it.

**0:57:25.0 S2:** Yeah, so... And honestly, Missy, were blame those building, those steps, your support women in this space who was historically, women have worked the land and done the work, but have they really realized the profits from it? If you go on, and I have this great pictures and one of the presentations I did, if you go on and look at the Congress and the Senate, and the folks that are in the ag and for Joanne Ag and Forestry Committee, at all Caucasian men, there might be three or wobbly never touched a rear Shaver exactly. As these are the folks who make policy for our food system, so these folks are not going to a grocery store and saying, I can't afford to get anything I want, these folks are not... Or to go to the corner store and by expired cans of food and SPIRE loaves of bread. And so that's a huge problem. How do we inject more women and more people of

color into our food system by doing these little steps and what I was gonna say, honestly, to see you and I may not see that, major change, but we're here every day trying to lay the path and showing exposing women and talking about the good things they do in exposing children of color and even adults and trying to repair the relationship to land in both of those populations, women and people of color, and saying, Okay, maybe you don't wanna pick up your rake and a struggle and you don't wanna have seeds in your hand, that's not your thing, and that's okay, but maybe you can be an Ag Finance or affect policy change or record these stories and give it to researchers and folks who can make new policy.

**0:59:30.7 S2:** There's just so many things that you can do that don't require picking up a rake in a trouble, I think clean...

**0:59:38.1 S1:** It's funny just to swing all the way back around to bettering your own meat. I remember early on in thinking about the Farm and thinking about Putri me, my ex telling me that, Look, not everybody in the tribe or in the community does every job, and you may not be the butcher, and... That's okay. It's like we all contribute, the piece that we can do, so I'm the grower of things, and I'm the razor of animals, and I'm the cook, and I'm an advocate, those are the things I can contribute and someone else is gonna be the butcher, and that's okay. You know, I still took on doing it once to have a relationship to it and understanding that that's not my piece of work to do, that's that kind of village, everybody working together, community mindset and understanding is that we all have a part that we contribute.

**1:00:30.8 S2:** And then where are... Where are the women in that space, where are the women in the processing space, the people of color are there, they're at the bottom role of me of the food Jane photo. Literally, and that was proven again last year in covid at all the big poultry farms, that was a nightmare situation for those folks

**1:00:56.6 S1:** And butchers, I know ranchers and farmers and raisers of meat and animals all over the country, and the whole system is a massive nightmare, nobody you have to schedule appointments like over a year out to get your animals butchered for market, and even then I just read about a farmer who went to a different facility than they usually go to and got back to me that wasn't even their own meat, and now they're like, I don't know what to do with this 'cause it's not even up to snuff for the quality of the animals I raised, and I can't get my animals back and return this and they're giving away for donation to anyone who needs to meet and once I meet, I hear story after story after story like that. And you know what strikes me is, I've been listening to you, is I think about the education piece and how indigenous people and people of color have all the knowledge, and the more I learn about food and food culture and food relationship, the more realize that it's about bringing back wisdom that already exists as opposed to creating new technology and wisdom, it's there, it's like people have it, and it's about honoring and respecting those people and elevating them, which is really what women in food is about, there's all these amazing women who have all this experience and knowledge and elevating those voices and bringing them to the forefront, and I think about that a lot with honoring elders, elder wisdom, that the re-teaching and knowledge there.

**1:02:42.4 S1:** And

**1:02:43.1 S2:** We live in an area where we have rich indigenous populations, and we just need to look for the respect that indigenous people have for the land is so profound that it makes me... Like when I speak with folks, Native American folks about that, I'm ashamed. I'm literally ashamed of my relationship with the water when they're in spaces, they take the time to thank Mother Earth and Father Sky and pay tribute to the land that we're actually sitting on having this meeting. That could be about whatever. And I mean, to do that all the time like that is something that is paramount to them moving forward in any space, and to think how we... So disrespect and have no regard for the space that we live in and the air that we breathe in, it is shameful. We have those folks right here to help us with that and sold for your farm out in Grafton, outside of Albany. That's all they do. Everything they do is about respect of the land and leaped who runs and owns and started to fire farm, she always tells the story about when she went to Ghana, I think it was gonna...

**1:04:24.6 S2:** And someone asked her, the farmers there asked her, they said, Is it true that Americans don't pray before their season and before they plant and ask these crops to grow healthy and strong, and she was like, Oh yeah, that's not part of any of our farming that you don't, don't do that. Yeah.

**1:04:48.2 S1:** And she's got a great book, I love her books so much. I reference it will be to me too, which is farming. Well, back, and I will put links to that reference in the show notes as well as links to Allison's work and websites. Yeah, I love that you bring that up, 'cause it is something I think about when I... So seeds, and I just naturally did this, not from learning anything, but when I say seed, I'm always like, I hold all these seeds in my hands, and I'm always thinking like which one of you is gonna take routine talking to them, which one isn't, I wonder... And I apologize when I sin, I hate thinning seedlings, I hate it. I hate it because it's just like, they worked so hard to do end to end their life short, and so I always try and eat seedlings or honor them or apologize, as I often play like sacred music when I'm working in the greenhouse and seeing things and singing prayers, and when I've had kids come, I actually had a wonderful girl and her father come out and help me plant shallots this autumn, and we planted all the shallots, and I said, Okay, now we put our hands on the soil and we can say whatever blessings to the shallots, so that they have a nice winter underground and they grow in the spring, and it's also a time that you can whisper any which is you want to the soil or anything you wanna let go of, anything you want, you can just say your own prayers or blessings to the land, and we did that.

**1:06:17.1 S1:** It was so sweet to have her do that, and I have a number of friends who come and often will send energy or lay their hands on my garden beds and give love to the sealing out in the gardens and stuff, so... That awareness is so important to me. I love that you brought it up. And I do live practically on the border of some of the Seneca land and just down the road from the Seneca farm market and farm stand, and I love visiting there and talking with them about what they're doing, it's just... It's like you said, it's totally inspiring, and it reminds me to hang on to that connection and remember to honor that relationship.

**1:06:57.0 S2:** Yeah, that's beautiful. And then that's what I mean is when I was talking about these little baby steps, you know, just having that little girl come and experience that, you don't know, that could be a powerful, powerful thing that stays with her, you know what mean? She could forget it tomorrow or it could be too... Well.



**1:07:17.0 S1:** I know that coming to see my animals completely sparked her love and her dad's and all set her up with horseback riding lessons and things like that, so it was a big... It was a big deal for her. I think... Thank you for saying that. And it's just like you said to me the other day, like the small act of introducing you to my neighbor for manure has become an integral part of feeding a whole community of people in the city.

**1:07:43.9 S2:** And I love to Germans and... Everything they stand for and everything they do and their generosity with making sure that we get organic fertilizer every year to help us feed... Folks in the city is huge. I remember one year, 'cause we have to have the contractor that we work with drive out to you, 'cause he's right across the street from you in his big dump truck, and you know he's a contractor, so getting his time to do that as I... Point, and it was getting late in. My farm manager was like, Well, maybe we can get something from around here, and she was like, Oh my gosh, biggest mistakes, don't ever bring me that stuff again. So we make it a point to make sure we get that. And so Mr. O-Gorman called me a couple of months ago and he said, I moved your pile... Excuse my French, he said, I want your pile of shit closer to the road, so it'll be easier for you to pick it up next year, okay. See, in the spring go by... That sounds just like a... I

**1:08:56.6 S1:** Call them all the time. I call them all the time with it. 'cause he's like, yes, no. Just do it this way. It's okay. I actually, the summer... This is a quick story. And then we do need to wrap up, 'cause I know you and I could talk forever. Ever, ever. But the first summer I was here on the farm alone, the dogs ran into me from behind, they were playing with each other, and slammed into me and took out my knee in the middle of the pasture, and I couldn't stand up, and so I called him 'cause he's retired, but he's a doctor, and so I called him like, I need help getting back to the house, there was no one on the farm except me, and I managed to drag my dogs won't let strangers into the pastor, so I at least get myself to the gate, I drag myself through all the chicken poop and everything to the gate, and then stood up by the time he got there and helped me to the house, and he's like, Put some ice on it and get back out in the field and you'll be fine, like that is so a farm country doctor attitude, get back out there, you'll be okay, but still hurts in eight weeks, then maybe see a doc.

**1:10:05.0 S1:** Anyway, thank you so much else, and there's so much with so many lessons you shared with us today, I feel like we just ended on this note of remembering the impact we can have even with the smallest thing and honoring the value of that, but the... Which is a great lesson and reminder for all of our listeners, but if there's something else that you would love our listeners to walk away from this conversation, thinking about as they cook in their kitchen, as they go to the grocery store, as they work in their garden, as they love food in whatever ways they love food, what would you like folks to walk away remembering...

**1:10:48.3 S2:** Just a couple of things that someone in your household has to be responsible for, the nutrition doesn't have to be the woman, who usually is, but it doesn't have to be... Sometimes it's a teenager who's... Some of our young folks are so in tune and they're concerned about the climate, concerned about their health, so someone has to do that, and it's okay, it's a shared responsibility, but it is a responsibility on the left, that's the first thing about nutrition, the second thing is if you are so inclined to support farmers of color or do anything to help propel this work and to help increase the number of farmers of color, especially black farmers in our state, in Mahi, maybe you can put a link to black farmer Fund, which is in a pilot organization that is funding farmers and food system workers who are people of color, and the other thing is just support local growers across the board,

go to your Farmers Markets and see what a beautiful space that it is, and take time out and take your children and educate them about why it's important to buy fresh local food if it's organic, and what that means for them, and most importantly, everyone should understand it, you are a part of the good System, and this system needs to work for all of us.

**1:12:27.7 S2:** So anyone who thinks they're not a part of the food system, you're wrong, and when you start realizing you're part of it, even as a consumer, which is a very important part of the food system, that you can make demands for better choices, better quality, more access on whatever you need, and you see you're not getting from your food system... You should voice that.

**1:12:53.2 S1:** Yeah, thank you. I love that whatever you need that you're not getting from your food system, speak up, ask for it. Demand it and voice it. Yeah, absolutely. Well, also, this was so much fun, I love connecting with you the once or twice a year before we all get busy that we get to connect. Thank you again so much for sharing your stories, sharing your call recipe and sounds delicious with us sharing your advocacy and your passion. I really appreciate the time you took today.

**1:13:27.4 S2:** Oh no, thank you, and hope and I will come out to see you this year and hopefully we'll do some things together and... Yeah, and then maybe at the end of the season, we'll take time out like we did... Oh my gosh, 2019. Just to have dinner.

**1:13:42.2 S1:** Something like that, that was a long time comes... So to all our listeners, I hope you enjoyed this episode of women in food and got a bit of inspiration for your next meal. A last request, if you could go over to iTunes or whatever app you're using to listen and give us a rating and review, it's a simple act. That really helps us a ton. Once again, thank you for accompanying me on this delicious adventure, join me around the table for our next episode and get ready to eat

**Thank you for choosing Scribie.com**

Cross-check this transcript against the audio quickly and efficiently using our online Integrated Editor. Please visit the following link and click the Check & Download button to start.

<https://scribie.com/files/a13a2f3404b941dbb5bbac37728844e4c9dc3cb9>