



FARMER TO FARMER

podcast

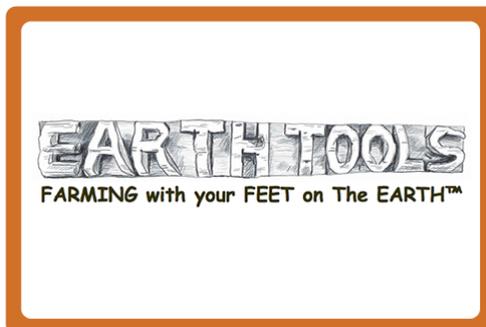


EPISODE 111

Rashid Nuri on Using Urban Agriculture as a Lever to Enrich Lives and Build Communities

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Chris : It's the Farmer-to-Farmer podcast episode 111 and this is your host Chris Blanchard. Rashid Nuri is the founder and CEO of Truly Living Well Center for Natural Urban Agriculture in Atlanta, Georgia. With four farm sites in metro Atlanta, Truly Living Well is a leader in demonstrating urban agriculture as a sustainable solution for helping people to eat better and live better.

Rashid shares his journey through the conventional agricultural system including time spent working for the Cargill and as a Clinton appointee to the U.S. Department of Agriculture on the way to his becoming an organic urban farmer.

Along the way he shares his insights into food systems and how truly living well uses fresh food and crops to enrich lives and build communities. We also dig into the systems Rashid has developed for effective urban farming, whether he is growing in boxes on top of concrete or in the soil. Rashid also shares the simple but effective composting and fertility system Truly Living uses to create healthy crops that allow them to grow without the use of pesticides.

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Rashid Nuri, welcome to the Farmer-to-Farmer podcast.

Rashid: Good afternoon, sir, pleasure to be with you.

Chris : So you've got an absolutely fascinating history and I want to get into that story, but I'd like to start with where you're at now. Can you kind of lay the groundwork for me for



the Truly Living Well Center for Natural Urban Agriculture?

Rashid: Truly Living Well Center for Natural Urban Agriculture is located, headquartered here in metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia and we're in our 12th season. We are a 501(c)(3). We grow food, we grow people, we grow community. We use food production as a platform on the plate on which we serve our programs because we are essentially a training and educational institution.

We do seven sessions of summer camp. We have four food co-ops that we have started. We have six after school programs and then we do our training and we have a bootcamp that we do. We have a women's and children's program. We have a short term urban growing training program. We have internships.

So we have the largest urban footprint. I have several locations. Four locations in the metropolitan area and, as I said, we grow food, we grow people and we grow community.

Chris : So when you say you've got four locations, about how much ground are you covering with that?

Rashid: Let me see, our big site downtown is six acres. We have two acres, two acres, that's ten, about 12 to 14 acres all together of land that's available to us. Now all of it's not under cultivation. But that's our footprint about 14 acres, 12 to 14 acres.

Atlanta is the greenest city in America by virtue of trees and open space. We have somewhere between 900,000 and a million acres that are tree inevitable and we calculate it would 25,000 acres to provide all the fruits and vegetable necessary to feed the people in the metropolitan area. We are very lucky in that way.

I had a friend take the train out from California to Atlanta, she and her daughter, and when they came to see the Atlanta is a great big forest with some houses dropped in it. So we're lucky in that regard. We still have old growth forest around here, in the city.

Chris : Really?

Rashid: Yes, sir.

Chris : How have you found the land where you're farming?

Rashid: Most of it came to us. The first site, we started in a backyard just south of Riverdale, just south of the airport. You couldn't grow anything there, it was under some trees. The second site was referred to us by a colleague. The third site, one of our partners in the business took out and showed us some land behind a house in East Point, which still remains as our headquarters.

We needed to expand. It took me a couple years to find the place we had. We had six acres down by the King Center, but that's been taken back to do development and the folks that are doing the development showed me this land that's going to now be our



permanent headquarters over on the west side of town.

So they come through referrals and searching, asking looking and God has been good to us.

Chris : How are you actually doing your production? You mentioned you got started in a backyard, are you guys actually tilling up ground, growing in ground or are you doing boxes on top of parking lots? What does it actually look like?

Rashid: It depends on what site it is. Until we got that first big site where we broke ground in 2010, we grew in the ground. But the site we had on Auburn Avenue here in Atlanta, off of Auburn Avenue, was a site of a former housing project. And I liked that site because it was in the shadow of the downtown skyscrapers and part of what we wanted to do, what we have done, is demonstrate the efficacy of urban agriculture.

So there we did both. We were in ground as well as in raised beds on the concrete paths. At first thought, we'd take that concrete out, but I thought about it. I said there's no reason we can't just use those footpaths from the houses and just grow with there. So we put raised beds on that and grew food.

Now these days when people, particularly newcomers, who are just starting to grow food in the urban areas, I highly recommend they use raised beds because they're going up instead of going down. Trying to dig down into this red clay which is tough to work with. So it can grow up, literally grow their food up on top of the ground instead of having to dig down. They have a better control of the weeds and of the soil and it works. It's efficient.

Chris : [00:07:00] Tell me a little bit more about how you're building those boxes and what you're putting into them.

Rashid: The boxes I have now are made with cedar. I expect those will last 10 or 12 years. Light wood, they only last three to five years. And we just reinforce the boxes on that concrete. I use two by eight boards on top so we've got practically 15 or 15 1/2 inches of space. That's how high they were.

Done the same thing on our new site that we're doing with the cedar and then we grew in ground where you just put the compost down and built soil. What is unique about our new site, Chris, we took 125 fruit trees that were five years old roughly on average, five years old. One at a time we dug them up, took them over to the new site and planted.

I moved 125 trees. I thought I'd lose 10% or 15%, but I only lost two trees. So that was a real blessing. And then we took all that dirt, I spent five and half years building that soil and we had truckloads of soil that we took over to our new location. I'd invested so much time in that dirt, I didn't want to lose it. It sounds incredulous.

My emphasis in our training, particularly in the early years was, compost, compost, compost. That's how you grow food. You got to build the soil. And one of my favorite sayings is, I don't grow food, I build soil and let God grow the food.



- Chris : I've had a few people on the show who have really emphasized that you want to pay attention to everything else and the vegetables are going to take care of themselves.
- Rashid: There you go, that's exactly right and that's my attitude. Over the years that we've been here, I have to say, we've been quite successful in convincing the community how important compost is. Now you've got citywide composting activities and round tables discussing how to scale up composting activities and you're getting restaurateurs and stores participating in this whole process. In that regard we've been pretty successful.
- Chris : Tell me a little bit about that compost production. Because I can't imagine that if you're doing that in the city, that's something that the neighbors get super excited about.
- Rashid: Well, that's everybody's first assumption. But if you're doing it right, it's not going to create any smell. That's not a problem. I found out recently that our compost is vegan. And now that's not the language I've ever used for our compost making, but we don't use any meat or any oil in the production of the compost.
- So at the very best, occasionally when we turn it, you'll get, I call it the smell of money, you get some smell, but it doesn't last very long and people don't get upset by it. There was only one time in 10 years that I've had anybody complain and that was a bad wind day and people had not properly prepared the compost piles and a couple neighbors did get upset. They mentioned it to us.
- But outside of that, I've had no problems in all these years.
- Chris : What are you using for your feed stock for the compost?
- Rashid: We pick up waste, Sweet Auburn Market is where we get a lot of our material. We get them from coffee shops, coffee grounds, we get brewer's yeast. From the Sweet Auburn Market we get greens primarily as a feed stock. Then we collect leaves from around the community during the leaf season. Every time a truck comes back to the farm, they'll bring some bags of leaves. So that paper will go into there as well as leaves that are in the bags.
- Then we also have a lot of wood chips. We got a lot of wood chips. Because remember we got trees. We've got lots of trees down here so we we've got a lot of wood chips that are just delivered to us. The truckers, the tree companies are very happy to see us and bring us their wood chips so they don't have to pay a tipping fee. They save money and we get the chips.
- Chris : Great. We've had a couple guests on the show who have talked about the importance of the ramial wood, those small wood chips like I can imagine a lot of the trimmings you guys are getting as being very biologically active, a good feed stock for compost.
- Rashid: Absolutely. So just make sure you get a mixture of the green and the brown, keep it wet, aerate it and you're good to good. There are a lot of ways to make compost. You can take material and just put it over in a corner and wait a year. Or you can be more active



with it. For a while we were putting plastic pipes, large 8-12 inch pipes with holes in it through our stack in order to aerate it. These days we just stir it. We use a Bobcat to turn those piles, that helps to speed up the decomposition and breaking it down into compost.

But I also get thousands of hours of volunteers. So over the years I would just have the volunteers turn it. You get 25-50 volunteers out there on any particular day, give them some shovels and say turn this over. We turn it frequently, but right now we do have a Bobcat that we're using to turn our stuff.

Chris : Do you have any idea of what kind of tonnage of compost or how many yards of compost you guys are making on an annual basis?

Rashid: Oh, yeah, the number has gone up. Several hundred tons. Several hundred tons of it, we make a lot, we use a lot. Then we've got compost for the community. We sell it, we get a good price for our compost because it's the best around. I like my compost. I call it black gold. It's just beautiful stuff and we use that and occasionally if I don't have enough, I will buy some. That's not too often.

I've got a man down the road that has five acres of compost and we've helped him get his business thriving over the years, we've introduced him to a whole lot of people. Compost, compost, compost. That's the secret to growing good quality natural organic food.

Chris : Now when you're doing the boxes on top of a concrete slab or on top of asphalt, are you growing the crops in straight compost or are you adding other stuff into that soil mix?

Rashid: Generally what I'll do, the first layer will be litter. I put some litter in there. Whether it's leaves, small clean up from around the site. Then I'll get some other kind of soil put in there and top it off with compost. So three to five layers of material that we'll put into the garden.

Chris : What kind of crops are you guys focused on? You grow for CSA, right?

Rashid: Oh, yeah. I think we've got 130 CSA members. Yeah, we grow whatever's in season. That's another way we're lucky. I can grow 52 weeks a year and now we have a hoop house that we put up, we've got a 72 foot hoop house that we have up there and a lot of growers in our CSA program they're providing hoop houses to farmers. But we've certainly been doing that here in the urban area.

So I can grow all year round and whatever is seasonable here we have in. So from May to August through now it's the cool season crops, root crops and greens. Our last frost date is April 10th, but with the hoop house we can get started earlier and last longer.

I remember the second year that I was here, we had such beautiful weather in March and I planted 240 tomato plants and then we had a hard freeze on Good Friday just before Easter and lost them all. So that was part of my learning process, be patient and don't get ahead of what Mother Earth has for us.



Do you want specific crops? I have spinach and chard and kale and collards, radishes, lettuce, many different kinds of lettuce that is out there. Come April we'll put our tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, squashes. Okra we can put in a little later because that really needs some heat.

We grow flowers for cutting. I love roses. Roses is the only unnatural, hybrid tea roses, are the unnatural thing that I have in the garden. People don't understand how those beautiful roses that you give to your girlfriends, your wives or your husbands throughout the year, Mother's Day, are actually highly unnatural. A true old rose most people would not recognize.

One of my careers was managing a rose garden, not too far from you, I was up in Minnesota and we had 30,000 rose bushes under glass out in Eden Prairie just outside of Minneapolis. I love roses, so we grow them.

I've got gladiolas and lilies and we do lots of sunflowers and all kind of cut flowers we have out there.

Chris : So you've got the CSA and now you're mentioning crops like flowers, where else are you marketing your produce?

Rashid: At farmer's markets. Years ago I used to sell to the top restaurants in town. I don't do that anymore. That was a good place to start as we learning the town and learning the market, but now most of my food goes directly into the stomachs of consumers who are food co-ops as well as our CSA and we do four farmer's markets each week and we sell our food there.

Chris : Tell me about, when you say food co-op, tell me about what that means? That conjures up a particular image in my mind, but it's not usually something that's being run by a farm.

Rashid: We're training and education so we have some VISTA volunteers to help us to organize the food co-ops. And one of the food co-ops, the neighborhood housing project where the average income for the people there is \$5,000. Hard to imagine in these times, but that's what it was.

So to get these people to sit down together and work to purchase the food and now they're running their own co-op and we did this in collaboration with the food bank. We provide the green food and the food bank actually has some green food too. They got fruit that they're able to give the folks. So they're getting there.

We provide nutrition classes, health classes as well as fiscal training. Help them to run their own business, run their own co-op and it's been quite successful. We've been doing that for four years now.

Chris : And that's a big part of your mission is getting good into communities where there isn't a lot of good food.



- Rashid: Yes, making it available, helping people to grow it themselves, creating food self-sufficiency. food sovereignty, yes, that's what we do. That's what I said, we grow food, we grow people and we grow community.
- The food co-op is part of the community. The training and the education is the different training programs we've had is growing the people. Many of the people who work for Truly Living Well came out of our training programs. And then of course we grow the food. That's the platform on which we do everything else.
- Chris : Now when you talk about your training programs, have you had folks come out of the Truly Living Well Center and move on to run their own farming operations?
- Rashid: They're involved in agriculture, absolutely, in one form or another. Some go to work for other non-profits. Several have started their own farms. You intern different places. Yes, sir, absolutely. I think we calculated about 80% of our training stay in the business.
- Chris : That's really great. That's a great rate.
- Rashid: Yeah, it is. I tell you the truth, I challenge that number, but that's what my people tell me it is. One of the things I tell folks all the time. There are two groups of people that tell lies, fishermen and farmers. Farmers sitting around in the feed store, how many bushels of yield they've got on their crops, they never tell the truth. But it's fun.
- It's just like a fisherman. Every time a fisherman tells a story about the size of the fish, the fish keeps getting bigger and bigger.
- Chris : Right.
- Rashid: That's why they call them fish stories.
- Chris : That's right. One of the things that we've seen be really popular up here, up north, with urban agriculture is these programs doing lots of high tunnels, lots of high end salad greens combining it with an aquaponics program.
- Rashid: We do have an aquaponics. I've got about 8,000 gallons.
- Chris : Okay.
- Rashid: Of fish tank.
- Chris : I guess I should ask you after you talked about fish stories, how big are the fish that you get out of there?
- Rashid: I'm more interested in what grows above then the fish. The fish is just providing the fertilizer for our plants. I'm not interested in hydroponics, where you're just putting chemicals into the water. What we're doing is really vermi-ponics cause we have worms in these clay ball based that we have and we build the biomass that is able to feed the



plant. For every harvest of fish that you get, you can get five or six harvest of greens above it.

The money being, from my experience down here, the money is made in the crops that you grow, not in the fish. Before we moved site we had to break down our fish tank and we had a fish fry. We had a lot of the people came in, a little fundraiser. But our focus really isn't on the fish, it's on the food.

Chris : I mean, I would imagine that growing in Georgia, you guys are organic farmers. You must have a lot disease and pest pressure with all the heat and humidity that you have there.

Rashid: Why do you think that would true?

Chris : Well, I'm thinking up here we see the disease pressure really starts to kick in when you get into July and August. When things get hot and humid in Wisconsin and the rest of the upper mid-west, that's kind of the impression I think it's like most of the time there in Atlanta.

Rashid: No, not at all. You figure we grow for abundance, number one. And I assume we're going to lose maybe 10% of my crop either to deer or rabbits. And I can't say we have a lot, I don't because the soil is strong. And the theory that I grow with if the soil is strong, the plants will be strong, if the plants are strong it's going to make quality food to feed the people.

So my emphasis is on the soil. I want to have soil that is as strong and as healthy, full life. The best way to know the quality of the soil is how many earthworms that you have in there. If you don't have any earthworms, your soil is dead. You want roly-polys and millipedes. You want to see that mycorrhizal fungi underneath your ground.

That's why I'm not interested in running tractors through the ground because you stirring up all that life in there like you're putting it into a blender. Everything we do, all the work we can do, can be do with a hoe, a rake and a shovel.

If I get some new ground someplace that I've never been before, I will run a tiller or a tractor through that. But after that all of our beds are semi-permanent. I don't want to disturb them too much. Now that having been said, what we do is, compost, compost, compost. That soil is so strong. You pick it up you can smell it. You can put your hand down up past your wrist because it's so open and porous. There's so much organic material in there. And you can see all the life that's running around in those beds. That's a good soil.

And the diseases are not going to come in there. Disease in the field ... you go to Africa, everybody's probably seen some of those adventure shows showing those big herds. The lions and the leopards and the cheetahs, they feed upon the old, the weak and the infirm. Young, old and infirm and that's how they keep the whole heard strong.

The same thing happens in the garden. You keep that soil strong, those plants are going



to be strong and they'll look out for each other. They have a way of communicating under that soil. I know this is getting kind of spooky in here, but they do. The plants are able to communicate with each other through the mycorrhizal network that exists in the soil. That's why the emphasis needs to be on the dirt. Why the emphasis is on the compost.

All of our soils, if you come in our garden and look, they're alive. You can see the life that's in it and we don't have a lot of disease pressure. Now I will grant you that other parts of the state and other forms of agriculture, particularly the big boys, the commercial agriculture, they do. And they're out there with all those chemicals, but they kill all the life that's in the soil, they kill it. With the fertilizers and the pesticides and the herbicides that kills all the life in the soil and that makes those plants that much more susceptible to the pressures that you're describing.

Chris : Is it just the compost that you're using for that or are you guys adding other fertilizers as well, or other soil amendments as well?

Rashid: Well, it depends on how describe soil amendments. I might put some, I definitely use some lime every couple years.

Chris : Okay.

Rashid: Occasionally, in the potting mix, I'll put some alfalfa meal in there. If I can find something that's some other kind of organic material, but not a lot, we primarily use compost. I don't use any other chemicals out there

Chris : Great.

Rashid: No chemical fertilizers.

Chris : I love that. I love the simplicity of that.

Rashid: Yeah, that's it, it is simple. I think that the industry has attempted to make it, has made it very complex by the introduction of all these hybridization and the GMOs and all the pesticides and chemical fertilizers. It added a complexity to it that is not necessary and that's my attitude. Keep it simple. We try to emulate nature as much as possible.

You go out here, we've got plenty of woods and I point out to people, "Just look out there in the woods, you've got all those beautiful trees, old growth trees." You don't see anybody out there doing soil tests, there's nobody putting fertilizer on the ground, putting other kind of chemicals. The trees grow, they drop the leaves, the leaves breakdown and feed the tree so you get that circle of life. Wheel of health that is very natural and that's what I want to emulate.

You go out in the woods and kick over some leaves and you see all that white stuff underneath the leaves, that's the mycorrhizae that you want, that's the breakdown. The soils in the wood, the humus that you're going to find there, that's what you want to grow in.



I tell my clients, people that we do installations for, look in your woods, grab some of that dirt and you can inoculate your soil in your garden with some of the humus that you're going to find out in the woods. Emulate nature.

Chris : So you mentioned clients that you're doing installations for. Is that a large part of Truly Living Well's work?

Rashid: Not at all. Not at all. I did a consultation today, we're going to do an installation for a lady. We did an installation at a library last week, week before. But over the years, not that much. When we first started, yeah, I was hustling anything I could do to earn a buck I would do. So I did put a lot of gardens in several people's front yards that stimulated the whole community, whole neighborhoods to get involved with this agriculture thing.

I'm an urban agriculture advocate. I've been very fortunate. I've been involved in just about so many different areas of agriculture. I'll tell you there's a lot of people who have a greater depth of knowledge in any particular area, but not as many as have had as broad an experience as I have. I'm lucky, I'm very lucky.

Chris : I'd like you to talk about that breadth of experience. Because that was something that really struck me when I was researching you, getting ready for the show. You've kind of been everywhere and done everything.

Rashid: Well, that's an interesting way of looking at it. I'm a city boy. I call myself a city born country man. I planted my first garden in 1969 and didn't know anything about it. I can remember somebody told me how good corn is when you pick it off the stock and put in the pot for a couple of minutes. I can remember the first harvest that I had was with sweet corn and not knowing that's not really an efficient crop for growing in the cities anyway. But boiled the water and ran in there.

But the joke was, one day I saw some corn silk worms in that stuff and my yard was just completely white. I don't know what I used to try to get rid of whatever that was that was attacking that garden, which was so far away from growing organically when I started. But I didn't have enough sense to know any better and no one to teach you on that. But that's where I began.

I then I went to school. I was looking for a practical skill, I'm a child of the 60s, we we're talking nation building in the black community. In order to call yourself a nation, you got to feed, clothe and shelter your people. I was trying to decide if I wanted to be a carpenter to build, a printer for communication. I had what I call my burning bush experience, to make a long story short, God told me learn everything about food from the seed to the table. I was interested in nutrition, health and nutrition.

I pursued that. I went to graduate school in planting soil science. My first job out of the university was doing what I'm doing now and this is back in the early 70s. I was working with children in the school. We started putting community gardens around, this is out in San Diego, San Diego county, and we built an urban farm. It was a pretty large farm in the middle of town that was taken over by the city itself for all the reasons they had.



I had a job, they called me an assistant county agent, assistant extension agent, they said to me that organic agriculture is not economically viable and will never work. A year later I came back to that place after I left there and we had one garden when I started and they had 60 community gardens around the county.

I left that, I came down south for the first time in 1975. I was responsible, I was working for the National Islam and I had 13,000 acres of land that I was responsible for. I had two farms in Alabama, one was 4,000 acres and the other was five. Then in Georgia we had a 4200 acre farm where I eventually lived. And on that farm we had chickens, sheep, a dairy, horses, beef cows. We grow cotton, corn, peanuts as well as vegetables there.

It was a tremendous learning experience. I was young and dumb, way over my head in terms of experience, but I learned so much. It was a grand opportunity that most people will never get. I lived underneath two acres of pecans and oak trees surrounding that. It was just an idyllic place to live. And because I was there, I never really had to teach my children about the birds and bees, because they'd just watch the animals and figure it out.

Chris : That's right.

Rashid: From there I went over to Louisiana and I worked for the Southern Cooperative Development, with Father McKnight. In the years I was there, I started off working with school co-ops, black food co-ops throughout the south, eight southern states. Helping them organize themselves through cooperatives. It was these farmers who would come in and grow the food. I helped them set up their books and gave them better ways to think about their business.

They had a farm, they were trying to build a training farm in St. Landry's Parish just up by Opelousas where Jim Bowie was from. And they had a man they brought him in, he was working nine to five trying to build a farm. And all your farm listeners will know that's absolutely impossible. So he got fired and I took over. We built a farm. We were growing cabbages and cucumbers, packing them up and selling them locally.

When I left there, that's when I came up north and, let me see, I worked in a rose garden. We had 30,000 rose bushes under glass up there in the Minneapolis area and while I was there I hooked up with Cargill. I did 12 years with Cargill. I was first working economic development, not economic, analysis.

Then I came back south to Georgia for my second time living in Georgia and I was up in Hall County, which is the chicken capitol of the world. In Gainesville, Georgia, downtown in their town square they've got two monuments. One is a cannon facing north because these folks down here in Georgia are still concerned about the war of northern aggression. So they've got the cannon facing north. They had a 30 foot marble obelisk with a bronze chicken sitting up on top.

I ran a soybean processing plant there for Cargill. We were crushing 1500 tons a day of soybeans. I was their merchandising manager. I bought the beans, sold the meal, sold



the oil, handled the trading in Chicago, Board of Trade, we did all of the hedging on that. That was a wonderful experience.

When I went to Cargill, I told them I wanted to go to Africa, but they wanted to find out how serious I was because I was 10 years older than my colleagues and took a large pay cut to come and work for them. I already had a whole houseful of children. From Gainesville I went to Singapore in Asia and I worked in all the non-communist nations in Asia. That was a three year experience and I did seed, poultry. My title was Regional Investment Manager.

[00:35:30] So I traveled to all these countries, everywhere from Japan to Philippines on the east to Pakistan on the west and everything in between. The longer I stayed in Singapore in those three years was two and a half weeks. I had two passports... I introduced feed formulation on PCs, this was back when people had five and half inch floppy disks. You know what those are?

Chris : Yeah, I remember five and a half inch-

Rashid: Ever see one of those?

Chris : Yes, I am that old. Not as old as you, but I am that old.

Rashid: Yeah, a whole lot of people have never seen those things. But I introduced it. They were using MS-DOS back then and the truth of the matter was I was just learning computers while at the same time trying to train people. We had five feed mills up there, no we had more than that. We had feed mills in Malaysia, in Indonesia, Thailand, Japan, Korea. So I was training the folks in all those areas and I also did a process in quality control operation manual for the whole region. That was Cargill Southeast Asia.

I always wanted to go to Africa, so I finally got to go and I wrote a book ostensibly on how to enter that market and I did and I got to go implement it. We built the first carrying charge market in Nigeria, because the farmers would use to sit on their trucks, sit at the feed mills and the flour mill waiting to sell it, but I started buying the grain up country, storing it and making deliveries in the future to the buyer. And that had never happened before.

We was also trading maize, sorghum, rubber, coco. We were the first people to break the monopoly there on sugar import. Lost my shirt, but since then folks other than Aliko Dangote are able to bring in sugar.

We had cotton gins. We had purchased the British Cotton Growing Association many years before. We had 13 cotton gins around the country so I was on the board of directors of that organization representing our interest in the company.

But I was there five years putting that business together, trained a lot of the young people, had a number of young people there working for us there. From there I came back to the states and spent another year over in St. Paul.



Then I came to Washington and that in the first Clinton Administration. I worked at the Department of Agriculture as a Deputy Administrator for Management. I was there when the name was changed from ASCS, Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service, we changed it to the Farm Service Agency. So I was responsible for both the Farm Service Agency and the Foreign Agriculture Service. I was responsible for contract, finance, budget, IT, facilities. I had an 18 billion dollar budget and about 2500 direct supports and we supported 35,000 farmers around the country.

We handled all the disaster payments and all the subsidy payments that went to the big people, Cargill, Con-Agra, Continental, ADM. They would get these hundreds of million dollars in checks every year was sent out to them. And that was under my responsibility as well as all the disaster payments and subsidies, conservation reserve programs, all that stuff.

A lot of that has changed now, but at that time all that was under my purview. I worked at the Commerce Department for awhile, international development with Ron Brown. I had the distinction of having worked for two African-American Cabinet Secretaries. Unfortunately, neither of them got to finish. Mike Espy got caught up in some stuff, he was eventually exonerated, but it wasn't pretty at the time. And then Ron Brown got killed over in Croatia.

[00:40:00] I left the government and was doing some work with some small businesses around Washington. Left and went out to California and got back involved with urban agriculture. Was there for a couple years. We had a number of projects and programs we did there. Then I went to Ghana in 2004 and spent a year and a half there. We went over to buy the Ghana Cotton Company. That deal did not work out. I was there for a year and a half.

I left there to come to Atlanta to do this work that I'm doing now. As I said, this is our 12th season here in Atlanta and I think we're making a positive impact in this community.

So that's a five minute rundown on almost 50 years of work.

Chris : So what's really interesting to me, when you talk about that 50 years of work, a good 30 plus years of that work was doing very conventional agricultural things. I mean, not just from the standpoint of working for conventional companies like Cargill or working in the government for the FSA, that's pretty conventionally oriented.

But also large scale corporate-style agriculture. What you're doing now kind of turns that on its head and I'm curious about how you got from there to here?

Rashid: [00:41:30] Well, I had to suspend judgments quite a bit because I wanted to learn. When I went to Cargill, I wanted to learn how food is moved around the world, commodities are moved. Cargill does that better than anybody else. When I ran that soybean processing plant up in Gainesville, again, there were certain judgments that I had to suspend.



Lot of folks don't know how soybean meal is made. You take the beans and you heat them up, you flake them to get the hulls off which is a product you can sell. Then you crush them. You run them through hexane. Hexane is the same fluid that is used at the dry cleaner to get oil out of your clothes. That's what they use to get the oil out of the soybeans. Then the soybean meal is dried. The oil you send over to deodorizer to get that smell, that hexane out of it and then you're ready to put in the tank cars and send it off.

[00:42:30] When you see how food is made on that level, it's not pretty. It's not pretty. So I did, I had to suspend some judgments. I saw things that were happening there that I didn't approve of. I mean, I think one of the reasons they got me out of that economic development back in 1980. I don't know if you recall when the U.S. had boycotted the Olympics?

Chris : I do remember that.

Rashid: Well, what happened in the big feed business, I mean the commodity business, those grains on the first business day in January of 1980 the whole slew of the agri business executives went to Washington because what Carter had said, "You cannot sell anything to Russia." So they told the government, "Well, that's the problem. Because we have all this grain to deliver against the contracts that we have with the Russians and we can't do it. So what are we supposed to do with this American grain?"

So the government said, "All right, I see your problem." The government bought the grain from the grain companies. That was sale number one. Follow this now. That was sale number one. Then they told the government, "Well, what are you all going to do with this grain now? We'll store it for you." So the government paid the same grain companies from whom they bought the grain to store it. They got paid twice.

Then they went down to South America, primarily South America, and shipped the grain against the contracts that they had with the Russians. So they got paid the third time. The next step was, the price of grain, of course, dropped because the storage was so high and the grain companies went to the government and said, "What you all going do with this? We'll tell you what we'll do. The price has dropped and we'll buy it back from you and let us worry about how to get rid of it."

So they bought it at a discount from the government and they were able to re-sell it. They got paid four times because of the boycott that Jimmy Carter had caused. And I'm sitting there looking at the wires, reading this stuff, and I saw that and raised questions. "What is this? How is this going on?" And I asked a couple questions too many. They didn't appreciate that too much. That's how those deals went down.

I saw a lot. I wanted to learn about this business. This is why I tell you a lot of people have a greater depth of experience than I do, but not many has had as broad. Before they'd let me go overseas, I spent, oh, I don't know, nine or six months in a special training program. I spent time in Kansas City at a feed mill. I was down in Florida looking at broilers. I was up in Arkansas, Fayetteville, Arkansas looking at Tyson's business as



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well as Cargill's feed business that they had up there. I got to travel all over the U.S. looking at the different enterprises that Cargill had and then they sent me overseas. That was part of the training.

So that was a unique program, but it prepared me for what I was going to see to a large degree and it was must more opportunity to be exposed and to learn. That has been much of my life has been this exposure, this learning, having a chance to see things that others may not get a chance to see. It's been a nice ride.

Chris : With that, Rashid, we're going to stop here, get a quick word from our sponsors and then we'll be right back with Rashid Nuri for Truly Living Well Center for Natural Urban Agriculture in Atlanta, Georgia.

The Farmer-to-Farmer podcast is sponsored by Farm Commons. I had a great attorney while I was farming, but in a town surrounded by a sea of corn and soybeans, he often didn't understand the ins and the outs of what we were up to on a legal front. Whether it was dealing with intern housing, in-kind wages, land leases for my market farm, putting my CSA on a strong legal footing.

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All right, we're back with Rashid Nuri from the Truly Living Well Center for Natural Urban Agriculture in Atlanta, Georgia.



Rashid, before we went on break, you were telling me about the history that you have in conventional agriculture and one of the things that you said is that, "some people have more depth of knowledge in particular areas of farming, but not many people have the breadth of experience that you do." What are some of the lessons that you learned in your experience with international and conventional agriculture that you brought and applied at Truly Living Well?

Rashid: That's a huge question. He who controls your food, controls you. That's a big lesson. Food self-sufficiency, food sovereignty is very important. The American agriculture, particularly since Earl Butz, has been based upon a Malthusian paradigm that there is not enough food to feed people when it's not true.

What happens is, wherever you see people starving, it's because of politics. You've got warlords who are controlling the food or the government is controlling food. And Arab Spring a few years ago was based upon food shortages in countries and it wasn't short because there was no food available, it was short because of the politics that surround it. To see how that is handled, the different forms and structures, lessons that I learned, of how the government is involved with agricultural production. The rules that they have changed.

Right now the big problem that we have is that the U.S. technology is being exported. Introduction of GMOs. People like Monsanto and Bear and all those big companies, Cargills, all of those folks are trying to impose an agriculture system like we have in the U.S. on the rest of the world. When the truth of the matter is the U.S. agricultural system is broken, it doesn't work.

California has no water. Yeah, when we work at farmers markets sometimes you'll hear somebody complain, "Why do I have to pay so much for this food?" They don't understand, our food costs just as the same as the food that you're going to get in the big chains. The difference is, all that food in the store is subsidized. Those folks out in California, which is the richest agricultural producing region in the history of the world, all of that food is subsidized. There is no water in California and it's taxpayers all over the country who are paying for the production of that food by subsidizing the water.

Bringing it down from Colorado, building all those canals that come over there. The bills that they've had over the last 75 years to support the import of water to California so they can grow that food. And that's the same kind of systems that you're going to see all over. The cotton growers, most of the commodity growers, if they had to buy their seed, pay for their land, pay for the equipment, buy the seed and the inputs that they need and then sell it at the market, they'd go broke. But they don't have to, because the government subsidizes the agriculture.

That's why the U.S. Department of Agriculture is so big. Every time you buy a gallon of gas, you're supporting a corn farmer. I hope I'm not stepping on the toes of your listeners, but these are the things that I have learned as I'm going.

Ethanol, gasoline is 10% ethanol. It's all corn. We are a corn-based society. Corn is in the



paper, corn is in the clothes, the starch that goes into the manufacture of clothes. So we subsidize agriculture, we always have. The Homestead Act of 1862 and the Land Grant Act of 1862, they were instituted by President Lincoln, was developed to support agriculture.

Homestead Act brought Europeans, that's how them folks got up there in Wisconsin and Iowa and Kansas and Minnesota and the Dakotas, they were all the Swedes and the Norwegians that they brought over. They got free land, they got all the land grants. They had subsidies, got cheap money to be able to buy that land.

Then the Land Grant Colleges were set up to support, to teach, to provide the extension services, the outreach activities. Teaching people how to grow food in all those places. That's how American agriculture was built. The problem we have on the local level, I mean, the urban level, is that folks would sometimes look at us and say, "Are you all self-sufficient?" I tell them, "No, why should we be?"

So within my work, if you want to make money there are a number of folk who have small farms and making decent livings. We're a demonstration of training innovation, so I need some help because all education and all agriculture is subsidized so we do have to get subsidies.

Understanding how that works. The relationship that the government has to the people and the production companies and the big commercial ag. I got to see that on so many different levels. That's five minutes' worth.

Chris : What you're talking about is what I might call a philosophical or an economic approach to thinking about and understanding agricultural systems. Were there things that you learned on the conventional and international side of things that you applied when it comes to actually growing the food?

Rashid: No, I just learned how the rest of it was done and decided that was not what I wanted to do. I don't use any hybrids in my production. None. Never mind GMOs. I mean, if you look and see the rise of disease that happens ... Henry Wallace was the Secretary of Agriculture under Franklin Roosevelt asked Norman Borlaug, sent him down to Mexico to start hybridizing wheat and corn. Then the rice over there in the Philippines.

What's happened now, is the human body there's been a rise of disease within our society. Then when they add the GMOs in '96, it just skyrocketed the kind of problems. Think about this now. Up there where you are, how many people do you know that are gluten free? They want to get food that's gluten free. Okay. To me that's patently absurd. Wheat has been around for tens of thousands of years. People have been eating wheat all that time. So how come in the last 10 years, all of a sudden you can't consume wheat? You have to get it gluten free. Which is mean you're getting paste, you're not getting real food.

Why is that? Because the wheat has all been hybridized. It all grows at the same level so they can get the machines out there and harvest it. And the human body has not evolved sufficiently to be able to metabolize that food. That is the reason you have all



these problems. People have been eating wheat since time began! Anyplace they've been eating bread and all of a sudden now you can't eat bread. You can't eat wheat. It makes no sense to me.

Chris : When you say you're not growing any hybrid vegetables, so everything you're doing is heirlooms and open pollinating crops?

Rashid: Absolutely, 100%. I had a variety of broccoli that I grew for a number of years that I didn't know it was hybrid. Beautiful stuff. Standard, uniform, made big head, lot of side shoots. I was very happy. Then I realized that it was not original seed, it was hybrids. I had to stop doing it because I don't want to poison people that way.

Chris : It's interesting, because on my farm we lean pretty heavily towards doing hybrid vegetables because we found, why I actually spent some time managing the gardens at Seed Savers Exchange and one of the things I always felt like was a lot of the heirloom crops, they were heirlooms for a reason. They weren't particularly great or they didn't do such a fantastic job of resisting disease or pests and didn't necessarily produce great crops.

And I think about a crop like broccoli where, I've never seen an open pollinated broccoli that produced a really consistent crop.

Rashid: [00:56:30] It's not consistent, it's not. That's why it was hybridized so you could have something that was consistent but it's antithetical to the human ... people can't eat, they're getting sick. Look at the rise of obesity. All our populations are on these diseases. High blood pressure, all the heart attacks that folks have. They can't eat the food that's being presented for them. It's not good for them.

Think about it this way, if you look out in nature you don't find that homogeneous look on anything, whether it's people or trees. Every tree is different. You can have a stand red oak trees in your yard, but not one of those trees is going to look exactly the same as the other.

You get a group of people and put them there. They may all be human beings, they can be all white, all black, but the human genome program show that 99 plus percent of people are the same. Some of the skin colors and features will change, but you don't get two people who look exactly like unless they're twins. Okay.

So there's no reason to expect or anticipate that everything in the garden is going to look exactly the same. But that's what you're going to get with your hybrids, they're all the same. You're right. You've got a uniformity that you can depend upon. Disease resistance, that comes from the soil. If your soil is healthy, your plants are going to be healthy. Guarantee it, guarantee it.

Chris : So I'm curious how you deal with that variability from a management perspective. As a farmer, that was one of the things that was really appealing to me about hybrid crop. I think, it's probably appealing to most farmers about a hybrid crop. You put it all in, the broccoli comes together at the same time, you pull it all out. You're dealing with a lot of



variability both on the production side, but then imagine in the appearance of the produce.

When you're marketing that, the people who you said weren't necessarily eating a lot of vegetables. Have you found that to be a challenge in your production and marketing?

Rashid: No, not at all. I don't have enough food. I can sell everything I got. That's not my issue. Selling food is not my issue. My issue is having enough food to sell. Humankind used to live within walking distance of where their food was produced. That doesn't exist anymore. We average 1500 miles in this country to have food travel to get to our plates.

So in that situation, the commercial growers they want something that's uniform, they want to be able to harvest it all at once, they take it out of the field. But what I find is that I'm selling food directly to people. I don't need a whole field full of broccoli to harvest at one time to go to dump. I want to be able to have it growing at different sizes. Even if I was growing it in my yard, I wouldn't want all that broccoli to come in at the same time exactly the same. What would I do with it? Okay.

Since we're using broccoli as an example, there are varieties of broccoli that will stay out in the field, you not only can eat the heads, you can eat the leaves. I sell the leaves on broccoli, broccoli greens. They're very similar to collards, particularly to collards, and some of the kale, and my people love them. They love them. We give it to them when it's tender and then we get the side shoots that come up. We're able to sell those side shoots and bring that to market also.

It's a little bit different than the commercial agriculture, but I don't spend a lot of time railing against commercial agriculture. But I do have a tremendous number of supporters of what we're doing and the people and the people that I've trained, that it's an agriculture that works in urban areas. That's my specialty, that's my beat, is the urban agriculture.

So you would never hear me berate you for growing the hybrids, I just share with you what I've learned and what I know. And if it can apply to what you're doing, then that's fine, if it doesn't, that's fine too. You're not going to get an argument out of me. We're going to find ways and find the things on which we can agree and we can build and bond from that point.

Chris : So tell me what you think are the keys to making an urban agriculture work?

Rashid: Compost, compost, compost.

Chris : [01:01:00] It's interesting to me that when you talk about that it's really about the soil. Not about the marketplace.

Rashid: All about the soil.

Chris : Not about the labor. It's all about the soil.



Rashid: All about the soil. You've got to do the work. This work is no joke. Part of what our training programs do is separate the wheat from the chaff. Those people who are going to stick with this business and who are not. People find out very quickly if they can handle this work. Because the work is no joke.

A real farmer is going to work from can't see to can't see and still not come home. I'm 69 years old and I'm still putting in 14-15 hours a day. I'm getting tired, but I'm putting it in, that's necessary to run this organization. I'm spending this time with you and I still have to do all my paperwork.

I probably got a hundred emails that I've gone through plus the ones I already did. We're closing out last month's books. I've got to through the P&L and check it and make sure all of those numbers are correct. I spend much of my time, when I retire, which will be soon, I asked them to get me one of those big fire chief battalion hats with the metal and the long bib that goes off the back. Because I spend so much of my time putting out fires every day.

I had a friend of mine, I'm complaining about having to put out fires and he said, "Well, you're doing a pretty good job, Rashid." I said, "What are you talking about?" He said, "Man, the house hasn't burned down. So you must be doing it okay."

Chris : Right.

Rashid: I said, "Yeah, you're right."

Chris : So, Rashid, the training program is a really important part of Truly Living Well, can you tell me more about how that works?

Rashid: Well, in a lot of ways we are plug and play. Whatever organization we're talking to, if you have a need we can help address it. We may want to talk about some of the techniques that I employ out in the field. But the training program, the longest one, they spend a whole season with us, six months. Then we send them on their way.

So they will have a chance to plant, cultivate, maintain, irrigate, harvest, make compost, do all the activities. Process the food before it goes to market. They have a chance to experience everything that takes place on the farm.

I had one young man a few years ago who quit in the middle of it. He said, "I'm not learning anything. We do the same thing every single day and I'm not ... we're just out here pulling weeds. I'm not learning." Which is absurd for a farmer, because you know that everyday you're in the field, you're going to see something new, you're going to learn something new. You get to watch those plants as they rise up out of the ground and come to fruition.

Make food, if it's a vegetable or an ear if it's corn, soybeans. You get to see the processes and experience it. One of the huge lessons that one gets from agriculture is patience. Things are not going to happen any faster than they happen, okay. Given a



druther, I'd like to put a seed in today and be able to harvest it next week. But that's not the way it works. You're going to have to learn patience.

And that's one of the virtues and values that you get from the garden. There's so many. Things take time, they don't happen overnight. There's a process involved. So that young man who's saying he didn't learn anything, he didn't submit himself to the work. He's trying to push it faster than it's going to go and he got bored with it so he had to go. No problem, son. If this is not the work for you, then you should go.

But the focus we have out there is that doing it every day, know it takes time and it's only going to happen in its own time and it's a tremendous lesson.

Chris : So are most of the people that you're training in your farmer training program, are those folks that coming from the neighborhoods that you're working in?

Rashid: Oh, yeah, for the most part yes, sir. But, no, it depends on what the training program is. They come from a lot of them places. What I was responding to is this new farm that we built over on the westside of Atlanta, all the work of construction, building those beds, filling up those beds was done by people who live in the neighborhood, within two or three blocks of where we built the farm.

What that has done has created a relationship between us and them at the farm and they welcome us to the community. I got on video tapes people saying how much we have changed their lives. How much love we've brought into the community through our work. The connection that we have in the community. The site, we call it the Colleetown Farm. I got an elementary school literally across the street. Those children come over as part of their STEM, STEAM it's now called, Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics.

Chris : Yeah.

Rashid: The school across the street from us is the first STEM certified school in the Atlanta public school system and they give us credit for helping them get that certification. We just put 65 fruit trees on the school grounds while we're there. We've got a boy's club, a Y, Atlanta Instructional Center, just up the street, senior citizens housing, the AUC, the Atlanta University Complex Center where it's Clark, Morehouse, Morehouse Medicine, Spelman and the National Theological Center are all three or four blocks away from our site.

So we're getting those college students that are involved in our work. The Beltline is a corridor that's been built around the city and we're just a few blocks from there. I got a church up the street. All of these constituencies are right there in that neighborhood, which is called the Cross Roads, so we're able to reach out to all of those folks to get them involved with our work.

So we build community, that's the third leg, food, people and community is what we do through our work. And I have to admit these days, one of my cardinal rules of my life is never to ask anybody to do anything that I have not done or would not do. That means



I've got experience in this, I can now guide and direct people and I tell them, "I'm flying at 30,000 feet. I need people at 5,000 feet and I need people that are right there on the ground doing the work."

As we built our organization, unfortunately I'm not out in the garden pushing wheelbarrows anymore. I'm too old to do that anyway.

Chris : I always-

Rashid: I don't want to do it anymore.

Chris : I was always think that one of the things that's really interesting as a farm goes through the kind of growth that you're describing is, how you delegate those responsibilities downwards and how you get other people to take on those responsibilities and still make sure they're being done the way they need to be done to get the results that you want to get.

How have you gone about delegating that management work downward as you've moved into more of an executive role in the organization? And now you're talking about moving towards retirement.

Rashid: Yeah. I always wondered what does that mean to be retired? Somebody told me, "Retirement is when you can get up in the morning and do whatever you want to do." I realized I've been retired most of my life. I'm very fortunate. I've enjoyed all the stuff that I've done.

But that succession is a really important thing. It's a huge question and I've been addressing that with my board of directors, addressing it with the funders, foundations that I have worked with. I got several people down at the senior most level, I brought in a brother from North Carolina who is now the farm's manager. He and I are on the same page as far as growing techniques.

I will admit, things are not quite at the level I would like or as it was when I was actually out there in the fields doing all the work. It's changed because my hands are not directly on it. But we continue to grow. At one point I had a man who was managing the farm, I had to beg him to manage it. That wasn't his expertise. I had to beg him to do that. What his skill is is teaching. So he runs our training program. He's now the training director and he's much happier because he doesn't have me riding his back every day, what about this and what about that? He's doing what it is that he knows how to do well, which is teach, and he's going both out and in, outside the organization and inside the organization, he's able to do that work.

On the adman side I've got a woman who handles our grant making. She has the title of CAO, chief administrative officer, does all our HR and compliance work, she handles all that and supervises the education department. We have an education director, that's what she does, she directs all of our education programs. I got three or four people that are working in that area.



The woman who runs our camp, God bless her, she's a wonderful woman. Been my friend for many, many years. She's not a manager, she's not an administrator, but she's absolutely brilliant when it comes to working with the children.

Number one, people will tell you who they are and you have to listen. So someone says I can't do that or I'm not comfortable doing that, you need to listen to that and don't try to put a round peg in a square hole, because it's just not going to fit. And you have to juggle until you find the right fit then the key is to get out of the way and let them run. Let them do what they know how to do.

There comes a time, a lot of frustration, and finding somebody who will be the successor is a tough one. It's something I'm wrestling with right now.

Chris : Great. Now, Rashid, we're going to turn to our lightning round. First we're going to get a quick word from a sponsor and then we'll be right back.

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All right, Rashid, here's the lightening round. So what's your favorite tool on the farm?

Rashid: I like a diamond hoe. It's the one that's shaped like a triangle so you can turn on its side and scrape the top if you want to get weeds out and you can also dig trenches with it.

Chris : Do you use one of those, I've seen those in a couple of different sizes. I've seen some of those that are made out of old sickle blades that are maybe two inches by two inches and I've seen some that are quite a bit larger than that. If you had to pick one, which would you prefer?

Rashid: Oh, let me see, about six inches.

Chris : Okay.

Rashid: Six inches.

Chris : What's your favorite crop to grow?



- Rashid: Greens.
- Chris : Now I know that greens down south means something different than it necessarily does up north. When we say greens, we're typically talking salad mix. When you say greens, what in particular are you looking at?
- Rashid: Collards, kale, mustard, chard, spinach. The green crops. That's what I like to eat. And lettuce. It's interesting, a lot of the summer crops, I'm not particularly fond of peppers and eggplant and tomatoes. I'll eat our tomatoes, again, those [inaudible] and those Cherokee reds and some of those ugly tomatoes that just taste very wonderful. But in general, I'm not fond of tomatoes because they all taste like cardboard. They all taste the same, they don't have a lot of flavor to them.
- But I like greens. I like to eat them, I like to grow them.
- Chris : All right. What are you going not be doing differently on the farm this year?
- Rashid: Less of the management. Turning it over to Maurice. Maurice came last May. He helped us make that transition from the old farm to the new and now he's in charge. We check in with each other. I make sure my job now is to provide the resources, so if they need something I've got make sure I've got the money to pay for it. That's really what my job is and that's what's really different from the past where I was more hands-on.
- Chris : Now you mentioned that you're working 14-15 hours days now, can't see to can't see. What was the last purely recreational activity that you did?
- Rashid: I watch movies, I read books, I listen to music. Now you can stream just about any movie that you want. My real enthusiasm in life is music and books. I've got books in every room of my house. So I read and I listen to music.
- Chris : If there was one book about farming that you'd want everybody listening to the show to read, what would it be?
- Rashid: The Soil and Health by Sir Albert Howard.
- Chris : Awesome.
- Rashid: He wrote one book back in the 40s called Agriculture Testament, that was back in the 40s, then about the time Norman Borlaug got his Nobel Peace prize he published the Soil and Health. Where he made all the things that I'm telling you about the soil, that was my beginning of my knowledge of that. Sir Albert Howard, Soil and Health.
- Chris : And finally, Rashid, if you could go back in time and tell your beginning farmer self one thing, what would it be?
- Rashid: This work you've chosen to do is no joke. It's no joke. I'm at a age now, Chris, where I give myself permission to look back and acknowledge the successes, acknowledge what



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I've accomplished over the years. The other side, I had no idea when I was young man that your body could wear out like a machine. And would I have done anything different had I understood that? Probably not. I've chosen a path and I'm stuck with it.

What I tell my young self, I think I told myself then, the secret to success is getting up every day and sticking to it and doing it. That's what I've done. I probably would have been a little less judgmental. When I was younger, I would tell people don't do what you're doing. I don't do that anymore. If you ask me what I'm doing, I will tell you what I'm doing, I'll tell you why I'm doing it. You're not going to see me on the street corner protesting Monsanto. I'm not going to do that.

What I am going to do is demonstrate how I can grow good and not have to pest pressures and anybody who's listening to me and comes and sees what we do, they'll learn Monsanto will take care of their own problems. I want go grow people and I can do that best by demonstration, doing the work.

Chris : Rashid, thank you so much for being my guest on the Farmer-to-Farmer podcast today.

Rashid: It's been a great pleasure, Mr. Blanchard, and anything I can do to help you, please do not hesitate to call.

Chris : All right, so wrapping things up here. I'll say again this is episode 111 of the Farmer-to-Farmer podcast and you can find the notes for the show at farmertofarmerpodcast.com by looking on the episode page or just searching for NURI. That's N-U-R-I.

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[01:19:00] Finally, please let me know who you'd like to hear from on the show through the suggestions form at farmertofarmerpodcast.com. I'll do my best to get them on the show.

Thank you for listening, be safe out there and keep the tractor running.