

**Poem: “Grow those Greens”**

**by Russell Taylor**

(inspired by the NYCHA Farms and Gardens April 2025 Summit)

There is something missing, but then again, it really isn't!  
It's just locked away and stored in our DNA — our cellular genes.  
Something that is so deep inside, within the cracks and crevices of our minds -  
And for so many suns and moons, it's been gone,  
like those former farmer pants and straw hats we once wore.  
And you know what? We are going to get them back;  
We'll tip our hats to Father Sky and implore Mother Earth to be kind,  
while rolling up our sleeves.  
“We are going to grow those greens.”  
‘Cause sometimes, we have to go back -  
in order to move forward,  
especially coming from agricultural backgrounds up north, down south,  
around the world,  
and everywhere in between.  
And, somehow, we have traded it all for brick and steel high-rises,  
fast-processed foods, convenience stores, and concrete streets!  
Yes, sometimes we have to go back!  
Back into antiquity, back into our ancestry, and back into our agricultural pasts!  
And, Ron Finley, the Gangsta Gardener of Los Angeles, once said  
that, “Growing your food is like printing your own money”!  
And with that statement, I wholeheartedly agree!  
And so, instead of buying overpriced organic produce from supermarkets  
and online stores. We got-tah get back to bending our backs,  
and back to being on our knees; and not in servitude,

but to reestablish that once forgotten and lost connection  
to Mother “mommie” Earth, and being in sync with those shining  
and pouring blessings from Father sky.  
And somehow, when the sun is on my face,  
and the grass and soil are beneath my feet,  
along with the feel and sounds of occasional cool breezes  
that pass through those rustling trees. I am transported,  
I am elated, I am, at the same time, rejuvenated!  
And the like thereof; the company we keep.  
And we don’t care what the bourgeois say; they can pay,  
but we are going to bend our backs, get on our knees,  
and grow our own greens.

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