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EVST Podcast Profile - Lady Eve Balfour
Overview
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Lady Eve Balfour was a key actor in the rise of the English organic agricultural movement. As a young adult, she pursued education through any means necessary in order to learn how to be a farmer. She would move through her life as a dedicated farmer, author, educator, and organizer, conducting experiments, giving lectures, and managing farms under her own organic values. She wrote *The Living Soil*, a now-classic book detailing the importance of organic methods in soil preservation, human health, and ecological well being. She also helped found the Soil Association, an organization still active today whose objectives are to collect and disseminate knowledge about organic farming practices. Balfour strove to make her knowledge and message accessible to the layperson, because she believed that soil health impacted every single member of society, whether they knew it or not. She pushed for federal funding and policies to support organic farming methods, and travelled the world to spread her message and learn from others with similar goals. In all, she was a steady force that pushed the organic agriculture movement forward throughout her life. A lifelong farmer and advocate for better farming practices, her impact cannot be understated. Despite this, the first federally funded organic agriculture bill was not passed in England until after her death.

Balfour also occupies a space of queerness that has been ignored and erased by historians fueled by homophobia and sexism. She lived with a lifelong partner, Kathleen Carnley, and neither ever married a man or had children. Balfour's role as a queer woman in agriculture carries deep significance, and places her at an important intersection deserving of far more study and recognition for her invaluable contributions to the organic agriculture field.

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