What’s REALLY In Your Meat? The Truth About Regenerative Farming for Athletes Transcript

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Introduction to Regenerative Farming

I'm Dr. Megan Jimenez. I am an orthopedic surgeon and jujitsu athlete. And today I have joined by my good friend Adam Mason, who I met through another podcast by Dr Will Cole, and he was talking about his regenerative farming.

Adam and his wife and three kids opened up this farm back in 2020 during the pandemic. He's here to talk to us about regenerate farming, how it's different than industrial farming and how I can benefit anybody and particularly athletes because that's what we focus on.

and my patients as an orthopedic surgeon. He went to UCAL poly for a plant science degree, which is super cool, very different. I don't think I've heard of that one before.

But thanks for for having me here on your farm. Yeah, thanks. For coming and checking it out. So let's start with industrial versus regenerative farming, Which is what you do here and kind of what we know in the US and probably most other countries.

You know, I'm actually not too sure about that, what they're doing in other countries. But I know in the US, this is the main way that we farm for the past 70 to 80 years and kind of talk about the difference for us.

Yeah, well, so the different of what, it's visible if you're watching the video. Typically, the life of most animals, and I can kind highlight two different ones.

I mean, we're out in a field that grow our chickens for meat and then our cows play a crucial part of that. Typically the life of a chicken is in a very large warehouse.

You know, there's up to 10,000 to 100,00 birds. They're walking around their own feces. they've never seen this, the sunlight, you know the light of day or there is no fresh air.

Very high stress, toxic environment for those animals. Sounds like humans, right? Right. Because people that are in their office all day, they don't get sunlight.

Yeah, well, and you look at the reason why, it's based on efficiency, right?

Industrial Farming vs. Pasture-Raised Animals

It's like, oh, everyone meets me at my building and we could cram as many people in there. Yeah. And then, yeah, artificial light, air coming in through ducting and fill this whatever.

That's a really good comparison. But yeah, the diet of that, like for the chickens, it consists of 100% grain. So you are very limited by what's going into that meat.

You look at here, I mean, this is what the chicken's would be eating. I can look around, there's all these different plant species around here. Grass clover and a multiple different other plant specie.

And when the chikens are consuming that taste, texture, and health components spike. You will not see anything in the grocery store that compares to stuff that we produce.

That's solely based on that diet that they consist of. They're grazing right next to us. This is their diet, this is all they

will get. So we don't feed any grain.

The typical, I'll paint the picture of the cow, you will see in the grocery store grass-fed, right? You think, oh, yeah, it's like what Heal Farms is doing, that's not the case.

All cows in their life have been fed grass. And so the USDA allows any producer to put that on. They're labeling as grass fed. A cow typically will start their life out on the range.

You see these large 10,000 acre ranches that are just breeding cattle. And then they'll sell all their calves off to a feedlot. So they pay a lower amount per pound.

Then these cows just go ship out to the various feedlots we had throughout the country. I visited them before and it's repulsive. In California, you go up the I-5 miles before you get to there, you know you're close because it is overwhelming the stench.

And you'll see, hundreds of thousands of animals, their ankle high up and knee high in their own feces manure and urine, and their diet consists of pretty much any plant byproduct anywhere from I've seen almond holes, cottonseed, you got soybean meal, I seen anything like wasted bread, anything that goes and gets mixed in a ration of some hay.

and corn typically genetically modified organisms with the corn and soy and so then those animals are fattened using that that uh the diet and they'll they typically they will coat it down in some like molasses or sugar so it's palatable to the animals because they normally want to eat that and and then they take them to slaughter.

Two weeks after you have a cow that moves from this diet, 100% grass and pasture, two weeks they are fed that corn grain fed diet their fatty acid profile completely changes.

to where you have high CLAs, high omega-3s that all reverses. And that's where, you know, we're talking about like the studies you see. Oh, red meat's bad.

It leads to heart disease. That's typically because you're testing the meat that is fed that garbage. Yeah, and I have an article from University of Arkansas that says they did a study looking at if chicken manure was a good source of protein for cows.

And they found out, yeah, it's an excellent source for protein. What do we do with all these chickens that are in these houses? Well, they scrape it out, and they ship it to a feedlot, They spray down molasses, And they're feeding cows chicken crap.

It's disgusting. A cow's never gonna eat that in the wild. Cow is an herbivore. They're created to eat grass. Man, you look at that, You don't know what you're buying at the grocery store.

Before I knew a lot of this, yeah, Why? That seems like crap, like literally, you know? But so that, yeah, that's kind of the basic of what we do. You know, we are centered after looking at nature.

We see ourselves as a part of nature, We manage everything within nature you, know. we're not completely driven of like, Yeah, got to have productivity with the cows.

Is there a good healthy deer population?

Soil Health, Carbon Sequestration, and Ecosystem Cycling

What do our rabbits look like? You know, people say, well, the deer are eating their forage. And it's like, that's great. I got deer that are out in the forest, they're eating a whole different nutrient profile.

They're coming in, They are pooping into this land here, onto the pasture. This is taking a couple of bites of the

clover and grass, but they are leaving behind a totally different nutrients that this grass and the clovers aren't uptaken.

You that is trapped in woods. So they mining that area over there and depositing in here. We have a total different profile and so we want the deer here and it's funny in the winter where we're at all the Deer from everywhere we counted up to like 44 deer at once in this field and during the Winter because it is the only thing that stays green and the reason why it stays Green and you see our surrounding neighbors that they're not green.

is because of the nutrients that they have in here. It is way more nutritious because we're putting in chicken manure and cow manure. We're cycling all those things in.

So the grass stays greener longer in this field because that management. So it's like a fertilizer. Absolutely. Yeah. And the plants need, that's one thing beautiful, a plant needs to be clipped or else it will die.

The plant need the cow as much as a cow needs a plan. Like you have this right here. This is the end of this plant's life. It's saying, hey, I'm producing babies.

I've done my job. I've lived. And so if you cut this, you're keeping the plant in a vegetative state. As you have roots, you're sequestering carbon. So you are pulling carbon from the atmosphere and storing it in here.

This ground doesn't ever get opened up. No tillage or anything like that. And what you see is all that, like this is earthworm poop, right? So it's taking that…

Yeah, we're sitting right on it. I just noticed that But yeah, it's soil. Earthworm will take the cow manure, they'll take that down, eat the roots, and they actually are building soil, so that's the only way, you know, the thing with the climate change, is the ONLY way to sequester carbon.

Yeah, you can burn fossil fuels like Bill Gates wants to do and take these machines that pull carbon out. No, that's ridiculous. We have a machine right here.

It's a solar-powered machine. it's called grass. Um, it is the best way to sequester carbon, sucking carbon from the atmosphere and storing it completely in the roots where it stays there until it has opened up.

And in our fields, we don't open it up, so we have this sink. of carbon that's just trapping and storing there. So that is the idea of regenerative farming is that we are regenerating the soil, we're depositing and building soil profile, but yeah, it's an encompassing management style that use.

That's awesome. Everything you need is right here. You don't need to bring things in and we just keep populating and self-populating. Absolutely. Yeah, so I mean you brought up the these new infrastructures that are trying to make meat genetically made and you know I've had people that Are like listen if we can do that isn't that great?

It's saving animals You know we and we get the same nutrients and so i've have discussions with people on that but what's your take on it? Yeah, so anytime somebody says cows are killing the earth, right?

Oh, the methane. Well, we're talking about those feedlots, which, yeah, I'm on their side. Yeah. We shouldn't be having those. It is producing a dead zone and waste of methane, but the number one.

Critique of Fake Meat and Plant Agriculture

I don't know why this isn't talked about. The number When they say that agriculture is the big polluter of greenhouse gases, right? It's emitter of greenhouses gases.

The number one culprit is rice. Rice, when it's grown, what you do is you take your field and you build these giant dikes around the field that can store water.

When you that, they fill up this area and it kills everything. Well, then that soil goes anaerobic. And whenever you have anaerobe, you emit methane. So methane is being puked out of the soil.

And so rice is your number one culprit for methane emissions. Methane is way more harmful to the atmosphere than carbon. Carbon's been here, all the gases have been, but carbon can be pulled out a lot easier and is not as damaging to ozone layer.

So this idea of plant-based, you start looking at it and plant, plant based agriculture to do on large scale like we do is, it is really destructive. Remember I said, right, the grass, when it stays in this state and it's not tilled up, You are storing that carbon.

So all areas in conventional plant agriculture, they're tilled up. And so every year, boom, you had the stored carbon and now you're emitting it right back into the atmosphere.

So you are constantly putting that out. It breaks the water cycle. There's many things that you can… like take that that path through but um yeah the the fake meats it is very destructive i mean you take a chunk of beef right what's your ingredients there's only one you know you burgers or whatever it's a novel you got to sit down and you need to have somebody help you with pronunciation because half the things are you know you can't pronounce it and then you think about all of the fossil fuels that went into making that right because like You had to have the tractors to till the land.

You have to harvest it. Take that to a grain mill. Convert that into something. Then you have then synthetically add and change the structures of these plants to mimic the texture of meat.

And all the while, that's burning tons of fossil fuels. We're taking a cow that burps a little bit. But you're taken that and if you are managing it the way we do, you're actually pulling carbon from the atmosphere and putting it in the ground.

You're on a negative. Well, what about people that they think they're saving animals, right? And I respect it. I have a lot of friends that say, you know, we just don't want to kill the animals.

And how you do it here is much more humane. Absolutely. They have a good life, they eat, graze, you're friendly with them, treat them like family, and then it's a cycle of life.

Everything has to die. We're eating it and we're helping humans. So what about people that say, we don't need to kill any more animals, maybe this created meat from carbon and however people want to make it is going to be the answer?

Right. And I love that question. That's such a good question because literally last week, a customer of mine called, she was a vegan for like 10 years.

She said, man, tried the chicken. It's phenomenal. We got one of your beef packages. I'm still kind of struggling to eat that. How can you eat something that is so cute and was living?

I said I appreciate it. You know, I understand how you're sentiment towards that, And I think it's because, for some reason, the Western mentality is afraid of death.

There's this negative connotation that's wrapped up in death, which I don't think is should be. If you look at nature, death is inevitable for all of us, For all life it is inevitably, and it creates a cycle.

So in order for there to be life, you have to have death You look at many cultures, like Native American, they understood that cycle. And so for some reason, we have this fear of coming and encountering death.

I think it's a beautiful thing. There's like a spiritual aspect too. It's you have to have death for there to be life. I don't tend to humanize the animals that we process and, you know, take their life.

Animal Welfare, Death, and Ethical Food Choices

I see it as this huge respect, right? Like this animal is living its life and I'm providing it, guaranteed, the best life that it could have. If this cow is in nature, it will either die in the jaws of a wolf or of starvation or injury and a very terrible death.

So those three things are typically long and painful deaths. Our cows, they are humanely killed and they're living the best life that they possibly are laying down.

Taking a nap. Yeah, so you look at that, right? And so with all of our animals, we give them the best life that they could possibly have and keep them for predation.

And yeah, We do take that. But the beauty of that every time our animal go in for processing, I thank them. For their lives. It is something that I give these animals the respect that They deserve.

Their life is going to nourish myself and the families that consume our meat. And I think it's this beautiful cycle. I'm not afraid of that. When you go, when you look now at the plant side of things, That's when you actually see more death.

There are 25 times more sentient beings die from a plant diet than you do if you're eating one cow a year. You know, if we kill one cal, that's enough meat for our family for the year, If we were to eat a vegan diet, I'm killing 25x more beings.

And it brings up a question that I would ask somebody else. It's like, well, why do you somehow give more value to the cow than do to a mouse? Okay. Oh, well, that's a mouse, right?

Okay, what about the birds? What about? The rabbits? what? About the snakes? And what About all the insect life that you're killing as well? That's because when you do the mono crops, you have to take everything out of the soil.

Yes. All the animals come out. You get picked off. They lose their habitat. And I know this by personal experience. When you run through tillage, of a field, you look behind you and there are, that's why the birds, the bird of prey come, because there's these, I mean they're chopped up animals, they get, their collateral from there.

And you want that one crop to grow, and, there is this detachment of like, well I'm eating this noodle, this just came from this wheat head that was harvested, but you don't understand of all the death in there, when thebirds are nesting, thats when you come and you harvest.

So all these birds, their babies, if they don't get out and flee the nest, that combine's coming through, and it's going straight through the combine.

Personally, I've had this happen. So it like, there's death attached to whatever you're gonna eat. It's unavoidable. You will never get away, even if you were doing your garden in your own house.

If you stick your shovel in to till the ground, you are chopping earthworms in half. And so- It's so fascinating because I never had a good argument. I was like, I don't know, meat's just great, right?

It has such good nutrients. But you're killing so much. And to have those monocrops, not only are you killing everything, you have to spray chemicals.

You have a ton of stuff. Yes. To keep one crop growing. Absolutely. And that's the hazmat suits and the pictures going through spring. Yeah, and even people say, oh, no, I buy organic.

I had one lady. She goes, uh, she's like, Oh no. We buy it organic and she is vegan. Ooh, lady, I've been in this. You kind of have to gracefully say it, but it's like, you're wrong.

I started organic farms in fields and stuff, and you still have the spray. you are still doing pest management. If there's something lush, something wants to eat it.

And typically insects are the first in there. So yeah, you are still spraying organic derived chemicals and sometimes those do a lot more harm to the soil life than some of these others.

And that has to do, that's a a with marketing, right? So when we go into the grocery stores. Yeah. My family knows that I am a stickler with my food and what goes into my body.

And I just got this way over the past couple of years with gut issues and recognizing how important it is to not just go to the grocery store and take what's on a label, right?

I think we have a little bit of trouble regulating what is on labels. So organic doesn't necessarily, you know, my family goes, hey, Megan, this is organic.

Don't even worry about it. You can eat this. Right. I used to be like, OK, it's organic, great. Now it' s like well, what does that mean? Right. I don't know.

Yeah.

Organic Labels, Transparency, and Farm Integrity

And I think last year, Secretary of Ag, they're cracking down because there was something like, I was in the tens of billions of dollars of product being sold as organic and it was actually not.

It was like 30 something billion dollars and I might be off, it could be more. But it was that much that were marketed as organic or conventionally grown.

And so that boils down to you have to know your farmer. That's why I tell my customers, I always say, like, you need to what your farm looks like and talk to them, ask them.

Some people, they don't know the questions to ask. So that's what I feel like I tend to be like an ambassador, a middleman for my customer is because You look at the farms and they're profit driven.

They're driven after one thing. We have bottom dollar percentage. There not even looking at animals. Looking at spreadsheets and saying, okay, we need to do this, making decisions based off that.

Whereas we are integrity driven, I do not, We do have any synthetics, no antibiotics, No GMOs, hormones, vaccines. Even organic, you can put vaccines in there.

I was just reading the exception laws that in certified organic If you cannot source an approved vaccine through whatever means that you get it, you can use GMO vaccines.

And these are genetically modified organisms that they've used and then converted into a vaccine. Man, so you you think oh, yeah, well, I'm buying or get all they can't source it.

So boom, they shoot them up with GMOs, you know, and like what what is that? That's that's crazy to me. You start doing genetically modified vaccines.

And the goal isn't to like demonize the industry. That wasn't my it's not my intention at all. It was created for a purpose, right? From my understanding, 70 to 80 years ago, there were wars happening and people were starving.

And so it was well-intentioned, right? And now it's just kind of gone overboard. And I mean, what do you think the answer is to having more people farm this way?

You know, the price is more expensive. So I have a lot of people that come to me and they're like, I can't afford that meat that you're getting from the farms.

But how do we, you know is it government helping with subsidies? What do think is the answers to have more of the industry go to this type of farming and still being able to provide enough food for our food population?

I think actually government subsidies is the reason why we're probably in this. When you start looking at subsidies, at the time, yeah, it was, hey, let's pay farmers a guaranteed wage.

That way we ensure we have enough grain in our silos. If we had a famine again, like the 20s, the Great Depression, whatever, then we can feed everyone.

Subsidies have gone way back. I Think Abraham Lincoln was one of the first to kind of implement that. But subsidies now, have created so much in excess that you look at the Monsantos and all these things, they know their product is going to be sold or is gonna be purchased from them because farmers guaranteed a wage.

And so it's not a true free market. A true-free market would eliminate, I think, a lot of that. But going back to the subsidies, you have so much excess now that they're like, well, what do we do with it?

Oh, I don't know, let's feed it to cows. Oh okay, wow, they got really fat because it's dirt cheap. because the taxpayer money is going, you know, and attached to that, which you don't see that you see, that cheap burger.

Well, your tax money paid for that. Your tax, money, paid, for McDonald's, if that's even me. I mean, yeah. And the cheap meat that your finding. So that where that price tag, when you look at our prices, That's typically the price of what you would find.

It would probably balance out a lot more if there were other smaller farmers. But that is the true cost of of meat. And so you see a subsidized cost in the grocery store, and that's for that reason.

Then they take it, it's like, okay, well, we still have excess. What do we do? I don't know. Let's synthetically break it down and turn it into high fructose corn syrup.

Oh my gosh, It's a preservative and it sweetens it and its addictive. All this is perfect, right? We can put a bread on the shelf. It'll last for months and then the people get addicted to it.

You start down these other cycles. Well, I think the way that we also help it is things like this, videos, just sharing information and supporting the local farmers to try and help you guys do what you do.

I know anybody that can afford it and can, you know, sometimes, okay, You don't go out to dinner that Saturday night, but you can buy your meat for a week.

So little things that are, people that smoke cigarettes. And I'm such a huge fan of getting rid of the cigarettes, of course.

Subsidies, Food Pricing, and the True Cost of Meat

It's like, well, stop that smoking. You might be able to get some good meat. Yeah, you're spending six hundred dollars a month on cigarettes or whatever it is.

They're expensive. And you know, the meat is just such good quality. Oh, absolutely. So the last kind of thing I want to talk to you about was athletes.

Right. How can athletes benefit? And most athletes, I didn't until about two years ago. I don't even know that this was a thing. Going to a farm and getting your meat from a friend who, the chickens, of the cows.

I was going to the grocery store and like, all right, yeah, I'll just take some meat and it'll really fuel me for my exercise tomorrow. Now I try to go to a restaurant on a pinch, you know, on the pinch if I have to get meat, and I feel a little heavier.

You know I can't go work out after, You can eat a bit of steak and maybe an hour later go workout from a good source. It's not, i don't feel that full feeling.

Right. So what do you think athletes need to know because You know, the truth is, we go to the grocery store, and we don't know any better. So how do we educate athletes?

And what do you think the benefit is of eating meat from a good source for an athlete? To me, I think of it as like this. An athlete is like a Ferrari.

You know, it's like you have to have a perfectly clean engine. You want that thing firing, everything greased up, all that. And where are you getting the fuel, you know?

The fuel and your grease, right? Well, that all comes from food. If we relate that to humans, You might have higher inflammation that's coming in there, which is hindering your body, getting joint issues and stuff like that, and plus your nutrient profile completely changes.

Like I said, that chicken in the conventional groin does not have the nutrient of an orchard grass, of red clover. So those micronutrients are going into your body and I would think would probably impede an athlete from getting to the peak of where they want to.

You see a lot of athletes, they'll just consume whatever food and And they can do it, they do well, right? Because they're like, oh yeah, I just eat everything because I burn it up.

But I try to tell, like my godson is a cross-country runner and he's in college and and, he just, He's like oh I love ramen noodles. And I'm like look, look I'll get you some good meat and just cook and eat this good quality and let's see what happens to your running, let see happens your sleep.

Even my patients, you know, They come in and they they are like Look I have a good diet but my knees hurt and all this because, cause I talk a lot about diet.

Athletes, Recovery, and Nutrient-Dense Meat

and inflammation, and diet's a part of it, right? There's so many things that go into it. I'm like, well, where are you getting your meat from? Like, Piggly Wiggly, you know?

And it's like… I don't think it was Pilly Wiggly up here. But in the South, that's when I first… When I moved from Jersey to the south, I was like what is Pigly Wigley?

I went in there and I said, oh man. And so they're like I just get meat. Like I eat a lot of chicken, a eat lot this, eat lots of vegetables. Where are getting it from and it just not…

We're not really informed on that. On the importance of… the quality of our food. Yeah, absolutely. Going to the grocery store, we just get a bunch of stuff.

And so I help my patients change to other things. It is expensive. So maybe we bring a little bit of it in and maybe you don't switch to full, but we can at least Yeah, a couple of nights out of the week or something.

Yeah. It'd be like, you know, pouring a little sand in the Ferrari, like pouring that in in an oil pan and then, putting a bit of water or impure fuel.

As an athlete, I've played a lot of sports. I never thought that much in depth to it, but I watched sports and I would

think that you'd want the cleanest fuel possible for that peak performance.

Just for the edge. I think I'll just give that edge and it's not like… They're performing at a high level. Yes, everybody's performing it a higher level, right?

So what can set you apart, you know? Yeah, and push it push you pass one of the many things Yes That's what that's when I'm here for that. That is what I am trying to talk to people about and educate But cool.

Thank you. Is there anything else that you wanted to add? We do shipping now so Heelfarms.com you go there and we yeah, we're shipping all across the U. S.

Shipping, Nonprofit Support, and Closing Remarks

And you're on Instagram too? On Instagram it's at underscore Heal Farms. H-E-A-L. Yes. And you have a nonprofit, too, that you're a part of. Yeah. So percentage of all of our sales, yes, it goes to Heals, the nonprofit.

It was our vision for Healfarms to support Healed, a non-profit. That's where we kind of got our start on that. I love that even more. Giving a piece to that, great organization.

Instagram, email, and you ship in all over the U. S. now. Yes. Yeah, we just started that and then that's been really good. We're super excited about that.

Cool. Well, thanks so much for all the information. I really learned a lot today. Awesome. Appreciate it. Thank you.