Syntropic Agriculture 17 March 2021

SPEAKERS
Jeremy Melder, Victor Pires

Jeremy Melder 00:00
Hello, my name is Jeremy Melder, and I'm the presenter from Beaming Green. Before we start, I would like to acknowledge that this podcast is being held on the traditional lands of the Bundjalung people and paying our respects to elders both past, present and emerging. The Beaming Green podcast is a podcast that will help you take out some of the stress and confusion about how to live your life more sustainably. We do this by introducing you to inspiring people with first-hand experience and expertise who covered aspects of sustainability, from human interest to environmental perspectives, helping you to thrive and enhance your life and the lives of your friends and family. In the first episode of Beaming Green, I spoke with Victor Pires, who spoke about Syntropic agriculture. Victor grew up in Brazil but has lived in Australia for the past 20 years. He has trained with some of the best practitioners of Syntropic agriculture in Brazil. In the previous episode, we spoke about his intention to share his knowledge with others interested in learning about Syntropic agriculture. Today, we're going to be speaking with Victor about what he's been up to since the first episode, and about his upcoming causes for his new venture, the Syntropic gardener on the land that he takes care of in Uki, New South Wales. Welcome to Beaming Green Victor, do you know this is Episode 20. And you're on our first episode. So, I really wanted to have you on the show. Because I've been looking at some of your beautiful work that you've done at the Syntropic farm down in Uki. And just wanted you to give us a bit of an update as to what's been going on back at the farm,

Victor Pires 02:03
20 episodes. That's pretty exciting. Yeah, maybe I should be interviewing you (next time) see how your journey is going. (Laughter) Yeah, look, has been a big journey since the beginning, but was that about two, almost two and a half years ago, that we moved in, and then started to interact with the land. I started to plant started to get our understanding of those life processes, I'm getting better. And you start to probably be a bit humbler on how you deal with nature. And yeah, what you expect out of your work as well has been a massive learning curve. And especially in terms of our thinking, I think we've you know, jumped on board and we're all excited. I've been doing Syntropic farming now for about five years, so I was you know, three years into my journey have done lots of courses in Brazil have facilitated a few courses here as well have also started Gabala farm and other ventures and, you know, had a bit of experience on me and was like, Alright, let's do this. And then just planted and planted and planted and I thought I was going to be feeding the whole world and I barely fed myself and yeah, so that was you know, I just had you just have to once you start to work with natural processes, you just have to naturally adapt and change your mindset and really start to work with processes if you want to be as Syntropic farmer gardener Yeah, we do have to understand processes. Any if you don't it becomes quite frustrating. Because it doesn't always work especially if you start on a piece of land there was as degraded as mine was. Yeah, well, not mine, but the one that I've started, and which is basically kind of sub soil farming. lifeless, steep west facing, you know, very dry you know, water just

running on the surface? Very few roots. Very little life. Yeah, to play with. So, it's been a massive journey.

Jeremy Melder 04:24
So, the soil was quite compacted wasn't because of, you know, because of cattle, I presume. And,

Victor Pires 04:30
yeah, look a little bit that I know, I mean, the whole area was first you know, get the timber Geddes mean, and pretty much logged everything that was worthwhile. Everything that was straight. And then, you know, once that happens, then the cattle came in and on an area of such high rainfall like we are that experiences in our 2000 ml a year quite often on that steep land with cattle that's badly managed, and the topsoil just disappears really, really quick.

Jeremy Melder 04:58
Yeah, and you need to really, from the time you started yet to really observe, what was going on, and change tack as you needed to right. So, I looked at the way you planted, and then you changed, you know, the alignment of where you were, you know, going with your planting.

Victor Pires 05:17
Yeah, look, I think observation is perhaps my biggest lesson. I mean, in the beginning, I didn't really observe, we just jumped on board and started planting. And then over the years, you start to observe how the water is moving on the landscape. What your plants need, what they don't need, what what's happening, which plants are coming in, which are not coming, and you start to really pay attention, basically, I have to learn to pay attention, there is a lot more attention that I need to pay. But I think that's the, you know, a wise decision to just start paying attention on your landscape, and also on your needs, and how you can how you can match your needs, your goals, with the status of your land. So, observing, paying attention is definitely number one.

Jeremy Melder 06:05
And soil being what it is you need to build its intelligence, so to speak, you know, in terms of giving it hoummos and all those things, don't you? You need to work it in a way and how did you go about doing that?

Victor Pires 06:20
Yeah, look, people think tend to think that soil builds plant, in a sense, but I find it the other way around. So, you need plants to actually build soil. So, as I understand there is no other way. But planting if you want to have good soil. So that's what that's what I've done. So, in every pretty much apart from last winter, when I did a few more just veggie beds, but all my beds, they have trees in them, they have lots of leguminous plants in them, they have a whole range of succession of plants that are not only putting, you know, roots straight away, but I'm using as well to cut them to chop them to put their organic matter in the soil to stimulate that growth to stimulate that exchange. And that's and that's how you build soil, the more plants you have, the more plants you can cut, the more plants you can manage that soil get built. And I think after two and a half years starting to think now that I've managed to accumulate a little bit of life, I've got eucalyptus trees that are probably seven or eight meters tall

now, which I just I'm just at the moment lifting skirt, but I will now start to do an apical cut so kind of cut the head off. Yeah, and I mean, I am considering perhaps next spring to drop one of my systems and then be able to plant quite a bit of real food with hopefully minimal inputs or significantly less inputs. And you know, even considering planting some grafted trees invest a little bit because up to now was just basically everything I planted just anything that requires a bit more life, which means you know, food for humans requires a fair bit of light. They didn't really do very well. Doesn't really matter how much chicken manure, rock phosphate, egg lime, whatever it be, you know, inputs, irrigation, you name it, you know, you can't really trick plants, especially, especially if they are longer, longer life cycles. You can trick a lot a lot of lettuce and you might be able to trick a broccoli you know three months without you know, the banana might germinate. But after three months to banana, just go Yeah, maybe look good effort. You kind of got on the right track, but I'm just gonna sit and wait for life to increase.

Jeremy Melder 08:46
Yeah, just for those people that haven't been you know, hadn't listened to episode one. Yes. Can you go through the Syntropic successional stages?

Victor Pires 08:55
Yep. Look, I probably won't go into all the detail not into detail. But just an overview. I think what we have to understand is that in Syntropic agriculture is about understanding the dynamics of forestry ecosystems. So, when you look at a forest, people tend to think that a forest is something that is kind of static, stagnant, this just trees, but it's actually moving through time and space. And a mature forest will have like a mosaic type of communities in a sense that through disturbances, natural disturbances, fire, floods, hurricanes, whatever big trees falling. There is a whole triggering of succession of events. And that's how nature works. So, let's say there is probably a big tornado comes through and drops an acre of forests, flatten it out, there will be a hope, let's call a race of plants that will recolonize that and used to I've done a really quick with the, they're really short lifecycle plants, you know, let's say, in a horticultural sense, your radishes, your rockets, your lettuce and start to come through, and they start to then nurse what comes after. So, there's a whole range of time scales within plants, that will then take this forest up again. And in doing so, because other organic matter of fell, and it started to be processed, the next stage has a lot more life to play. So, if we understand in what stage your land is, then you can keep you can speed it up, right, and you can really then plant a lot of a lot of things together and take it through succession in a much more efficient way. So, through Syntropic systems, we are able to maybe speed it up, let's say 10 times. So, like, in my case, in two and a half years, to have, you know, basically a closed canopy in most of the area I've planted,

Jeremy Melder 11:05
which is amazing. I've got to say in two and a half years, I don't think anyone any garden that I've been to that I've seen that amazing to see that

Victor Pires 11:14
it's in it's in a sense, it's easy to do it if you just plant and observe and then be present, I think that's the most important part is you have to participate, if you just plant. And that's unfortunately, in a lot of educational settings in a lot of discussions on Facebook and things like that everybody's asking the questions such as, should I plant this? What's the spacing of that? Does that grow in this climate? And

you know, those questions are important. But very few people are asking how do you manage this? How do you take this place from lifeless to full life because it's, it's quite easy to get your first what you call horticultural cycle out, you know, you put some chicken menu, and chances are, you're going to get something and you're going to be participating? But what happens a lot is, after the first three months, once your four months or five months, let's say wants you to tomatoes have stopped producing, then people don't show up anymore.

Jeremy Melder 12:19
So, I'll just go to say, Victor, I'm guilty, because we all are guilty. And I'm guilty and charged here. So, I started off doing exactly what you said, you know, got totally excited, planted all this. And then my Southern slope here in in Dunbible, then I go, what's next? What do I do next? You know, and, you know, unlike you, who is observing, and I think we talked about this earlier that it's an important thing that when you take on this type of journey of Syntropic agriculture, that you're actually got some time to commit to it in terms of observing, and you know, your example of, you know, living and breathing what you're doing. But and you've done that you've been living and breathing it and you've observed and done changes when needed to tweak your formula.

Victor Pires 13:14
Absolutely. And look, you know, I've learned to observe, I think it's, it's kind of number one mistake is that people just focus a lot on the planting. And you can see, you know, that tractors available, there's all those methodologies to plant and designs and others of your apps that you can design your perfect system. And it's really easy to just go there, you know, and plant a massive system, you might get, you know, some people involved, and in a week, you're playing the whole acre or whatever. But nobody's really thinking through time, humans have a difficulty to deal with timeframes. And we can, you know, we can deal with a lot of complicated matters. But once you put the complication into time, it become complex. And human's kind of lose the plot a little bit. And I find these to be, and I've done it, I mean, our first systems at Gabala, we kind of for the first three months, just planted, just planted, kept going, kept going, kept going. And we just kept repeating the same mistakes and are observing and learning the lessons and going slow. So, it's very important for everybody that starting to go very slow. Just plant one square meter, observe, do another square meter, observe and keep then learning what it takes to manage. Because it's, it's easy to manage. If management is harvesting, it's like, whoa , this thing is really great. I come here to manage, and I come back home with cucumbers and tomatoes and data. Nice. But what are you going to do once that crop ends? And you're done? Right, and you don't have that immediate reward? Yeah, but the thing is, if you don't manage, then there'll be no more rewards. That's because you've been no idea, you're playing that a lot. In all those planes, we will start to create a bit of attention, if there isn't management, and that's again, coming back into forest dynamics, that is the strategy of the forest to have a lot of plants coming through together. But it has a lot of animals and beings that are the that are there to manage that growth and select, let's say, the champions, for example, yeah. And if there isn't that, then you can see that things start to slow down. And I've observed that, and you might have observed in yours, that if you come down and management, then you know, your pigeon pea might be on top of your Eucalyptus and Eucalyptus a bit weaker. And then next year start to compromise, or the banana needs assistance, and all those things that the human being needs to participate, needs to observe, needs to start that dialogue, and really manage it. Without the expectation of that I'm going to get a reward every time I show up. Yeah. And that is, you know, we

have to change our consciousness in how we relate to the natural world. And we have to start acting and doing things without expecting an immediate reward. So

Jeremy Melder 16:16
it requires a bit of patience. Absolutely, really, you know, actually, then we as a species have become more and more impatient. Really what you're saying?

Victor Pires 16:26
Yeah, you know, and wards everywhere.

Jeremy Melder 16:28
Yeah. So, you know, I'm, most I said, you know, my slope, I was disappointed with what's going on? I'm actually quite happy at the moment, because obviously, my bananas are really, you know, thriving, and so on. So, it's all dependent on, from that observation that people plan this in a way that's looking at the land and how it sits.

Victor Pires 16:50
Yeah, absolutely. I think planning is an important part. But I think as you observed, you know, your plan will change through time, you just don't know, when you're going to have a super dry year, like you probably had on your first year. Yeah. And you wish to put your lines on contour? Or how, you know, we are having a massively wet summer, and your kind of going, thank God, I'm not on contour, otherwise, everything, everything will be so squishy. Yeah. So, it's it, you know, so which way do you go, we have to be adaptable. We've got to be adaptable. Yeah. And for you to be adaptable, you've got to be present, you've got to be observing. And you can make changes, like at the moment, I'm going through my systems and going, look, I need some air flow here, some more light coming through. But it was last year, you know, at this time of the year, we were getting 33, 34, 35 degrees. So, I probably would say, I need more shade. Yeah. But if you're not present, then, you know, you show up and it's out with fungal diseases and things like that, because the air is not flowing, everything's on top of each other. It's moist is mushy. So, you got to participate. A lot of people, and I don't know if that's a problem of how Syntropic education it's happening, or happened, I think, at least all the courses I've done, there is a lot of focus on how to design your system, and how to plant your system. But there is no focus on how to observe your system, how to manage your system, how to adapt that system for, you know, different environmental conditions and things like that. Yeah. And a lot of people unfortunately get stuck because they go ahead, they get excited, and they get the resources, and they plant. And after three months, they have no idea. what's next.

Jeremy Melder 18:34
I know we covered since Syntropic farming in quite a lot of detail in the last episode or in the first episode. Yep. But would you mind giving you know the people have just logged on to Episode 20. A little bit of a brief understanding of what Syntropic agriculture is.

Victor Pires 18:51
Yep, absolutely. Not an easy question. But I'll try my best to me Syntropic agriculture is basically understanding how nature works. And bringing that power of nature into a way that humans can not

only utilize that power towards their own needs, but also be able to manage that power and work with nature, rather than working against nature. Yeah, so it's, yeah, that materialization of that natural force in a human system kind of thing.

Jeremy Melder 19:25
this was actually started in Brazil, right?

Victor Pires 19:29
Yes, yeah, that started in Brazil, and now it's taking over the world.

Jeremy Melder 19:34
It's taking over the world. How many countries do you think is taking Syntropic agriculture? Now? Do you think any ideas?

Victor Pires 19:42
it's hard to tell. But I would say there is in every country now. I mean, if you look at those Facebook groups that are questions coming from Asia, from Europe, from North America, from Central America, from Africa, plenty of Australia is doing it as well. I mean, I'm not sure if it's up in Russia and things like That. Yeah. But perhaps Yeah, I mean, it's definitely doable there. Yeah. If you can grow a tree, you can use Syntropic agriculture, basically.

Jeremy Melder 20:07
And another question I've got is so it the types of questions you said, you're getting lots of questions. Are there big agricultural types of people that are doing or just people that are just doing it home?

Victor Pires 20:19
I'd say more people that are doing at home. Okay, the small scale, I mean, there is some growing interest on the commercial side of things. But I think it's we are a little bit far away, in my understanding, I think commercial Syntropic agriculture, is still a few years away. Because one machinery it's quite different the way you relate to your land and the machinery that we need to properly do to properly manage things. skills. Yeah. Which, again, you know, humans that are there, and not only have the skill to observe and manage, but also have the freedom to observe and manage. Yeah. But also, on the third side, is consumers actually valuing a product that has a lot more quality. Beyond Organic. Yeah, it's, it's like, it's alive energy. But when people see one carrot and another carrot, they think they are two carrots, they are the same thing. But they are not. And that's, and that's a different thing to a difficult thing to change. Because if you notice, as soon as there is an economical change, the first thing that people cut, is how much they are spending food. And we discussed that in the first episode, didn't we? Yes, yeah. Yeah, we do. Yes, yeah. So, there is a few variables there that I think are, you know, stopping. I mean, there's more market gardeners' kind of growing towards that, or CSA is kind of these more was small scale of commercial is doable. But I think the bigger end of the commercial things might take a little bit to go there. Just because of the whole economic pressure, and how the whole agricultural sector at the moment is, it's working. And you really gonna have to work on your, on your community on your buyers, they have to understand that you are providing a much better product that

actually embodies our environmental consequences. Whereas, you know, they used to not have to pay for that. Yeah. But they're getting, you know, pretty poor quality in terms of energy, nutrients, life.

Jeremy Melder 22:44
So, for the person that's starting out, and wants to get into some Syntropic, and we're going to talk about a course that you're going to be offering in April. Yep. But if they want to start off in north in Northern Rivers, Northern New South Wales, I know you can't cover the whole world yet. But you know, if we're saying some wants to start, you know, a couple of meters, they want to start off. It's now autumn. Yep. What can they start planting?

Victor Pires 23:14
Yep. Look, I'm not gonna go into specifics

Jeremy Melder 23:18
But generally speaking, you know, if you just want to start planting, that's it.

Victor Pires 23:22
Well, if you just want to start planting, stop, and don't, and first start to observe, great, okay, and you start to think, one, what do you need? What are your goals? Yeah, that's, that's where you begin? So, do you want to regenerate your backyard? Do you want to just grow food? What do you want? What kind of food do you want to grow? Yeah. So, once you understand your own context, what resources have you got? You know, have you got is able to access fertilizer or not? Or your you know, your 500 Kms from the nearest? Whatever agricultural supply? What can you do? So, first, understand your context, and then start to observe what's happening around you. Yep. What kind of plants are growing at got to go to your local council? And ask a few questions. You know, what's growing here? What am I supposed to be seeing here? If you have friends, you know, Aboriginal people, indigenous people, great source of knowledge, elder people, elderly people as well. great source of source of knowledge. So that so now start to expand your context for towards your locale, not your personal context, and start to grow from there understand, okay, so understand my context, understand what I can grow here. How can I put those two things together? Yeah. And really try to understand that the idea of farming, it's always moving towards a place of more life. Yeah, sounds simple, but what do I mean but more life so just tries to reduce things into look at water. Look at nutrients, look at energy in terms of sunlight, and look at species dynamics, you know, species interactions. So, if your place, basically, all the water is running on the surface, nothing is coming in, you know, you know that it's not very alive, you're probably just going to have a few weed species in one layer only, it's not gonna be very structured. So, you don't really have that much life to play. So that will dictate your strategy, are you going to be bringing out a lot of nutrients to be able to grow food for you? Or are you going to be working with processes more, and just adding a few different plants and with a lot of management in participation, you can then increase that life, which is a bit of a strategy I've done. I mean, I did, I did bring a limited number of inputs. And I planted my you know, my hardy plants, my pigeon peas, my Eucalyptus Grandis, castor oil. And now those hardy plants, with my veggies, I managed to get some veggies sometimes. But now I've got you know, a canopy that I can drop and play with. So yeah,

Jeremy Melder 26:06

so, when you say drop and play, when you're talking about, you know, cutting down those eucalypts, and, and so on aren't you, just to clarify that

Victor Pires 26:13
When we're talking about life, we have to organize life, we have to organize water, we have to organize nutrients, and energy and those kinds of things. So, once you have a canopy, now you have an opportunity to play with energy dynamics. Yeah, yeah. So, you can start to then understand what's underneath, getting more light during this life. And once you drop, once you prune, or cut a tree down, and you put that back in the soil, then again, we are you are organizing how the water is moving through the soil. And hopefully after time, and if you can keep your soil covered, animals start to colonies and break things down. So now you have to start to make nutrients available, and everything else. So as soon as you improve one of those variables, everything else improve. As soon as your water start to slow down, then you're new to start to be more available. As soon as you have more plant in your in your plot, then water starts to be better organized. So that's the idea to work with processes. You know, humans love to just get an immediate reward as we just talked about. And you might be able to get it. I mean, you feel if you have a fertile land, why not? You might hit the jackpot. Yeah, very few people have that luxury. So, we need to understand that it's a process. And that's work with their regenerative force. Yeah. And the more we do that, the more we bring plants down and fulfill niches and bring different species that will have different roles and will attract different birds and all that kind of stuff, the more chances you're going to have to grow real food by participating by cutting by organizing,

Jeremy Melder 27:57
and do you feel like you know, now, what was the two years that you've been doing this, you're on your property on the property that you're using? And do you feel like you're getting to a point now where you feel like you're gonna get some, you know, you're gonna get some benefits in terms of wanting you wanting more food? You were mentioning that level, when he first he thought you're going to get lots of food. Yeah, didn't happen. But do you feel like you're on that, you know, point of saying, Oh, this this year, we'll start to get some benefit from all that work that we've done in terms of the soils improved, and so on. Yeah.

Victor Pires 28:32
Oh, we already are getting Yeah, I mean, the land is definitely not as hot. The water is definitely moving slower. Things are growing much faster, and much stronger as well. So, we already are getting some of that environmental benefits. Am I going to get more food or easier food? I hope so. I mean, that's the idea. Yeah. But the most important thing is that you I can tell you that I am moving in the right direction. Yeah. So that will be this year that I'm going to, you know, grow a lot of food and be able to harvest a lot. I don't know. Yeah, I mean, I'll continue to try. I'll continue to experiment. I'll continue to add life and bring life into the land. And I am getting better. I mean, less to eat up. I managed to, you know, for a period of time, most of the food we were eating we were on property. Yeah. And it's just, yeah, it's just that a bit of that game. It's not easy to grow food. No, it is not easy to grow food. There are so many variables that you have to play with. And you can ask every farmer and you can see how much of our organic farming is getting to greenhouses and that kind of controlled environment. Yeah, because, you know, in the last three months, we've had the rain it's been almost impossible. For me Last summer I had the best tomatoes ever this summer could not grow a single one No. Right. So, if you are a

commercial producer What are you gonna? Do you try to then control and bring those variables in? But is that the solution now? Yeah, maybe not. I mean, and that's one of the difficulties of commercial Syntropic . Because you need to be supported by your community, and you need to be able to then move into different crops, that we'll be able to handle the country, the present conditions, you know, so if I was a tomato grower, then I would have to move into something else. Because the tomato, or I'll have to put it into greenhouses and yeah, it's not easy growing food. It's not easy. No, basically, and you have to be very resilient. And, and just trying different things, and really, really, really working with your land. And making sure that at least you are increasing the amount of life because the more life you've got, the more resilient you're going to be. Yeah. And the higher the chances that you will be able to, to harvest that tomato, the eggplant or whatever you've planted.

Jeremy Melder 31:02
Yeah. In terms of the Have you had an idea of how much because I remember when you first started, it was, you know, it's grown in terms the amount of land you're covering? And do you have an idea of how much land you've grown? Roughly, just very roughly, oh, I

Victor Pires 31:19
never really measured about say, there'll be what, maybe an acre there a bit more. Looks like? Yeah, yeah. I mean, we extended a little bit further down the bottom with kind of a bush regen kind of project. That's another 1500 square meters, that we kind of planted this season and that a different take into bush regen. Yeah. Trying to, you know, not, not follow mainstream practices. Really? Yeah. Which is not easy. And yes, I'd say maybe an acre, maybe an acre and a half. What's that? About? 6000 square meters? Yeah. Something like that.

Jeremy Melder 31:53
Does Syntropic agriculture have a way of working with permaculture?

Victor Pires 31:58
Yep. Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. I mean, as I understand, I mean, I've done a couple of PDC's and I'm kind of familiar with the permaculture language and practices. And absolutely, I think there's definitely a win possibility, there, I mean, to me permaculture is it's a much broader framework. Yes. It deals not only with food production, but it deals with housing, and water and whatever, all those other concepts that Syntropic agriculture does not Yeah. But definitely, in terms of the food production side of things. As I understand, and as I've, you know, learnt about it. They, the permaculture framework is a lot about design, which really heavily it's a design science. Yeah. And where as Syntropic agriculture? It's really an agricultural science in the sense that, yes, there is the design component, but most of it is how you will participate. So how you manage, when you manage, why you manage, and that kind of thing, which I don't think permaculture brings with such specificity. Right. So, to me, Syntropic agriculture is like right into permaculture and actually makes it much stronger. And vice versa. Because permaculture also allows us Syntropic farmer or somebody that's practicing Syntropic agriculture, to understand a little bit more, you know, the zones and where should I be putting my more horticultural garden? Where do I want to have more, you know, fruit production and that kind of stuff, which is also important to optimize your resources? So, I think together, they make each other much stronger.

Jeremy Melder 33:47
Yeah, I think so too, because I've been listening to some of the podcasts about, you know, permaculture, and I just think, yeah, this there's something there's something there's a definite dynamic there that can work together and can enhance your and. Yeah. And what your situation, you know, so I think there's some great synergies there.

Victor Pires 34:07
Absolutely. Yeah, absolutely.

Jeremy Melder 34:08
Now, when we last talked,

Victor Pires 34:12
right, we were 20 weeks ago, or 20 episodes 20 episodes ago,

Jeremy Melder 34:16
you were talking about setting up a business which is yet to be about educating people about your project, which is now what do you call it the Syntropic Gardner? Yes. And you've done it which is actually I think it's something to celebrate that you've actually started that you've got a website Syntropicgardener.com So tell us about what are you what are you hoping to do?

Victor Pires 34:41
Yeah, look bit of a mission now as a one man show. Well, I do have a lovely partner that helps me a lot. But on that whole business side of things, you know, having to set up websites and engaging social media and now that kind of fun her fun, yeah, but trying to have it, you know, I try to do it in an ethical way, rather than just let's just promote and promote and promote, which is not really what I want to do. Definitely not me. Yeah, so it's been, you know, massive learning curve. And I've, you know, been putting everything I can into that, while at the same time, you know, planting and managing and all those requirements that if you stop paying attention, then you're gonna have a problem as well. So, here's how to bring everything into balance has been interesting. And yeah, so now I'm kind of really trying to focus on that educational part of Austin, tropic agriculture. They're really trying to bring something different to the table

Jeremy Melder 35:38
How so?

Victor Pires 35:39
as I said, just before, I think that the emphasis on consortium planning and design, and the planting side of that needs to change needs to change, and people need to really understand what their context but most important, how to pay attention, how to interact, how to conduct whatever they planted towards whatever the design was. Because if you don't plan, if you don't design, if you're sorry, if you don't participate, then your design just goes wherever, hmm. So a lot of the educational part of Syntropic agriculture, in my experience, and I've done quite a few courses in Brazil, with all the big guns, and seeing the places, nobody's talking about, how are you going to manage how you're going to

take that three months crop that you plant, and you're pretty happy harvesting all those beautiful fruits, that you're going to be able to harvest bananas, and you're going to be able to harvest papayas, and you're going to be able to harvest whatever you designed to. Yeah, and I've seen quite a few people, and you might be on one of those, a good example. You know, people get excited after the course they come in plant, and they go like, yeah, this is works, everything is growing. And then what? So, so what I'm really trying to think is how, how can I bring, you know, exercises? And how can I bring specific points of observation that people can interact? And a lot of the course, of course, we're going to talk about planning your Consortium, preparing new soil, and that kind of stuff, of course, but a lot of it will be about how you're going to interact,

Jeremy Melder 37:18
Can I understand what consortia is?

Victor Pires 37:22
Consortia? Well, it's like in permaculture is like your guilds. It's how you put your plants together, there is a bit of a logic, a bit of a rationale behind it. Just to try and optimize some of those living processes that I've mentioned. Yeah. Which is important. Yeah. But again, plants are highly adaptable with within a specific niche. So, it is great to put things in a particular order that you think they're going to develop. But there is a lot of plants that they can play many positions in your team, as well. And it's really about observing, and looking, you know, are you happy here? Are you not? Is the plant beside you happy? Which one? Should I favor in this point in time, based on my goals, based on where the lands going? What's able to do? and things like that? So, it's really forging that interaction and really trying to plant a seed on how to observe how to pay attention. What to pay attention.

Jeremy Melder 38:22
So, Victor, you're planning a course that starts in the Easter break? Is that right? Yeah. In northern New South Wales,

Victor Pires 38:30
yeah. first of April 1st to 5th of April.

Jeremy Melder 38:33
So, what are some of the things that you're hoping to have participants get out of this course?

Victor Pires 38:38
Yep. Well, every participant will get, hopefully, whatever they need to get. So, it's not everybody going to get the same thing? Sure. But I'll make sure that the course is as individualized as possible. So, people will definitely understand their context better, will definitely understand the variables that they really need to pay attention. They will really, I will really focus on how people can conduct their systems. So, through management, through observation. And you'll definitely have a sense when they go back home of where they are, where they want to be, and how they're going to get there. And of course, things are changeable. Sure. And they will be able to be confident that they will be able to move with a tide that will be able to move as things change. Yeah, that to me is the most important.

Jeremy Melder 39:35
So really, this is really an introduction into a journey. Absolutely. It's not going to end it's you know, it's a journey that they start with and just like you've been on so many courses. Yep. That it's and you know, you're evolving as you go with that. And so, if people want to learn more, there's obviously going to be having other things that you can offer in the future, right.

Victor Pires 39:58
Yeah, I will definitely offer, and I will You know, invite everybody to do as many courses as they can my courses are the people's courses that they visit other people's land here and try to understand how they are solving their own questions. Because that's what I'm going to really try to bring you to it is how can I empower participants to ask questions? And how I can empower them to find the answers their own answers, because only then can find their own answers. Yeah. And the more you talk, the more you share about what you've done. Yeah, not about what you thought, the better.

Jeremy Melder 40:36
Yeah. Well, Victor, I really want to thank you for being on Beaming Green. And don't forget to sign up to Victor's course, they go to what website to do that

40:46
my website Syntropicgardener.com, you find information there and you find a lot more information about me, and about Syntropic agriculture in general. Or you can go straight away to the Eventbrite website. And my courses because it's named called becoming a Syntropic gardener. So, it's a process of becoming Yeah, and I would like to initiate that process. So, people start on a good note and very confident that they can do it.

Jeremy Melder 41:15
Fantastic. And I'll be putting some of those show notes and links to those also with some photos on our website of where Victor started off and where he's at so far. So please, you know, log on to the Beaming Green website to have a look at those links, and also go to the Syntropic Gardener website, thank you, Victor, for being on Beaming Green

Victor Pires 41:37
Thank you very much, Jeremy, my pleasure.

Jeremy Melder 41:40
Thank you for listening to this episode of Beaming Green. Now, if you got something out of this episode, we'd love to hear what your biggest takeaway was. There are a number of ways you can do this; you can leave a review on Apple podcast. Or if you have a Facebook, Instagram or LinkedIn social media page, you can leave a review there that don't forget to tag us so we can thank you personally. Lastly, go to beaminggreen.com and subscribe to our newsletter and receive a free how to be green guide. At Beaming Green, we are committed to providing you with a thought provoking and insightful program that inspires you to live your life in accordance with your true nature and purpose. We do this by sharing stories from people that are walking their talk and are committed to living their lives

sustainably with their mind, body and soul. So, as you can share this with your friends and family and leave the planet in a better place. The music for this podcast was created by Dave Weir