

Nicki: Welcome to The Healthy Rebellion Radio. This is an episode of Salty Talk, a deep dive into popular and relevant health and performance news pieces, mixed with the occasional salty conversation with movers and shakers in the world of research, performance, health and longevity.

Nicki: Healthy Rebellion Radio's Salty Talk episodes are brought to you by Drink LMNT, the only electrolyte drink mix that's salty enough to make a difference in how you look, feel, and perform. We co-founded this company to fill a void in the hydration space. We needed an electrolyte drink that actually met the sodium needs of active people, low carb, keto, and carnivore adherence without any of the sugar, colors, and fillers found in popular commercial products. Heath rebels, this is Salty Talk.

Nicki: And now the thing our attorney advises. The contents of this show are for entertainment and educational purposes only. Nothing in this podcast should be considered medical advice. Please consult your licensed and credentialed functional medicine practitioner before embarking on any health, dietary or fitness change. And given that this is Salty Talk, you should expect the occasional expletive.

Robb: What's happening wife?

Nicki: It's Salty Talk time.

Robb: It is Salty Talk time, are you feeling salty?

Nicki: I'm always feeling salty.

Robb: You are always.

Nicki: It's always time to get salty.

Robb: So what's new and exciting since I saw you in the kitchen?

Nicki: I don't know. I don't have anything noteworthy.

Robb: Those early memes of the COVID wine tour, where it's like the bathroom, the bedroom, the kitchen.

Nicki: Oh yeah, yeah.

Robb: That was oddly prescient.

Nicki: Except for us it's more like the COVID element tour.

Robb: Yup, yup. Have some orange there and some citrus here and I'll just be bloated elsewhere.

Nicki: And some raspberry over there.

Robb: So yeah.

Nicki: Yup, yup. This one's starting off like a hoot.

Robb: It is, it is, quite a barn burner. Yup.

Nicki: Let's see, I'm thinking about what announcements we have for you all. Let's see Sacred Cow's coming out next week, July 14. So still have time to pre-order and grab all the pre-order bonuses. If you've already pre-ordered and haven't gotten your bonuses yet, do that you can go to sacredcow.info/book and there'll be directions on how to submit your receipt and get all kinds of pre-order bonuses, including a sneak preview of the film.

Robb: Awesome. Cannot wait.

Nicki: Super cool, super cool. Also next week, we're kicking off our Rebel Strong Program, our Summer Strength Program with the folks from Basis Health & Performance at Sarah and Grayson Strange and Nate Carlascio. That's free to members of The Healthy Rebellion, so if you're not yet a member, and that's something that interests you, go to join.thehealthyrebellion.com.

Robb: And I don't want to belabor that. But when you look at what it costs to pay for either personal training or online programming, and then you get access to the community, and this program, pretty-

Nicki: It's a lot of fun there folks.

Robb: ... goddamn good deal.

Nicki: A lot of people are finding it to be sort of the place that they're very glad they have during this time, us included.

Robb: Us included. We're very grateful for our healthy rebels.

Nicki: Yup. And this program that they put together can be done with very limited equipment. So even if you just have access to say a dumbbell or two, you can do the program. So I know not everybody... Lots of gyms are in various stages of-

Robb: Shutdown like 24 Hour Fitness-

Nicki: ... shutdown. 24 Hour Fitness in fact... Yeah.

Robb: ... is filing chapter 11 which isn't a guarantee that it will go away, but I mean, it's a restructuring deal. So it's interesting, and we're catching some suggestions that there may be a second full lockdown. There's back and forth on that. But it's interesting times. And also there were recently some pieces suggesting that not surprisingly, people are exercising significantly less as a consequence of COVID than what they did previously.

Robb: Since literally almost the first days of this thing, your health is the greatest hedge you have in this story regardless of what else happens.

Nicki: And your strength. Michelle, one of our Healthy Rebellion members posted a quote out of Mark Rippetoe's book Starting Strength, which was... And I'm going to butcher it, but something to the effect of "A strong person..." How strength impacts just your happiness and how you view the world and a stronger person is more resilient, generally more-

Robb: Difficult to kill.

Nicki: ... harder to kill. Yeah, anyway it was a good quote and I don't have it in front of me so I won't butcher it any further.

Robb: Further butcher Mark Rippetoe's quote.

Nicki: Yeah, yeah. Let's see. Today's Salty Talk hubs you kind of broke down an article that was published in The Guardian titled, Why you should go animal-free: 18 arguments for eating meat debunked.

Robb: Yeah. And it's an outstanding piece that they did. It's very thorough and it's as if they went through Sacred Cow like we... They address just everything under the sun, but they're very dismissive of regenerative agriculture and actually paint it in a very unfavorable light. But it's worth noting that Frank Mitloehner, who's a professor of agriculture at UC Davis, dug up some information that back in early 2019, The Guardian got nearly a \$1 million grant to begin writing pieces sponsored by a vegan backed, entity, the acronym is OPP, it is not other people, stop.

Nicki: You down with OPP, honey?

Robb: Yeah, please, please, please, we really will be down to six listeners, please don't do that. We will never have sex again either. But it's really interesting and it was right on the heels of this, basically paying for ad space. And I make the case that when you go to The Guardian website, they have a pop up. It's like journalism is important and integrity... So I screenshot that and I kind of talked about that.

Robb: But when you look at the onslaught of anti-meat material that emerged after they got this grant, and that's the one thing that we've tracked down, we don't know what other things are kind of lurking out there. It's pretty crazy. And again, really quickly, it does not guarantee that... And this is something that just annoys the shit out of me. It doesn't guarantee that a vegan is wrong because they're backed by a plant-based product. It doesn't mean that... People throw these things out.

Robb: They're like, "Well Robb, you make all your money from meat related stuff." And it's like, "I sell books, vegan sell books, it's awash."

Nicki: And we occasionally make an affiliate fee off of selling some sort of animal-based product if somebody decides to buy through a link in our stuff. But it's not like-

Robb: I will open it up. Like if somebody is interested in seeing if we're sponsored by Big Meat, you have to put \$10,000 in an escrow account. And you can look at our tax returns from here till the beginning of time. And if you can find no indication that we've received money from Big Meat, then I get to keep your money but your willing to take a look at it, it's just going to cost you a chunk of change to take a peak at it.

Nicki: Maybe more than 10 grand, it's kind of a pain in the butt.

Robb: Not for us, we just send them that shit and then when they can't find anything, then that money is ours. But anyway, so I don't want to present this as, "Well they got money, so therefore everything is called into question." But it's a piece of data and I would appreciate people to start adopting that stance. It's like, "Okay, so there might be some conflicts of interest here, let's dig deeper."

Robb: Like maybe, you look at it even with a little bit more scrutiny. And there were some things in this Guardian piece, like he just dismissed the need for animal husbandry as part of agriculture due to its impact on topsoil. Like you're saying, "We don't need that fertilizer, we can make all the synthetic fertilizer we want." Which I was just like, "Are you shitting me?" Like one, it's-

Nicki: Monsanto much?

Robb: Monsanto much? And it is incredibly energy intensive, which means a massive carbon footprint. And this is kind of one of these non-debatable things. It's one of the things that Monsanto and other entities are kind of like, "Oh shit, what do we do?" Like they write papers on this. Synthetic chemical fertilizer destroys the topsoil and the general process of row crop tillage and whatnot.

Nicki: And insects and bees, and-

Robb: That aside, that that is secondary. If the soil is gone, all the rest of that doesn't fucking matter, because there's bare earth.

Nicki: There's nothing growing to fertilize.

Robb: There's nothing growing.

Nicki: There we go.

Robb: The key point is the soil and everybody acknowledges that synthetic chemical fertilizer destroys and degrades the soil. So the whole piece kind of goes up in a ball of flames with that one piece, but he goes point, by point, by point, he got 18 points.

Nicki: 18 points, yeah.

Robb: Some of them get really out in the weeds, and are kind of wacky but some of them are more germane to the common topics that people ask and whatnot. But it's funny, he didn't get into any of the things around like water usage and stuff like that, although there was a part that he basically said that intensive agriculture means that animals are on less land. Which you could kind of think that's good until you realize that these tracts of land are amenable for nothing other than growing grass and having animals on them.

Robb: And some of the suggestion is that you re-wild these areas, which, if you want to have huge herds of elk and deer and all that, I guess that's great, but you also need to then either hunt them, or you need some apex predators to keep their numbers in check. And funny enough people are not super stoked about having large numbers of wolves, coyotes and mountain lions in close proximity to humans and these interfaces with these re-wilding scenarios.

Robb: So it's really interesting how blase the guy is on some really important stuff. But again, it was long, is very thoroughly done, but the little kind of lies by omission are stunning.

Nicki: Okay, well, let's get into your piece.

Robb: Let's do it.

Robb: Hey everybody, welcome back to another edition of Salty Talk, hope you all are doing. Let's see here, what do we have cooking? Sacred Cow is releasing very, very soon. Got some nice love from Nick Offerman on that. What else do we have going on? That's kind of the big deal. It's been four years of work, so screaming towards that and I guess kind of to that end, we're going to be looking at this piece from the Guardian, the title is, Why you should go animal-free: 18 arguments for eating meat debunked.

Robb: And it's a phenomenal piece. They did an outstanding job on this. They hit all the key talking points. I will make a case that I don't think that their information is particularly accurate for the most part. How do I want to dig into this? So first thing, a little bit of background. And again, I want to be hesitant about doing a character assassination. The author of this piece is Damian Carrington, he's the environment editor for the Guardian.

Robb: He's got a PhD in geology, he's a well educated guy, his writing's pretty good. He's taking chemistry and physics and math, so he should understand this stuff well. So I don't want this to be outright like a straw man character assassination, but there's some really concerning stuff that pops up even before we start unpacking the actual material at large here. So let's kind of look at that. Oh, you know what? I have this first.

Robb: Hey, and for the folks that are just listening, if you want to be able to see these presentations, I usually do some sort of a slide deck or use some websites for some analysis, join.thehealthyrebellion.com and you get full access to all that stuff. So otherwise, I do the best job I can to provide some color commentary for what we have. But what I have here is a screenshot of the opening moments on the Guardian website where they have a little plea for you to support them.

Robb: It says, "We choose a different approach will you support it? With news under threat, just when we need it most, the Guardian's quality fact check news and measured explanation has never mattered more. Our editorial independence is vital." Pay super close attention to that. "We believe every one of us deserves to read on us reporting, that's why we remain with you open to all and you're visiting in your millions blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Support the Guardian for as little as a dollar." Okay, that's great.

Robb: So, modern journalism is in a pickle. We collectively have created a situation in which people expect information of all kinds to be free, from health to you name it. Nobody has an expectation of paying for information and journalism has kind of gone this direction. And this is actually a big part of why we're in this Clickbait moment which could end civilization as we know it, between social media, old guard media like this and the reality that Clickbaity news is kind of what wins the day for the most part, it's pretty dangerous. But check this out.

Robb: These guys are claiming to have this editorial independence and whatnot. This is from Frank Mitloehner's website. Frank is a PhD... He is a professor of environmental sciences at UC Davis, and he makes the point that there's this interesting link between the Guardian and this outfit called the Open Philanthropy Project. From Frank's piece in 2017, the daily UK-based newspaper sought and received a grant from OPP, again this the Open Philanthropy Project, to regularly print editorial content in support of OPPs, well established animal rights agenda.

Robb: So the OPP paid the Guardian nearly a million dollars to publish a series of articles titled animals farm, that consists of a steady stream of articles that paint animal agriculture as inhumane, unhealthy and dangerous to the environment. What's interesting about this and Frank posted this back in March 2019, and then again, it appears that the Guardian started receiving some amount of funds from this Open Philanthropy Project sometime in 2017.

Robb: But it's interesting, this really kind of flies in the face of the National Union of Journalists code of conduct. And when we poke around a little bit, there's some interesting connections here. So again, I'm pulling from Frank's post here. And this is Frank writing this. What I have a problem with is this, OPP is no ordinary reader.

Robb: It's funded by Dustin Moskovitz, one of the founders of Facebook, and has an unapologetic focus on farm animal welfare, which has its very right to have, by the way that is led by Lewis Bollard, a former leader of the Humane Society of the United States, that recently handed over \$4 million in support of Proposition 12 in California, which Proposition 12 was this really, oddly worded piece of legislation that was supposed to do... The surface level was that it was supposed to do away with different elements of confinement within animal husbandry, but it was broadly enough written that it could have basically taken out animal husbandry altogether.

Robb: So these folks are also investors at Impossible Foods, which is the Impossible Burger etc, etc. And so, what we have here is a link from some of these information monopolies like the Facebook, to folks that are openly hostile towards any amount of animal husbandry

at all. And in their mind there is no good animal husbandry, regardless of where you are on the planet or what your individual circumstances may be, to say nothing of the potential that regenerative agriculture could bring to the table, and this is all linked back to entities like Impossible Foods.

Robb: So there's some really interesting money and relationship that occurs in the writing of pieces like this. So digging in a little bit further, I did a little bit of background checking on Damian Carrington's writing and how it's been received, and generally it's pretty on point. Like this is from Climate Feedback, it's a website that ranks... I don't know about rank is the correct term, but it brings in a panel of experts to review the topic at hand.

Robb: Now, this is, I think a great effort. It always begs the question, who is the panel of experts? And this is where you keep going down different rabbit holes. Like you can get people with a gust seeming backgrounds who are all vegan, and you're going to get a very stilted representation but that's it. I don't want to paint Damian's work into poor a light, when he sticks to generally broad brushstroke topics related to the environment, he tends to get pretty good reviews.

Robb: And if you want to go to this website so that you can do some checking of your own, and I will have all this stuff in the show notes, but it's climatefeedback.org, this is where some of these reviews happen. But the piece that I'm looking at, the Guardian story on climate impacts of diet gets mixed reviews from scientists, and the Guardian piece effectively says avoiding meat and dairy is, "The single best way to reduce your impact on the earth."

Robb: And the review was ultimately tagged as imprecise/unclear. And basically the wording was misleading, the science that was used was not regarded to be particularly accurate. So again, it'd be easy to set this thing up as just a character assassination of this guy. That's the way that this shit happens these days. That's the way that people, like the, What the Health, Kip and people like that do these days, and I guess it's pretty effective.

Robb: But ethically, I don't really feel good about that if I'm misrepresenting something in this then by all means somebody set me straight. But I think that when we take all of this together, the fact that there is a clearly vegan backed entity that is funding these Guardian pieces, that there are links within that funding from the OPP, the Open Philanthropy Project going towards outfits like Facebook and also Impossible Foods, that's kind of concerning.

Robb: And it's not journalism, it's edutainment at best but it's basically an advertorial, and I think that that's really important to consider. One other thing that's interesting this is another piece by Damian Carrington the topic is, Climate emission killer: construction begins on world's biggest liquid air battery. And he is so starry-eyed over this thing. And basically what a liquid air battery is, is you take energy from some source, which in theory it could be the sun, it could be wind, it could be nuclear energy, it could be fossil fuels, and you have to use this energy to pressurize and liquefy gas of some form.

Robb: It could be atmospheric gas, it could be nitrogen, whatever. What they're doing here is basically atmosphere gas. And then when you allow that gas to go from pressurized, liquefied to depressurized, you can use that in a turbine and generate energy. It's a legitimate way of doing things, but what is entirely missed in this, Damian, when he mentions where the energy comes from, he just says green sources. And we have no idea what those sources are.

Robb: In general, we would assume it to be solar and wind, possibly some tide stuff, although I think that most of those have been largely abandoned. But what's really interesting when you dig into some of these green energy initiatives... And I know this is going to piss some people off. I'm a fan of solar, I think that it's got really huge upside potential, but there's some real problems with it too. There's a massive amount of energy to get the materials out of the ground to produce solar cells.

Robb: The solar cells do not have an infinite shelf life, they have a limited time run before they have to be retired. The recycling of these materials is not perfect. There's a massive amount of toxic substances produced in this whole song and dance of doing this stuff. And in this situation where Damian is playing up the efficacy or the importance of this liquid gas battery, he calls it a climate emission killer.

Robb: Well, here's the deal with that, the real problem. There's not a lifecycle analysis on this thing. There's not an accounting of all the inputs versus all the outputs. And so if we consider all the energy that goes into making a wind turbine, and this is like the carbon fiber blades, the generator, the copper wire, the whole ball of wax, to the degree that these lifecycle analysis have been done, they don't pencil out well.

Robb: They consume enormous amounts of energy, are incredibly environmentally damaging, and none of that really gets discussed. I see this stuff as an absolute boondoggle, and it's very similar to the raising of ethanol in the United States, or the farming of corn to produce ethanol in the United States. That is a net energy loss. You don't get more energy out of that than what you put into it. And there's all kinds of other environmental issues.

Robb: And as we actually circle back around to this original Guardian piece, some of that kind of gets exposed. There's a lot of claims bouncing around. If you spend any time online, then the vegans will cite all kinds of numbers that 85% of the world's crops are devoted to animal husbandry, which is not accurate and at all. More of it goes to ethanol production into feeding animals particularly cows, that's a whole interesting piece to this.

Robb: If we want to really have a discussion around the amount of food that goes into poultry and pork production, then we have a real discussion there and there's some potentially very concerning features to that. But with cattle, cattles spend 85 to 90% of their lives on grass, all of them do this. So when all these numbers get ascribed, and it's funny, the bulk of the problem is not related to cattle, the bulk of the problem is actually related to chicken and pork.

Robb: But chicken and pork are not the things being vilified, ironically. And again, vegans will vilify chicken and pork just as well as they do beef. But beef and grazing animals get a disproportionate amount of negative attention, when the irony is that they're actually poised to be these amazing regenerative tools. And so this is where it's really important for people like Damian Carrington and other folks, whether their paycheck is on the line or not.

Robb: If they really give a shit about the world and the environment, it's pretty important to get this stuff right. And so let's see here. I'll start unpacking this stuff and Damian pulls in some interesting stuff where obviously we're in the age of COVID. And he tries to make this case initially... Oh, and just as a quick aside, virtually every link in this article goes back to another Guardian article. And you have to get really far down the rabbit hole of these linked articles before you get to any independent scientific material.

Robb: And/or the outside link that it's referred to is generally some sort of vegan-centric website. So Damian's citing this biodiversity scientists to say even more deadly pandemics will follow, we're in this age of COVID. There's been this real attempt to hang this whole thing on animal husbandry which is ridiculous. It's looking more and more like this virus was actually some sort of a product of a lab setting like the Bret Weinstein on a recent Joe Rogan podcast really unpacked this pretty well.

Robb: There are some genetic elements that are not found historically in coronaviruses and I don't really want to get too far down that rabbit hole. But Damian just throws the whole ball of wax at this stuff trying to create this case, that animal products are a problem and here's from his article. "First, the over consumption of meat is causing an epidemic of disease with about \$285 billion spent every year around the world treating illness."

Robb: So he's ascribing virtually the totality of human disease being tied to animal husbandry and again, his link for this is another Guardian article with the title, Taxing red meat would save many lives, research shows, which we've done a debunking of that separately. But it's just so interesting. Really, it's incredibly unethical to couch things in times like this. Then we move on to "Global livestock herd and the green it consumes takes up 83% of global farmland." This is absolutely false just in numerical terms.

Robb: The land that animals graze on and it's so interesting we'll get to this stuff later, is huge tracts of land that are not amenable for cropping. They just can't be used for crops, and Diana and I unpacked this both in the film and in the Sacred Cow book. And you know, I guess kind of what's frustrating about this is it becomes kind of a, he said, I said, pissing match and Damian's got his numbers and I've got my numbers.

Robb: But if we sat down and did a debate, and we could cite sources and really take these things in context, which if Damian Carrington would ever want to do that I would be more than honored to host that and make it happen. Because the format of articles like this, you could just have like a wall of opinion that can be marginally cited and looks very compelling and it paints a really simplistic story, and it's super compelling. And it's also probably not true, at least fast tracks of it.

Robb: There's 18 points that Damian makes and I don't know if I'm going to go through all 18 of them but we'll at least touch on a few of these. The first one is, "Grass-fed beef is low carbon." It's interesting he says, "But a lot of research suggests grass-fed beef, uses more land and produces more or at best, similar emissions because green is easier for cows digest blah, blah, blah." This is really interesting in that he completely ignores all the lifecycle analysis, say, of white oak pastures, which shows it as a net carbon negative entity.

Robb: And this is another one of the most annoying and honestly dangerous pieces, which is that all carbon emissions... And one thing that the vegans do, and a lot of people do is they will say, "Well, methane is more dangerous than carbon dioxide." All of this stuff when we talk about it gets normalized into carbon dioxide equivalence, so that we're literally dealing with apples and apples here. And the fact that many people don't know that further highlights the fact that they're super ignorant about this stuff, and that needs to be fixed.

Robb: But this first piece ignores the fact that we have great data suggesting that regeneratively raised beef in particular is a remarkable carbon sink, and if scaled properly could provide huge potentials for mitigating the transportation sector and the other sectors which are not part of the carbon cycle, which living systems are part of carbon cycles. And I've talked about this in other places. There was a piece not that long... Actually, it's several years ago now, but it was decrying the fact that ocean floor shellfish produce large amounts of methane and woe be unto us, because the shellfish are going to contribute to the end of life on the planet.

Robb: No, the carbon equivalents emitted by life are part of a cycle, and it needs to be looked at entirely different than just massive amounts of carbon being stripped out of the soil from industrial agriculture, or from the transportation sector. So this is just a ridiculous piece in the way it's couched ignores so many features of this topic. And again, this is part of the reason why Diana and I put the book together the way that we did, and the film, where we address the ethical, environmental and health considerations of a meat inclusive diet and meat inclusive food system.

Robb: Because this becomes this game of vegan whack-a-mole, where they'll make a claim in one area, you start addressing that claim and other stuff pops up elsewhere. Okay, moving on to point two, "Cattle are actually neutral for climate, because methane is a relatively short-lived greenhouse gas." Actually we talked about that a little bit, we deal with this stuff in carbon equivalent. So doing the ping pong match back and forth between...

Robb: Well, if you really start talking about methane emissions then crazy things like peat bogs and termites start looking really, really dangerous. And this is what is... I think Diana and I have mentioned in other pieces that there were some Swedish parliamentarians folks that were recommending that their moose herds should be eradicated, because the moose belch methane, just like most undulates and herbivores.

Robb: This is so obviously crazy to me, but it is also obviously not crazy to everyone else, which is part of I guess, both the challenge and the opportunity here. But we must look at this carbon or carbon equivalent story from the perspective of is it part of a carbon cycle or not? And again, the irony here is that regenerative agriculture... Like we are not going to be able to turn the switch off on transportation.

Robb: We kind of are doing that with COVID and we had some shutdowns and we may have more shutdowns. And the knock-on effects to that are absolutely catastrophic. And it'll be really interesting to see where that goes in the future, but we can't turn transportation off. We can't just flip a switch and it's done. I guess we could but again, the results to that are going to be enormous, just incredibly catastrophic. So we can't do that. So what do we do?

Robb: Well, the vegan agenda, the people that are funding things like Impossible Burgers, are saying that we need to remove animal husbandry from the equation, because it's this big contributor to the climate change picture. In fact, it's not both in terms of the absolute magnitude, and also the fact that it's part of the cycle and what's being missed again in this whole story, is that regenerative agriculture scaled globally could offset the impacts of the transportation sector.

Robb: But it's potentially being taken offline by these, I guess generally well-meaning people, but people who have made and are potentially going to make enormous sums of money by shifting us to an almost 100% row crop-centric food system. And now a quick word from today's sponsor.

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Robb: So my first exposure to this was when I was writing Wired to Eat. And when you're trying to keep track, maybe I'm getting old and losing my mind, but when you're-

Nicki: You are approaching 50.

Robb: ... approaching 50 at a breakneck pace. But when you're trying to keep track of a project that big, like when I turned in the manuscript, it was like 400-page book, and then it got whittled down to like 325, or whatever. But it's a lot even with good outlines and everything, like just trying to keep the story arcs in mind, "Oh did I cover that here or there?" This stuff really helped.

Robb: And I think I had mentioned to folks at that time that I was doing this, doing some binaural beats, doing a little bit of nicotine gum as kind of some nootropic aids. And for

these periods of... I don't really use this every day, I really use it in targeted fashion when it's like-

Nicki: Working on a project.

Robb: ... I need to be on point and really light this thing up and then I feel like I get the maximum benefit out of it.

Nicki: All right folks, if you want to give B. LXR Brain Fuel a shot to supercharge your productivity, you can actually save 15% on your first order today. Just go to beekeepersnaturals.com/thr. Again, you can save 15% and stock up on some of these amazing remedies, clean natural remedies that actually work. And now back to today's episode.

Robb: So claim number three, in many places the only thing you can grow is grass for cattle and sheep. Yes, that is in fact true. And what's interesting about this is Damian doesn't even bother to try to find a scientific reference or an alternative reference from this. He just quotes asking someone who is a professor at a university or actually it's, in a few president minute batters 65%... Oh, yeah. Okay. So the long and short of that is that he doesn't really unpack this thing.

Robb: We do a really good job in the film and in the book of addressing the reality that there are enormous tracts of land that are amenable for nothing other than their grasslands and they need to be grazed by grazing animals. And some of the things that he mentioned here, this is from the article, I know I'm kind of spazzing out going all over the place here. But this is from the article, "A pasture could instead be used to grow trees and lock up carbon, provide land for re-wilding and the restoration of nature, and the growing bioenergy crops to displace fossil fuels."

Robb: Bioenergy crops are a fucking boondoggle. They never produce more energy than what they require as input. And again, this is where I go crazy. It's like this guy is not dumb, but he's clearly looking at different data than I am. And when you look at what... I'm a big fan of forests, we probably shouldn't cut down every goddamn tree, there probably should be some old growth stuff that never gets cut down just because. I'm totally game for that.

Robb: But when you look at the efficiency of grasslands versus forests in carbon sequestration, it's not even on the same planet, literally not the same planet. Grasslands are far more efficient. And again, if you folks want citations around this stuff, we've got them in the book and I encourage you to go line by line through that thing and look at what we cited, look at what the claims are and then look at how we've supported that.

Robb: And if we're full of shit than absolutely expose us for that, but this is just... I hate using the term lie, but this is inaccurate enough, this claim that... Basically they're trying to dismiss the fact that there's huge tracts of the earth that are amenable only to grasses and grazing. They're trying to say no, it's not. We shouldn't grow animals on there.

Again, they will circle back to methane and all these other things which we have debunked elsewhere.

Robb: "Grazing cattle helps store carbon from the atmosphere in the soil." So they go through kind of an interesting way of trying to debunk this. So they don't actually address any of the direct science on this. They go to another kind of journalistic outlet called the conversation and it's talking about how carbon storage under some circumstances is only 20 to 60% of total emissions, which is not accurate if you really get in and look at this stuff.

Robb: This other piece, though, is really interesting. It's the one article or the one scientific reference that's actually inline referenced. And it suggests that carbon storage reaches a limit within a few decades and then emissions continue. That's true up to a point, because what we're talking about is taking soils which have generally been overgrazed or over-harvested and are deficient in proper amounts of carbon.

Robb: About 20 years, you will take that denuded soil from about 0.5% of carbon by weight up to 5% carbon by weight, it takes some time to do that. Does plateau out. But then what's fascinating is that what Damian ignores here is that you then continue to produce more soil. And this is what occurs in natural grasslands, in regenerative environments, in which this energy from the sun is transformed into nutrients.

Robb: Some of those nutrients are pumped underground, and carbon chain molecules are produced and this feeds bacteria and fungi. And that whole system mines minerals and these minerals are combined with the carbon. And I don't know if there's an infinite amount of soil that can be made this way. I don't know that there's really a specific upper limit to it either. So again, this is a really interesting way of trying to shoot this thing down where he says, "Well, it doesn't matter that you can sequester carbon in the soil," which they do actually admit that you can do that.

Robb: But because the specific sequestration of carbon in existing soil plateaus, they present that as if it's the end of the story and it's not, we can produce more topsoil and that topsoil will continue to sequester more carbon and on and on and on. Claim number five "There's much more wildlife and pasture than in mono..." I'm not even going to touch on that one. Claim six, "We need animals to convert feed into protein humans can eat."

Robb: This is one of the main points that we make. And again, it's interesting the way that they tackle this. Damian does acknowledge, he says, "Animals can play a role in some parts of Africa and Asia." I don't know why it can't play a role elsewhere. But I will at least give them some acknowledgement for recognizing that the whole world does not have access to a CVS to get D vitamin supplements and iron supplements and vegan pea protein and whatnot.

Robb: So a really concerning piece of this, though is that he says, "In rich nations people commonly eat 30 to 50% more protein than they need." This is patently false. And this is why people overeat, because of the protein leverage hypothesis. And eating to a protein

minimum is what determines when we reach satiety. And this is some of the pushback that's coming out of like the, eat land set pieces and whatnot.

Robb: Further, reducing our protein intake is going to cause people to both overeat and to be malnourished and this is very well-established. Again, we make the case in the book and film around this, but there are other outlets that have really made this case pretty consistently. "What about soy milk and tofu that is destroying the Amazon?" This is interesting where he talks a lot about deforestation and the damage of animal husbandry with places like the Amazon.

Robb: Cattle are used in areas in which forest has been cleared, then cattle go through and eat the understory, and then the remaining is burnt. And then that area is converted into cropland, mainly soybeans. And he does accurately mention that most of the soy gets converted back into animal feed, but that animal feed is mainly for chickens and pork. And again, this area that is cleared, the cattle go through transiently. The soybeans are there permanently. But somehow he just completely misses this thing.

Robb: Again, I don't know if he's so wedded to these ideas that he hasn't tried to shoot down his own assumptions or because he's getting paid by the folks that he's getting paid that he can't look down those avenues, but it's not correct. "Almond milk production is massacring bees and turning land into desert." I can't even believe that he's going out of his way to defend things like almond milk and oat milk, because they're devoid of nutrition and they have pretty gnarly impacts on the environment.

Robb: He talks about avocados, quinoa, palm. "Plant-based alternatives to meat are really unhealthy." Well, you can debate whether they're healthy or unhealthy, but when you look at what goes into like an Impossible Burger, there's not a lot of nutrition there. To the degree there is nutrition, it's synthetic vitamins that are added to it. It's like canola oil and sawdust, more or less than in soy proteins, which, if that spins someone's propellers, I guess that's great, but I don't really see that as being all that great.

Robb: His claim number 14, "Fruit and vegetables aren't vegan because they rely on animal manure as fertilizer." This is another one that is crazy to me. His reference here is for the Haber-Bosch process, which is the process that was developed early in the 20th century. And it fixes atmospheric nitrogen. Converted into ammonia, it takes enormous amount of energy to do this. This is mainly propelled by fossil fuels.

Robb: It could be plugged into a solar power grid, it could be plugged into a nuclear power grid. But the reality is it takes huge amounts of energy. So depending on where you get the energy to run the Haber process to make synthetic nitrogen fertilizer, you have to consider that whole carbon footprint. And again, there's different potential ways that you could do it and I discussed earlier that solar energy in the form of solar cells is not a free lunch.

Robb: There's a whole net energy input into making those things relative to grass and sunlight and cows, but that's kind of one part of this. So he's not accounting for the energy that goes into the Haber-Bosch process. The other thing that is really fascinating is that when

we hear scary predictions like we have 60 harvests left because our top soil's eroding. We don't actually know how many harvests we have left, that 60 harvests left number is kind of an artifact.

Robb: It was a statement a woman made at the U.N. with no citation, no backup, it was just kind of an offhand comment that has now been included in scientific journals and documentaries and all kinds of other things. And it's not actually a credible scientific point, it is credible in that we do have an expiration date on our top soil with industrial row crop food systems. One of the main contributors to that problem is the synthetic nitrogen fertilizer, because it destroys the microbiome process that occurs deep within the root systems.

Robb: And so the totality of the activity happens very close to the surface. And so we don't actually get the soil building, we get soil degradation, to say nothing of the effects of the plows and the harvesting and all of that. So it's interesting the way that Damian discounts this notion around the important place that animal manure could play in a sustainable food system that we could come back a 1,000 years from now, and this thing is still functioning.

Robb: Claim number 15 "Vegan diets kill millions of big insects." It's funny he says it's true but insects are in terrible decline across the planet, but the biggest driver of these is deforestation of wild habitat. There's some truth to that, like the loss of wild habitat is a big, big deal. But just even the very pedestrian level of bugs that we had in developed areas. When I was a kid when you drove your car any distance the windshield you had to wash it every couple of days, because of the bug splats.

Robb: And now like you don't have to wash your windshield ever. Like the bees, the bugs have declined massively and it's a big problem all the way around. But again, I think that the way that these vegan-centric models are put forward, it's that they're completely benign to the environment and they're absolutely not, particularly on the taking of life ranging from insects to small animals. Point number 16, "Telling people to eat less meat and dairy is denying vital nutrition to the world's poorest."

Robb: This is absolutely true and he tries to dismiss this saying that plant products are going to provide more nutrition. There are certain nutrients which can only be obtained from animal sources, or you need the infrastructure to extract things like DHA out of algae, and then disseminate that to people. This is some of the big pushback that is actually coming out of developing countries from outfits like the World Health Organization saying that the whole world needs to shift to a vegan-centric diet.

Robb: Because these people recognize that the difference between life and death or success in failure in many regards, is the quality of the diet that these people get access to. And more starch is not providing better nutrition for these folks. "Transport emissions mean that eating plants from all over the world..." I'm not really going to dig into that, it's just kind of a goofy point. "All the farmers who raise..." Well, the last two are just kind of goofy points, I'm not even going to bother getting into them.

Robb: I like doing pieces like this, but even though I've spent close to an hour on this, it feels like a really paltry, superficial treatment of all this stuff. I feel like each one of these points needs a separate one hour, dismantling, debunking, talking points, context. And even if I were independently wealthy, I don't know that I would have time to do that. So I hope you find stuff like this interesting, but I'll tell you what we really need are informed activists.

Robb: Not, yes, men and women, not automatons who just belch and regurgitate the information they've been told. We need people who think and use critical thinking, huge judgment. And if Diana and I get some stuff wrong, then we need to be held accountable for what we got wrong. Doing character assassinations and just using dodgy kind of bullshit data to undermine our credibility, I don't necessarily think is a good thing. But this whole thing's being tackled as if it's team sports and the vegan team is playing to win.

Robb: And they don't really care what the results are. They don't care that they might have everything wrong and that the solution that they're horribly trying to vilify, this regenerative approach, this regenerative food system approach, might be the tool that we have in the toolbox to mitigate climate change and deal with food insecurity and a host of other problems. And it just so doesn't fit with that narrative, that these people are literally incapable of hearing it or seeing it no matter how compelling the case is made.

Robb: But the folks that we're kind of competing with on this topic have a religious level of conviction and a story, that is just airtight and buttoned up. Meat causes cancer, meat gives you heart disease, meat's unethical to eat, it destroys the environment. These are really powerful images and anybody who has a soul and a thought about being a steward of this world, that stuff should be considered, it should be looked at and considered.

Robb: But the bugger that we face is that unpacking these topics is asymmetrically difficult from our position. And I'm assuming if you're listening to this, that you're kind of on team omnivore to some degree or, animal inclusive products. It's a bastard to unpack all this stuff. It's not a simple story. It's not an elegant story. It kind of is, it kind of can be. But the counterpoints seem really dire. They come from every direction, they come from enormously wealthy entities and I've made this point elsewhere.

Robb: But what we're facing here is an asymmetric war. And in asymmetric war, usually it's performed by less well-funded, less well-organized entities that figure out the weak underbelly of their adversary, and they're able to do very small activities that have a disproportionately huge impact. And oftentimes, these activities are generally regarded to be unethical, like against human rights and Geneva Conventions and things like that in actual warfare.

Robb: And the process that's occurring with this planet of the vegan narrative, the asymmetric warfare is using incredibly simplistic models and heuristics to describe the totality of life. And this is really challenging to fight against. And this is why I did this piece and

hopefully this Salty Talk is valuable for you all. This is why Diana and I did the book in the film. But we're going to need a lot more help than this. Like we need you all to buy the book. We need you all to disseminate the film.

Robb: And we really need you to be well-informed, critical consumers of both your food and the information that we have at hand, and then be willing to go out and do some battle. I've done innumerable online jousting with vegans and other folks, and I will continue to do some of that, but I can't do all of that. And I know many of you have come to our defense, but when this book drops, when the film drops, we're going to get absolutely buried.

Robb: Both Diana and I, when we first started really getting something that really looked like a book. When you start a book, the book writing process, you're never 100% sure if you're going to finish the damn thing. And if you do finish it, is it worth actually doing something with it. But as we started nearing an initial completion point, we looked at what we had, and we're like, "Shit, this is going to really piss some people off," both on our side of the fence and the other side of the fence, ironically.

Robb: And in that recognition that we're going to piss some people off, it paints a huge target on us. And I guess, I'm kind of meandering here saying, really appreciate your support, but we're going to need a lot more and we're just going to need a whole army not supporting specifically us, but this concept of regenerative agriculture. This is a concept that is too big to have any one person steward it, although movements oftentimes need a singular leader and focal point, but that's also an enormous failure point.

Robb: If that person disappears, if that person becomes discredited, then it can horribly damage the whole thing. So we need something that is decentralized and dynamic, just like the food system that we're advocating. And I want to leave a place for our vegan-centric brothers and sisters, we'll take good care of them.

Robb: But we need to stop what's happening in which they're trying to create a world where a few multinational corporations control the intellectual property of our food, that we ignore the evolutionary biology of human nutrition, and we make our populace more and more sick and keep recommending solutions that just absolutely don't work. So thank you guys. I hope this was valuable, give me some feedback. This was a little bit of a different format from what I usually use. So let me know if this thing was worth your time. I hope you all are good. Take care.

Nicki: Hubs, is there any end in sight in this pro-meat, anti-meat battle?

Robb: There is I'm almost 50 years old, which means that I've lived more life than I'm going to live in the future, most likely. And so when I die, it'll be over for me.

Nicki: How do you know about that? You might make it past a 100.

Robb: We'll see, we'll see. I don't know. I mean, it's definitely a trench warfare. It's interesting we're right on the cusp of Sacred Cow being released, and we did the absolute best job

we could to be accurate in everything that we shared in this book. And the thing about being accurate, assuming that we are, is that there are some inconvenient truths that pop up and what's been interesting thus far is we've had a modicum of anger from literally every corner imaginable.

Robb: We've had people in the regenerative scene cranky at us because meat doesn't have the nutritional profile that they wish it... There's not as big a difference between grass-finished meat and regular meat. The reality is just meat is nutritious period, full stop. Clearly, the vegans are not happy with us. Other people in the regenerative scene have brought up some other wacky like gripes about-

Nicki: A whole host of things.

Robb: ...just a whole host of things and so it's interesting. Like I don't want to come off as a buzzkill. But I've invested a lot of effort in this. Diana has invested enormous personal sacrifice into getting both the book and the film done. And it's a little bit of a kick in the balls, I got to say. Like, I think even when I was recording the main piece there, I was kind of making a call out to you folks, like we're going to need help, we're going to need to defend effectively.

Robb: There are going to be so many people coming for our heads in so many different directions and I don't want you to do this "Oh Robb and Diana are good people," or whatever. Read the material, vet it out, make sure that we're not idiots and we're suggesting the wrong things. But I just see on so many levels this huge divide and conquer process occurring and it's on like social issues and political issues. And this meat thing is a just prime example where-

Nicki: Even in Paleo land, you've got divide and conquer amongst people. I mean, even in regenerative agriculture people that should be on the same-

Robb: Same team.

Nicki: ... side of fence more or less are at each other's throats to some degree.

Robb: So I guess I'm just asking you all, if you like to work, if it makes sense, if it passes the sniff test, when this stuff starts rolling out and you... Like Diana's getting some professional protection for their farm, because they advertise where they live and it's openly accessible and they're really worried about some potentially unhinged individual, probably a vegan that would potentially try to hurt her or her family, and she's been counseled to do that by people in the publishing industry and elsewhere.

Robb: So this is the type of shit that we're facing. And the goal is to try to help people, to provide some answers, to provide some talking points to just begin unpacking this stuff. And in the process of doing this, we've kind of exposed ourselves to a non-trivial amount of scrutiny, and potential attacks, and I'm still currently okay with that. We'll see how all this stuff goes. But I guess the long and short is if you guys are in a position to

just keep an eye on us on social media, and things that are popping up, please, please do that.

Robb: I used to do that in the early days of CrossFit and Paleo and I fought a lot of fights and it mattered, it changed ideas and we're going to need that help.

Nicki: All right, thanks everyone for joining us. Remember to check out B. LXR from Beekeeper's Naturals, go to beekeepersnaturals.com/thr and save 15% on your first order today. And be sure to join us at The Healthy Rebellion if you're interested in participating in our Rebel Summer Strength Program with Basis Health & Performance. You can go to join.thehealthyrebellion.com to get in on that. Again that starts on July 13. So you'll want to sign up in advance of that in order to participate. And what else?

Robb: That's it.

Nicki: That's it. All right, folks. Thanks again for listening.

Robb: Oh, oh really quick, really quick. If you have pre-ordered Sacred Cow, the time is closing on this and I know people are going to... We've tried every way to let you know. But there is a mountain of pre-order bonuses, you go to sacredcow.info/book, and you will get early access to the full film and then like six hours of extras that didn't make it into the film, and a ton of other swag. And by golly, we have done that... Like I have said this in-

Nicki: Don't wait until the day after.

Robb: ... hundreds of Instagram posts. We've done it in virtually every podcast. So July 15th you're out of luck on that block of things. There maybe something else for other people, but it's not going to be as sweet as the other stuff.

Nicki: If you've pre-ordered then get your bonuses.

Robb: Yeah, yeah.

Nicki: Just do it. All right, folks we'll see you next time.

Robb: Take care.

Nicki: Bye.

Robb: Bye.

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