

Josiah and Laura, Red Hook Farms, Red Hook, Brooklyn
July 17, 2021

Rachel (00:00):

Okay, let's begin. So if you guys wouldn't mind telling me your name, where you live, where you grew up and sort of how old are you, and when did you come here to Red Hook Farm?

Josiah (00:17):

Okay. My name's Josiah. I'm from Brooklyn. I'm 17 years old. And I would say that I came to the farm around March of this year.

Rachel (00:27):

Of 2021?

Josiah (00:28):

Yeah.

Rachel (00:29):

And what brought you here?

Josiah (00:31):

Well, like I saw a lot of the youth here for internships and jobs and stuff like that. And I kind of just wanted something new. And like it was always tied in with RHI, because I've been with RHI a little bit longer than I have the farm. So it was just other people like, "Oh, you should apply for the farm" or "You should volunteer for the farm." And like all those sources just kind of led me to the farm.

Rachel (00:55):

Very cool.

Josiah (00:56):

Yeah.

Rachel (00:56):

And Laura, how about you. Tell me who you are, where you live, and how long you've been with Red Hook.

Laura (01:01):

My name is Laura. I'm 18. I lived in Red Hook my whole life. I've started working on the farm same time as Josiah, around March, 2021, but I've been on the farm and like been with the community since it started. Because they do like Halloween stuff, Christmas stuff, farms staying as well. So, yeah.

Rachel (01:26):

What kinds of, do you feel like, what have you learned since you started working here on the farm? And both in terms of skills and also, have you learned anything like personally about yourself?

Josiah (01:38):

Okay. Well, ever since I've been on the farm, I've learned definitely more things about nature itself, like insects, planting. I learned like a bunch of stuff about compost, harvesting, fertilizing. I've learned so much.

And it kind of just opened my eyes because like I would always think that this type of stuff was boring. So I kind of think that the farm kind of just like opened my eyes to see that it's actually like fun to do stuff like this. And personally, I think I've learned more to just appreciate life itself and just myself. I don't know if that makes sense, but yeah.

Rachel (02:17):

Those are some huge changes.

Josiah (02:19):

Yeah.

Rachel (02:19):

That's amazing. How about you Laura?

Laura (02:24):

Well, kind of the same thing, learning about insects, plants, how my food gets to me. But I guess about myself, well, I feel like I learned a lot, like I feel like I'm more connected to my family because my mother and my father both grew up farming, because they both in third world countries where they had to physically make their own food as we do here. So yeah. I feel like more connected to that part of me, whereas before like I didn't really care. And yeah.

Rachel (03:02):

Cool. That doesn't surprise me. I feel like this is a very, very special place.

Laura (03:07):

Yeah. I've definitely wanted to do this, like study this.

Rachel (03:12):

In the future?

Laura (03:13):

Yeah. Like what Brendan and Sue Hair does, like they work here. I want to do that when I get older.

Rachel (03:17):

That's awesome.

Laura (03:18):

Yeah.

Rachel (03:19):

That's awesome.

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Laura (03:20):

Thank you.

Rachel (03:21):

And you're 18 now. So are you making plans for that?

Laura (03:23):

Yeah, the college I'm going to, well, I can only study gen ed for the first year. But they said by my second year, like I'll be able to pick what classes I want to study. And from there, I guess I'll learn more about how I can do this in the future.

Rachel (03:40):

That's very cool.

Laura (03:41):

Thank you.

Rachel (03:43):

So the question that is sort of at the heart of this whole project is when you think about global warming, what do you think about and how do you feel?

Josiah (03:54):

When I think about global warming, I just think about like the effects of weather and like just the earth itself, like how it's going to affect the life that's on earth. It definitely concerns me because like before, when I was little, I would say that like global warming was thrown around a lot in elementary school as like a, okay, global warming is like one of the biggest problems that we have on the planet today. And everyone's like, okay, like what is global warming? But as I grew up and we kind of like learn more and more about what it is and how it's actually affecting us, I mean, it's kind of scary.

Rachel (04:32):

What feels scary about it?

Josiah (04:34):

I would say like just the fact that knowing that naturally the world could just become worse through global warming. Like it's not like someone, like I don't know how to explain it, like the fact that, okay, maybe we think that we're just like living life here, but there's certain things that we're doing that like can also contribute to the fact that the global warming is increasing. So it's just scary to know that like we're just trying to like get by day to day. But at the same time, like we're worsening the earth at the same time that we live on it. So.

Rachel (05:11):

You did a great job explaining that.

Josiah (05:13):

Yeah.

Rachel (05:13):

And how do you feel?

Josiah (05:16):

I don't know. Like I said, I feel scared. I don't ... I can't really say too much about it because I don't really know a lot about global warming.

Rachel (05:23):

I feel like you do. You just told me a lot.

Josiah (05:23):

But yeah. I just feel like worried and scared about it.

Rachel (05:24):

Yeah. How about you, Laura? What do you think about it?

Laura (05:35):

Okay. So when you first mentioned it, you know when you go online and you look up your carbon footprint and you're allowed to see, like that's what I think about, but I don't know. I mean, when I think about global warming, I get really scared because this is our only earth. And then we're in 90 degree weather right now. Whereas like Monday, it was like 60 degrees. I don't know. That's really scary. I try not to think about it because I get nervous, but I mean look at Red Hook, like you got Amazon coming through, FedEx, UPS.

Rachel (06:09):

What are those changes signal for you?

Laura (06:15):

Well, everything, like they're really contributing and polluting the air in Red Hook, which contributes to global warming.

Is global warming the same as climate change?

Rachel (06:15):

Yeah.

Laura (06:28):

Yeah. So climate change, I mean, it's pouring and raining every other day and then it's really hot. I don't know. I don't know.

Rachel (06:35):

It feels stressful.

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Laura (06:39):

Yeah. It really stresses me out.

Rachel (06:39):

It feels so stressful that you don't like to think about it.

Laura (06:41):

Yeah. I try not to.

Rachel (06:42):

What does that feel like, to have sort of this thing that's like increasingly more present, that you are really trying not to think about?

Laura (06:59):

What does it feel like? Oh, I don't even know. You know, like the elephant in the room? Exactly what it is. There's an elephant in the room and you're just like ...

Rachel (07:06):

And you're just like trying not to smell like shit.

Laura (07:08):

Yeah, exactly. Just ignoring it. Exactly.

Rachel (07:13):

Have either of you noticed changes in your environment, weather pattern, season, since you've been growing up here.

Josiah (07:21):

Yeah. I would definitely say that like the weather has gotten like out of control. Like I remember, okay, like when I was young, okay, like it was kind of more scheduled. It was more like a pattern. Like we know that we were getting like snow in December around there. We know that like it was spring. Like it was like that annual season type of cycle.

But recently, like over the past few years, it's either like we're not getting snow. We're getting a lot of rain in the summer. Like I'm just starting to see like all these changes and they're not lining up with like what we would see ideally. So it's like kind of like weird, but also concerning to know that like, okay, it's cold in summer. It's starting to get cold in summer. It's starting to rain in summer. That's like really scary.

Rachel (08:12):

Does that affect how you sort of experience time or like your body and space?

Josiah (08:19):

I think so. Like I would definitely say that it affects, like the time aspect more so with me, because I would like, not that I would take like the seasons or like the weather for granted, but it's just like, I'll look

and it's just like, I don't even know what to do with my time because you kind of like know what you want to in that type of season, that weather like, okay. Yeah, like I'm going to go travel. I'm going to go swimming. I'm going to like go tanning. But it's like it's either raining or the weather is not keeping up its normal patterns or like its normal rates. So was just like, I don't know.

It does affect time in a big way. It's because it's like you would expect for things to just be the way that they're supposed to. But now that they're changing, it's more, it's so like what am I supposed to do? Like one day I'm going to go out with the tank top and the next day I'm going out with the sweater.

Rachel (09:09):

Yeah. And it's sort of disorienting.

Josiah (09:11):

Yeah.

Rachel (09:13):

Totally. And how about you, Laura?

Josiah (09:17):

Well, ...

Rachel (09:17):

Changes that you've noticed.

Laura (09:20):

In myself, I've done a lot of changes. Okay. I haven't suffered with asthma since 2008 because I remember the air was really polluted and especially in Red Hook because there was a lot of buses going through and before like they implemented the Clean Air Act, I had really bad asthma, like I walking with an asthma pump. Now, 13 years later, all of a sudden I'm having the same experiences where I'm like short of breath and I have to walk around with an asthma pump. And also with there's a lot more pollution, considering Amazon is now in Red Hook.

I have eczema again. I haven't had eczema since elementary school as well. And also, I get sick really easily and now I have a coat in the middle of summer. And yeah.

So it's been really affecting me and my body and it's not with the earth, but so it's really hard to ignore, especially when it's affecting me personally, but I still try to do it. Because if I think about it, what's going to happen, especially which I don't know what's happening anymore, but I know the ozone layer had like a hole in it from like hair spray or something like that. And I don't know if that's being affected again and causing all of this heat. But yeah.

Rachel (10:40):

That sounds scary.

Laura (10:40):

Yeah.

Rachel (10:41):

And it also sounds like you have very little control over the environment and how it's changing and how it's affecting your health.

Laura (10:50):

Yeah. Especially because we have no say what happens to our community. So.

Rachel (10:55):

Right.

Laura (10:57):

Yeah.

Rachel (10:59):

What do you and you guys are young, I mean you're 17 and 18. Like what do you want to see happen in the future? How do you want people to mobilize people in power or your community or yourself or your friends? Or like how does this moment ask us to step up?

Oh, please have as many as you want.

Josiah (11:28):

Wait, repeat that. I'm so sorry.

Rachel (11:33):

Oh just what do you want to see happen? We've been talking for 10 minutes, just so you know, because I want to be respectful of your time. But what do you want to see happen in the future? In what ways does this moment of warming ask us to kind of show up to it and have we been showing up and what do we do? You know, like ...

Josiah (11:59):

I would say, like I would like to see, like I guess us contributing more like in a healthier way for the community in the future and in the present now. Because just like Laura was saying earlier, like just with a simple fact that like there's a hole in the ozone layer because of hair spray. Like that's so scary.

And like I was saying before, we, as people today, like we don't really ... Sometimes we are like oblivious and blind to the fact that we are affecting the planet in like a really bad way. So like I just feel like in the future, I feel like there should be more caution and there should be more like, I don't know, just more information being given out to people because there's some people that honestly are just doing it unintentionally. They don't know what they're doing. And I feel like if we all know how to go about different things, using more organic products in our lives and stuff, it could definitely like be like just a big step or even just a little step to just being, or like contributing to the earth even more healthier.

Rachel (13:02):

So education too.

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Josiah (13:03):

Yeah.

Rachel (13:03):

What about you, Laura?

Laura (13:07):

Like how I or like in general?

Rachel (13:09):

What do you ... How do you hope we step up or what do we need to do for the future to ensure that we have a future?

Laura (13:18):

The same as Josiah, education, reducing how much we put out, like in terms of carbon and all that, how much we waste, like riding bikes instead of taking cars, public transportation, coming to the farm and helping out, stuff like that. Instead of just wasting all of the resources and plastic.

Rachel (13:46):

[crosstalk 00:13:46].

Laura (13:46):

Sorry. I just remembered that, but I don't know if that has anything to do with this because I know that affects the water.

Rachel (13:50):

You know, I feel like, well, plastic is a fossil fuel. I mean, plastic is made from fossil fuels.

Laura (13:56):

Yeah.

Rachel (13:56):

And you know all of these issues are interconnected and we can't solve global warming but also live in a polluted planet. That's not really the answer either. So I think they are all connected.

Laura (14:08):

Yeah.

Rachel (14:10):

How does thinking about climate crisis affect how you plan for your future, if it does at all?

Laura (14:18):

You won't have a future. If in 10 years our planet is like so polluted, like who knows what's going to happen? Who knows if we're still going to be here? Because if we keep polluting the way we were or even if the way we are, I don't know if it's still bad now but I remember it's really bad before. So anything could happen, the world could heat up.

Rachel (14:40):

And does that feel like a possible future to you?

Laura (14:43):

Yes.

Rachel (14:45):

Yeah. How about you, Josiah?

Josiah (14:46):

Yeah, I feel like it's so scary to know that like this, what we like see right now, what we're living on right now, can really come to an end just because of the fact that not enough education is given to the people to know how to take better care of their home. Because this is where we live. This is our home.

So I feel like in the future, and like in closing, we just need to be more aware of our, not surroundings, but aware of like the things that we do in our daily lives and how it contributes to ourselves, the people around us and the earth itself.

Rachel (15:22):

Now do you have time for a couple more questions? It's okay if you don't.

Laura (15:29):

I have ...

Josiah (15:29):

What time is it?

Laura (15:30):

I have it's 1:09. I have lunch.

Rachel (15:33):

We can wrap it up.

Laura (15:34):

Do you?

Josiah (15:35):

Okay. Yeah.

Laura (15:36):

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Yeah. I have lunch, so.

Rachel (15:37):

Okay, cool. Well, thank you so much. Do you guys have any closing thoughts?

Josiah (15:41):

No. Just want to say thank you for having us.

Laura (15:41):

Thank you.

Rachel (15:45):

Thank you. I'm so glad you came. I loved talking with both of you.

Laura (15:45):

Yeah. Thank you.

Josiah (15:45):

Thank you.

Rachel (15:48):

You're both really smart.