

Paleo Solution 380

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Robb: Hey, folks, six listeners can't be wrong, another edition of the Paleo Solution Podcast. Today, my guest is one of my good friends, Diana Rodgers. Diana is a registered dietician. Do not hold that against her. She's also an NTP. She is certified in multiple functional nutrition modalities. She also lives on a sustainably managed permaculture farm somewhere in the frozen northeast. Diana, how are you doing?

Diana: I'm good. How are you?

Robb: Good, good. As I've said a few times recently, I'm famous for giving incredibly paltry and under sophisticated introductions. I know a ton of listeners are familiar with your work, they follow your blog, they read your books. Tell folks a little bit more about who you are and why we are chatting today. Let's talk a little bit about your health journey that brought you into this ancestral health space first.

Diana: Sure. Let's see. I was really, really sick as a kid and found out at age 26 I had celiac disease which explained why I was hospitalized several times with dehydration and could never seem to put on weight all through my childhood. At that time when I went to go visit my registered dietician to find out about this gluten free diet which I thought at that time was the most evil thing you could possibly do to somebody.

I basically just swapped out my standard low fat "healthy" type diet with a gluten free version of that. I was eating gluten free toast for breakfast with sandwich for lunch and maybe some gluten free pasta for dinner and maybe a gluten free beer. And I couldn't understand why I was on this metabolic blood sugar rollercoaster with all my gluten free snacks in my bag constantly needing to eat all the time and hungry all the time.

I ended up under so many different trajectories. I'm trying to just get on the right one here. I had a career in food marketing after a degree in fine arts from college. Then when I had our second child it didn't really make a lot of sense for me to have this corporate job. I was working for Whole Foods Market doing marketing. And so I started running our farm stand and our kitchen and our CSA program, all the front of the house stuff, all the events at the farm.

We were hosting a raw milk coop and I was wondering what the heck all these crazy raw milk people were doing coming to the farm with their large bags full of butter and lard and raw milk. And so I decided to learn a little bit more. I went to a Weston A. Price conference, wanted to understand why butter was okay. I needed to hear about 17 times that it was okay to eat butter before I actually started eating butter.

Then I started getting a lot of questions from our customers at the farm stand, "Why are you selling lard? Why are you selling coconut oil? I thought those saturated fats would kill you." I knew I felt better when I ate butter and other fats but I couldn't really explain it in a way that I was comfortable. And so I decided to go back to school and learn nutrition.

At that time I wasn't really thinking career change. I was just sort of thinking that I wanted to get this golden key that would fix my own health. And so I went to nutritional therapy association and there was this book in 2010 that came out called The Paleo Solution that I read. And I was supposed to do a book report and follow a diet prescription in a book. I did that.

I don't really love sweet potatoes and I was sort of -- I had this background in that I knew fat was okay so I actually interpreted your diet in that book as a keto diet. That's what I did. I basically just didn't eat carbs, ate a lot of proteins, some veggies and lots of fat. It completely fixed me. I went from black and white to color. It was amazing that I didn't eat my snacks all the time. I could skip lunch and not have tunnel vision and shakes and start sweating. It was really amazing.

I couldn't believe it. I opened up my nutrition therapy practice and thought that maybe that was a diet that worked for me but maybe not for everybody. But sure enough, every single person who walked into my office did very well on a version of that diet where you're just cutting out processed foods. But I also at the same time realized that everyone who was coming to me was also really sick.

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So, in order to give prescriptive diets, to take insurance, to work with doctors, I realized I really did need the RD. And so after talking to you and Mat Lalonde who said, "Just make this your hobby. This is your hobby for the next six years," I decided to go forward and so finally I finished after a long painful extensive time of my life the RD program and now I'm on the other side. I'm very happy that I did it.

I have a clinical nutrition practice where I can actually fix people with all this other ancestral health background that I've got and I can bill insurance for that which is fantastic so I can see a much broader range of people than can only pay

cash for my services but I do cash as well and Skype and all that. And I even brought on another RD because I've gotten so busy with all my other work.

When I'm not seeing patients I am really beating the drum of how our food choices intersect with sustainability. Watching everything that's been going on in our farm where we raise vegetables, we do pasture raised meats, pigs running through the woods, chickens laying eggs in a pastured model, and then we do goats and sheep. I've realized if you just eat that kind of food, it makes a lot of sense and it also is great for the environment.

Especially when I was in my RD program, most of my professors are vegetarian. There's a lot of anti meat, anti fat rhetoric that was going on. It's really, really prevalent in the standard dietetics model. And there's all these media coming out about how awful meat is. It's really PC right now to bash me.

Lately, I've gone from just sort of general sustainability issues and sustainable farming to specifically why meat is nutrient dense, environmentally okay, and then the ethical issues too surrounding what is a diet of least harm? What does that look like? Does it look like a monocrop of soy and lab meats? Or does it look like grass fed beef? That's kind of where I've really taken my focus lately.

Robb: Awesome. Behind the scenes, we've chatted about this stuff for ages and we were kind of the, I don't know, two weirdos in the ancestral health scene that were like, yeah, abs are awesome but if you want the food that's going to give you abs over the long time and not make you crazy in the process, like freely the banana girl or something like that, then the sustainability story is probably pretty important.

But it's been interesting selling this because -- I'm going to piss somebody off with this, but I'll use the analogy nonetheless. I've met a lot of realtors over my time running the gym and doing other things. Oftentimes these folks, male and female, they might not be in the best shape, they might be pretty overweight, but man they will spend a lot of money on a car and even more money on a haircut.

So, there's not that immediate kind of gratification which we could argue that getting lean and have an abs or fitting in your skinny jeans that's a big deal and clearly there's a lot of potential health benefits with that as well. But often, a few people, when they get to the end of that process, they look around, they're like, "Okay, I'm healthier. I feel better. Now, what do I do to make the rest of the world a better place?"

Interestingly, giving some thought towards regenerative agriculture and Brazilian food production system is probably a really good place to look in that regard but

it's a bit of a tough sell. What are your thoughts around that? Why were we the knuckleheads that kind of connected the dots on this and decided to allocate time and resources into trying to convince people that this is an important thing particularly when the standard story out there is that grazing animals is destroying the planet, that a planet covered with grazing animals is going to destroy even though it's kind of crazy when you think about pre-Columbian contact and before humans spread across the planet it was covered with many, many, many more grazing animals. I mean, why did you decide to champion this stuff?

Diana: Because I'm crazy, I guess.

Robb: Glutton for punishment.

Diana: It's really I feel just very compelled to tell this story. It angers me when I see things like this.

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I think I emailed you, Robb, the story about the school system in Brooklyn that went vegetarian and not only vegetarian but now half their meals are vegan and their goal is to make them all vegan. This is why we need to give a shit about this stuff because this is affecting policy and not only US food policy and research that's coming out and funding for artistic projects and things like that but the rest of the world copies the US and we're now seeing our crappy western diet being mimicked all over the world.

Our heart healthy low fat diet is now destroying everybody. This is something that if we want -- We only are here once. You and I are halfway through our time if not more. What mark do we get to leave? Is it just getting people abs or we actually able to make sure that healthy food is around for the next 50-100-200 years from now?

Robb: Maybe a thousand years.

Diana: Yeah.

Robb: Diana, I completely agree. It's hard in situations like this where I have somebody on the show. I feel in some sense of like the standard media model I'm supposed to have some sort of a controversial counterpoint to create flavor and drama. Standard media, a balanced interview is apparently getting the two lunatics at the farthest end of the extremes and interviewing them and somehow you've vetted out a complex story.

I'm noodling on this. I'm trying to make it not too much of a leading deal but fuck it. We're right. Everybody else is wrong so they can eat a dick on this. I'm going to just motor forward. Something that pops up again and again is there's just this meme and it is so compelling and it seems so right. One of these first things is look at how much energy is necessary to make a pound of cow versus a pound of grain. Could you talk about that a little bit?

Diana: Right.

Robb: Without having your ears, just like your brain explode out of your ears.

Diana: Yeah. What a lot of people don't get is the land use deal. That's worth at least giving a nod to folks who aren't familiar with the fact that you just can't crop everything across the world. A lot of the world surface is actually not conducive to cropping but is conducive to grazing animals. So, if you think of all of Africa, most of Africa anyway, Norway, Iceland where I just was, you can't grow grain, soy, corn in a lot of places but you can graze animals.

When there's reports saying it takes this much land to produce a pound of beef versus only this little land for a pound of wheat or soy, first of all, we don't need to be grazing animals on crop land and we could be raising crops for the human consumption. So, eating animals that can graze grass which we can't eat on land that we can't crop actually is kind of a no brainer.

Compared to all the energy required to make something like lab meat where you've got all those inputs, you've got all that soy and all the other substrates you need, all the mined minerals, all the energy you need for the lab, everything, to grow meat in a Petri dish versus growing grass fed animals using the sun's energy directly. When we just try to have a greater understanding of how nature works and how ecosystems incorporate both animals and plants, the more biodiversity the better for a more resilient ecosystem, then if people could just wrap their heads around that they will easily understand how things like lab meats and powdered Soylent drinks and other fake foods like that make no sense from a thermodynamic perspective.

And, actually, your idea about grass world actually works really well. People really did that when I present on that. Do you want to remember?

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Robb: Dig into that, please.

Diana: It was a great sort of analogy. But basically, if you're looking to start a new planet or a new country and you're starting with just dirt and you want to make

something sustainable, a sustainable food system, how are you going to do it? Well, you would probably start with some kind of ground cover to secure the dirt in place so plant some grass. What happens with nothing eating the grass? The grass can't grow. Nothing is fertilizing it so the grass just dies.

All plants need some kind of fertilizer. You can either do that with petroleum and mined minerals or you can do that with animal products like manure which is not waste. It's actually fertilizer. Coincidentally, the chomping of the cows on the grass actually stimulates the roots to grow deeper and stronger. They're getting fertilizer from the animals. They're getting stimulated to grow from the animals.

If you introduce some cows you've got a lovely system there but without any predators or movement of the animals they'll just overgraze the grass and then produce too many cows and then you've got dead grass and dead cows because they've eaten all their food. One way to make the system a lot more dynamic and healthy is to introduce a predator.

We can do that with wolves or we can do that with electric fencing and it's pretty much the same thing. If you're moving the cows to give the grass a break, either by being a wolf and hunting them and calling some of the sicker animals, some of the older animals, weaker ones, the cows are moving -- I'm using my hands here which you can't see.

But if you're thinking about what a savanna might look like or what the bison populations might have looked like before we came in and monocropped the entire United States, those animals were constantly moving across. They weren't just staying in one place. They weren't sitting ducks for the predators. The movement actually produces healthier grasslands because the grass is then allowed to rest after it's chomped down. The fertilizer manure gets the chance to really get into the soil biome and the grass can actually sequester carbon that way through photosynthesis.

We can do that. Nature does that with predators. We can mimic that by calling the animals ourselves for food and using electric fencing. So, that kind of model is referred to in many different ways like holistic management through the Savory Institute. Intensive mob grazing, I think is what Joel Salatin calls it. And it's all pretty much the same idea, movement across lands. Although it does take acres and acres to raise cows on grass, again, this is land that really can't be used. Pasture land cannot be used for cropland.

Robb: Not long term successfully.

Diana: Yeah.

Robb: This is the dust bowl. This is state of affairs in the Middle America where we've grown lots of wheat and corn and whatnot. I'm going to read something here in a minute that I wrote the other day but we're losing massive amounts of topsoil. Once the topsoil is gone it doesn't matter how much chemical fertilizer we put into it there's nothing there to grow. Everything is pretty much dead.

Diana, I want to back up just a little bit though. This point about the predator-prey interaction and the electric fencing is really important because the way that livestock is generally handled right now -- Many people who knows around this stuff, particularly if they're in a vegetarian/vegan world, they will point out that, I would say, poorly managed livestock can lead to overgrazing and a host of different problems. That's absolutely true.

What's happening when we don't have predator pressure and we don't have the electric fencing? What happens in that story? Which is the way that the bulk of animal husbandry occurs currently in westernized society.

Diana: Right. So, you get a myriad of problems. First of all, you'll get parasite buildup. If one cow has a parasite load, that gets transferred to every single other animal in the herd because they're not moving off.

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There's no birds that can come down and eat the parasites. Every other cow can come over and graze right next to the manure of the sicker cow and they all get sick and die. That's one scenario. Overgrazing is another one because they'll preferentially eat certain -- Grass isn't just grass. It's many different species in there and they'll preferentially eat certain types of grass and which will allow weeds and other more invasive plants to take over. And so the pasture quality will decrease.

Robb: And that's really the point that I really wanted to hit on. I don't mean to interrupt you. But just for folks that maybe aren't familiar with this, please be skeptical. Please be skeptical but also please dig into this a little bit. But what happens under the current grazing models when the animals are just allowed to wander where they want to, they use optimum foraging strategy.

If you've read Wired to Eat or you follow any of the stuff I've done, any critter on the planet that moves to get its breakfast, lunch and dinner, it finds the tastiest bestest thing in general that it can. These grazing animals will find the new tasty shoots and they'll eat that and then they'll kind of wander off and then a few days maybe a week later when that plant is still trying to grow itself back they'll come back and eat it again. This is where the overgrazing process happens.

Whereas if we have the electric fencing or predator pressure, we bring these animals in mass pretty tightly grouped but not tightly grouped like a confined area feed lot deal. We put them on fresh pasture. And because there's competition between them they tend to eat everything there. But then we move them and we move them and we move them and we don't bring them back until that pasture has reached a certain degree of recovery and this much more closely mimics the natural patterns that occur with a herd of grazing animals.

Under predator pressure, they tend to stay tightly bunched together to protect one another. They tend to eat everything. It tends to move things towards a perennial grassland with a high degree of diversity. We don't get the kind of monocropping. Like this area around Reno all the way down to Las Vegas used to be a giant grassland. This used to be an enormous cattle country. Now, sagebrush is the climax plant species around here because it was poorly managed and overgrazed and like Allan Savory would say it's a brittle environment, high dessert, so you need to be particularly careful with that.

Again, I apologize for interrupting you but that was kind of the point that I really want to make. People oftentimes say, "Well, what's the point of this mob grazing?" They don't understand that if we actually put more animals on a smaller patch of land but then move them more frequently it's actually better for creating carbon in the soil, for retaining water in the soil, for increasing the microbiome which includes fungus and bacteria.

I mean, it's this kind of virtual cycle. It's re-replicating the normal ecology that we see. If humans disappeared and the African savannas did what they were going to do, this is what happens. This is what would happen in the American grasslands that make up a huge chunk of the North American continent going all the way from Mexico to Canada. Sorry to go crazy there.

But this is something that folks don't understand. It's not a binary deal of animals/no animals. There's animals done poorly. There's animals done well. And then no animals end up being worse over the long haul than even the animals done poorly generally.

Diana: Yeah. And it doesn't have to be cows. I'm stuck on cows for many reasons because they just tend to be the -- When people say eat less meat, what do you picture? A steak. And we are eating less meat. That's another thing that people don't realize is since 1970, we're eating much, much -- I've seen numbers anywhere from 200% to 400% more chicken today than 1970 and much less beef. Beef consumption has not gone up at all.

Robb: What role did chicken historically play in the American diet?

Diana: Well, yeah. Chickens used to be what everyone had in their backyard to eat their kitchen scrap. Same with pigs. People would have a pig or two in their backyard, a little flock of chickens, and that was just sort of what was their little--

Robb: Compost engine.

Diana: Yeah. Disposable.

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Robb: But, I mean, chicken was a rarity because the inputs in it were fairly limited. Chickens don't eat grass. They don't directly benefit from that photosynthetic process. That's where the bulk of the protein and quite a lot of calories were made up of these grazing animals -- sheep, goats, cattle.

Diana: Exactly. What unfortunately happened today is chicken has become incredibly inexpensive because of the disgusting way that we're farming it. Even organic chicken is still raised in a factory and eats grain and that grain is grown on land that we could be using for other purposes. When we're eating more chicken -- I mean, I live in a town where everyone's pretty well educated. Most people even have a Masters degree here. Nobody is eating red meat in this town.

They're all freaked out about the nutrition, that it's going to give them heart disease because of the saturated fat. And they're concerned about the environmental impact. They're eating more chicken and fish and less red meat when actually we need to be doing the opposite. We need to be eating much less chicken for many, many reasons. It doesn't have nearly, hardly any B12 or iron at all. Red meat is our best source of that which happens to be the leading nutrient deficiency worldwide -- B12 and iron. Go ahead.

Robb: Speaking of minerals, one of the things that pop up is phosphorous and some of these other minerals that need to get trucked in which is an incredibly energetically expensive proposition. It takes a lot of energy to go mine phosphorous and move it all over the planet and everything. How does that get handled in the grassland? What's the system that gets you enough minerals to make a grassland work over eons?

Diana: That's where fungus can play a really great role because they are actually -- In a carbon sequestration process, as the grass is going through photosynthesis, it actually drips little carbohydrates to the bacteria in the soil that are then eating those sugars and that makes them very happy. They have a symbiotic relationship to the roots and with the fungus networks in there that are actually going down and mining the minerals. We actually don't need to be applying mind minerals to the topsoil. It's actually a beautiful process that happens naturally.

Robb: What fuels that process?

Diana: Oh my god, now you're quizzing me.

Robb: The sun. This is the thing that--

Diana: I was like, the cattle? All of it. You need the cattle too in order to stimulate the roots to grow and to drip those carbohydrates down. But the sun--

Robb: It's the sun.

Diana: Solar energy is the apex of the entire ecosystem of the planet.

Robb: Yeah. I want to throw this out here. If you're a hippie you tend to love solar energy because it's green and it's sustainable and, man, that's cool. But yet getting hippies excited about this process is devilishly hard. They hit the meat causes cancer, meat's unethical or whatever, breaks go on. It's a total train wreck. Everything is a problem.

But it's a solar driven process. Our good friend Russ Conser who is a systems engineer for Shell Oil, evil Shell Oil, which has spent a lot of time and money trying to look at some of these systems based approaches to a host of different problems, he has gone really deep on this stuff. We've had him on the show before. It would probably be good to get both you and he back on the show at some point to do some more deep dives on this.

But this process of sequestering carbon, of generating nitrogen via nitrogen fixing organisms like plants and also some other critters, mining the minerals, all of this stuff happens effectively for free by absorbing the solar radiation that's landing on the planet and that's either going to heat up barren topsoil, heating the planet or you create grass and food in a dynamic ecosystem and you don't have to mine the soil.

Hippies should be excited about this. Conservatives should be excited about this because we would decouple a massive portion of our food system from imported oil.

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We wouldn't need nearly as much imported oil to run a system like this because it would be solar powered. Now, solar powered makes conservatives itchy because it again speaks of hippies and all this other stuff. But the fact that whatever into the political spectrum you're on, if you're not excited about a

resilient food system that is not dependent on inputs from around the world you're an idiot. You had your head literally in the dirt although the dirt that you have your head in is probably denuded of life because we have not been managing that thing properly.

I just want to launch into this thing that I posted on my Facebook page maybe like last week. It was a paper from a physics.org: Research reveals controversial insecticides are toxic to songbirds. It's about neonicotinoids which are used as an insecticide but this thing is a little long and I apologize. I usually don't capitalize this much of a show but Diana and I are pretty fired up about this and, I think, this thing kind of ties in.

Here's what I wrote. Let's say conventional agriculture in animal has been relied upon the following. Fungicides, herbicides, insecticides are incredibly injurious to the environment and to make it personal us. Of course, we need to make it about us. Nobody gives two shits about everything else. Let's also say that the process is highly dependent on antibiotics used in monumental amounts and this usage is likely to not only cause many direct problems but is also heading us towards a post antibiotic era.

This means surgery becomes an incredibly dangerous proposition and common illnesses that we shrug off with a doctor visit and prescription may become what they were in the 1920s, a life or death gamble. Finally, what if the current system is sending our topsoil into the atmosphere as dust or down the river as silt? Some people posit we can grow everything we need in vertical farms built on old manufacturing facilities.

Pretty sure these folks are living in a fantasy and the little back of the envelope math makes this pretty clear. If all of the above is true, and it is, or at least close to the mark, we will need a food production system that is vastly different than what we have now. It may end up looking a lot like Polyface Farms, White Oak Pastures, and a growing number of Savory Institute hubs coupled with a modern distribution infrastructure.

But to get all this right, we need to understand the problems, what legitimately viable options we have. Soylent and lab grown meat do not cut it. It will need to fight the corporate structure that will want to cling to the current system until time has run out while also convincing the hippies that planet of the vegans is, in fact, more raw crops, pesticides and fungicides, not fewer.

It's funny because one of the things -- In general, religion around the world in westernized countries is becoming less and less common a thing and to the degree it is common a lot of the historical elements of religion like a really guilt

based approach has kind of given way towards more spirituality and kind of live and let live and love your neighbor and all that type of stuff.

I would argue that to some degree the reason why veganism hasn't become more popular than what it is is because it's a very guilt based approach. You're bad for eating meat and there's this morality deal and that motivates some people but not all people. To your point, this is an ever growing and an ever more kind of sexy political agenda.

Interestingly, this raw crop centric planet of the vegan story is amazing for Monsanto and similar entities because it's soy and corn and wheat. Even if you claim that you're going to do this in an organic fashion, you're not because of the intensive monocropping. We have huge problems with pests. There's all these other knock on effects of trying to really tightly manage in what is effectively kind of like a centralized almost kind of communist approach to this thing.

We're going to manage the food system from a central location and expect this whole thing to work versus this idea that we need to decentralize, take advantage of the resources that we have locally and really maximize that and really heavily rely on the way that natural systems have either been around for 6,000 years or for billion years, pick your number, run with it, but they worked pretty well.

And the way that we've been doing it, to take a page from Daniel Quinn, is an extractive process and it's not something that is long term sustainable. Diana, how do we take all of this stuff, get people excited about it but not turn it into a moral guilt buzz kill so that people do care more about it? I don't have a good answer. What are your thoughts on this?

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Diana: Well, I mean, there's just so many things you brought up. We could talk for an hour just about antibiotic resistant bacteria that's happening from the factory farming model, vertical farming making absolutely no sense at all. What's even more amazing is that they're putting solar cells on top of these things. They don't blow the roofs off and just make windows. They take all this energy to make a solar cell and then they're using 100% artificial lights to grow lettuce which doesn't have any nutrition at all.

I have a particular beef with vertical farming. It's almost as stupid as lab grown meats in my opinion. It may be even be more because it's just so nutrient poor. You were right about religion. We've got a lot of sort of almost fundamentalists in the plant based community that are really passionate and ready to lay down

everything for this cause and rallying the omnivore troops is trying to squeeze money out of atheist for a church or something. It's really challenging.

That's why Unitarians are the lowest giving denomination. It's because they just sort of -- They're cool with stuff. I do have this, you and I have co-presented on ideas like this in the past and we've talked a lot about different ways to approach it but I really think showing people visually why natural systems work in a story format instead of a talking head spilling out statistics that are easily picked apart and refuted way is really the key. That's my next big project that I'm working on right now.

Robb: That is a beautiful segue, by the way.

Diana: You planted that one.

Robb: We set it up pretty well. Talk to people about this. We've been talking about this for ages. You've put in enormous amount of skull sweat into this idea. Talk to folks about it. Recently, there was the vegan film *What the Health*. A number of people did some breakdowns on that, myself, Nina Teicholz, a number of people. But man, that thing is convincing. It was well done. It had backing directly from Netflix and Leonardo DiCaprio. If I ever see that guy in public I'm going to do my best to punch him in the throat. It's really compelling. We in the omnivore community have no analog to that. Tell people about this project you're working on.

Diana: Right. It is a film project where I will be really diving into -- And it's not a direct attack. I just want to put this out there. First of all, I get why people are disturbed about eating meat and repulsed at factory farming. It's wrong. But we're not seeing any alternatives to that. We're not being shown sustainable farming. These films are being shown in high schools and in my high school, in my town here. It's really upsetting to me.

What I'm looking to do is really show the other side and show everything that we were just talking about, why natural systems and why working with the sun with grass and with nature actually makes sense. But instead of hammering people over the head with statistics and numerous experts which can just lead to exhaustion, we are going to be -- I teamed up with an independent film director whose family happens to run Maple Hill Creamery. She fully understands the nutrition and regenerative ag story because that company is amazing.

She and I are looking to really do this through artful story telling. We'll be diving into as many stories as we can afford to, depending on how much money we raise. That's always the big crux of the issue.

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But what we're looking to do is tell this ecological nutrition and least harm, really looking at what foods do cause least harm and is it really that plants are inherently good and meat is inherently evil? Or is there a little more context and nuance and should we really be seeing things in such black and white terms?

Robb: Man, two people are going to donate. Me and you. When I did the review of What the Health, I threw out to people my cake. There are going to be some people in the community that have been working on some responses -- not just responses to that but just kind of a treatment of these natural systems approach. I said if you would be interested in checking this out, please give me a yay or a nay, leave your email.

We have 600, 700 people that posted, "Yeah, I'm in." A number of people interestingly, they said, "Hey, I identify as a vegan. I understand what you guys are talking about." These people said, "I just can't personally eat meat but I think that this thing, this whole story could be sustainably addressed. I think it should be sustainably addressed. CAFOs, the confined area feedlot, apocalyptic system should be done away with and we need some alternatives."

So even people that were really dietarily in a different spot but they understood that it's not a binary solution of animals/not animals, that there's a way more nuanced story in this, were suggesting that they were willing to support a project like what you have going on and so I really do hope that people get in and support this. I know that there is just a ton of need that we get exposed to via the internet and social media, all of it is compelling.

Other than, I think, there were a few people that like they were running cross fit gyms or something like that and they said that they need a new sound system and they did a kick starter for that. I just think those people should be tarred and feathered. But aside from that, this is something that I think if we get it right our grandchildren's grandchildren will be sitting in a much better world than if we get this thing wrong.

The unfortunate reality is we really have our work cut out for us. The big corporate entities don't really stand to gain from a shift in this direction because, again, it's talking about decentralization not conglomeration. It's talking about pulling more control back to a local level. It means many, many more people working in the food production system compared to what we have now but doing it in a very different way than this kind of factory farm model.

There's a zillion reasons why people are going to fight this in bucket and there's a lot of big, big money. It's not a sexy proposition to have a nuance story like this

going through Hollywood. Like telling nuance stories is not what Hollywood is about. But it is interesting in this age of social media and things like Netflix although they appear to have really firmly thrown their hat in with this kind of vegan crowd, but there are some opportunities for really well done documentaries and commentary even like this very modest podcast to be able to go deep and to ask some questions and try to understand all the moving pieces at least to the best of our ability today. So, I'm optimistic about this. But we absolutely, we are the underdogs in the story.

Diana: Yeah. But luckily I do have, after many, many, many phone calls and emails, I've been working at this as my full time job for many months now, but I do have some vegans that are willing to step up and talk about how it's probably unrealistic even though this is their personal conviction, they don't want to be eating meat, but they realize that the rest of the world is probably not going to quit meat tomorrow and fighting for better meat is something we can all get behind. I'm excited to have them on. I should also mention that there's going to be no dietary dogma potentially freak out--

Robb: This is not going to be a Paleo movie.

Diana: It's not Paleo. It's not keto. At the end of day, what I'm trying to explain is that red meat is not the enemy here, that processed food, hyper palatable food, everything you talk about in *Wired to Eat*, that's what actually the big problem here.

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These school systems that are cutting out meat, I am very curious to see what they're actually feeding those kids. And also this isn't going to be totally one of those heavy depressing documentaries as well. Interesting, JP Sears is 100% behind this and I'm really excited to figure out how we're going to weave him into the story. Because I think that lightening things up a little bit and just sort of looking at this with humor and with common sense is really the way to go.

Robb: Absolutely. Diana, where can folks find out more about this? When is all this stuff happening?

Diana: If they go to sustainabledish.com/film, that will have all the information right there that will take you right to the crowdfunding page. We'll be sharing updates. I've got some really cool perks including a trip to Meat Camp which I went to, super fun. Thrive Market is providing some cool stuff. We've got The Good Kitchen. Folks can give and get either two weeks or a month of good kitchen meals. They've been really awesome and supportive of this. And other really cool perks too. They can get to Paleo f(x) as well.

They can give. We've got some cool shirts that folks can buy separate from the crowdfunder, just because of the platform I'm using. That's it. I've got a lot of podcasts that I've already done with the ton of the experts that we'll be featuring. Nina Teicholz is one of our main nutrition experts. We're hoping to have you on, Robb just to talk about the hyper palatability and processed food. Just got off the phone with David Perlmutter's team and sounds like he's behind it as well. We've just got a lot of really great supporters out there that really believe in this message.

Robb: Awesome. And when is the crowdfunding option going live?

Diana: When is this podcast going on?

Robb: We can make that happen any time you want.

Diana: Perfect. That's what I was hoping you'd say. You and I are talking on November 29th. This is going live next week so, hopefully, this will be up and on. We're launching it next Wednesday, December 6th

Robb: This will go live December 5th and so the day afterwards.

Diana: That's our soft launch date. Actually, folks can get a sneak preview. If they go today, they'll see it.

Robb: Perfect.

Diana: I did a really stressful video of myself for the pitch video which was probably the hardest thing I've ever done in my life. If you look closely I'm sweating and shaking. And I will not--

Robb: No beta-blockers that day apparently.

Diana: No. In fact, yes. But I'm not interested in being in film or being on film in any way but from all the crowdfunding 101 that I did basically mini masters degree in over the last few months folks really need to understand why you are the right person for the job. I was trying hard to do my best and swallow my inhibitions about being on or my shyness about being on camera and did it and I will never do that again.

Robb: You got to take some bullets to change the world. Remind folks again. That's sustainabledish.com/film for the crowdfunding page. Where can folks find you on social media?

Diana: I'm in Instagram a lot, just about every day, @sustainabledish. Twitter is just a place where people pick fights with me so I tend not to--

Robb: Yeah.

Diana: I don't love Twitter. And Facebook--

Robb: It's just all politics. All I do is just scroll through Instagram feeds now and I'm like, "Oh, social media is great."

Diana: Yeah. Instagram is really the best. I'll be mostly out of the country for most of this fundraiser so I'm hoping to just completely opt out of December and Christmas in general in the northeast here. I'll be watching this under a coconut tree.

Robb: Awesome.

Diana: I'll be back planning. We'll get into pre-production in January.

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We're going to shoot some films. We're really just looking to raise enough money to just get going, basically get a sizzle reel together to then show folks what we can do, how we're going to tell the story. We've got endless people that could be interviewed and stories to tell on this and so really just looking forward to getting started.

Robb: Awesome. Diana, folks don't know the back story here but trying to get shit like this off the ground and launched is incredibly hard, expensive, taxing both emotionally, physically, every level you could think of. And someday, it'd be a whole story unto itself for people to know the amount of personal sacrifice that Diana has put into this project just to date.

If you are the least bit inclined to get a beautifully done nice treatment of this omnivore story, please support this project. I'm going to support it to the best of my abilities. Maybe we'll get Diana back on the show here at some point and we'll do some more discussion around this. But please do support this. And, Diana, thank you for all the hard work you've done in this. This is several years of your life devoted to this scene already and just cannot thank you enough.

Diana: Thank you so much for having me. I really appreciate it.

Robb: Okay. We'll talk to you soon and take care.

Diana: Thanks.

[0:51:34] End of Audio