
Dominica's Island Life:
Where Family, Culture & Farms Thrive
Gumbo Hill Farm
Gumbo Hill Farm
Plant. Nurture. Grow. Repeat.
LOVE ROOTS GROW FUTURES
Written by Knowlton Theophile, Natasha Yeeloy-Labad.

Young Knowlton invites readers on an unforgettable journey to **Gumbo Hill Farm** a hidden gem nestled in the village of Giraudel, Dominica. Through Knowlton's enthusiastic eyes, children discover farm life in an exciting way: planting seasoning peppers as Grandpa taught, collecting and conserving rainwater, tending seedlings from soil to harvest, and celebrating the land's bounty at the local Flower Show.

More than a farming story, **Dominica's Island Life** is a love letter to Caribbean heritage, multigenerational family bonds, and environmental stewardship.



We Plant.



We Celebrate.



Sponsored by the Caribbean Cultural Fund through it's fiscal sponsor Le Centre d'Art

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*Inspired by **Gumbo Hill Farm** and the farming families and traditions of Dominica.*

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le centre d'art



This book is written for all the young, hardworking children and their farm families out there, feeding our communities, protecting our land, and making Dominica

a True Nature Island.







Hi, I'm Knowlton! I live in Giraudel with my family and we have a farm!

Have you ever been to a farm? Come along with me on a fun adventure! We are getting ready for the Annual Flower Show, and it's happening soon!

And guess what? Gumbo Hill Farm has been invited to take part!

Come on, let's go to the best farm ever and learn about farming!





Let’s drive through Giraudel!

Pass the school on your right, then the big Credit Union, then the Flower Show Site!

Keep going…you’re almost there!

Find the sharp bend on your right, just before you leave Giraudel. That’s the way to Gumbo Hill!





We’re almost there!

Through the maze of thick green trees, look out for the mountain peaks in the distance and then you’ll see them.

A long, beautiful row of sweet, zesty orange trees.

Do you know the smell of orange blossoms in bloom?

Oh, the smell is so amazing!





“Welcome to Gumbo Hill Farm! That’s me!” says Knowlton, grinning wide.

“This is my family’s farm. We love Gumbo Hill, and we love farming!”

Can you spot Grandpa Theo? And there’s my Super Dad, and my Mum picking seasoning peppers. That’s my baby brother eating an orange and that’s me, carrying my favourite fruit.

Bananas!

Everything here is grown with love.





Look at everything that grows on Gumbo Hill!

There are carrots, potatoes, peppers, cane, cabbage, oranges, bananas, and pineapples and so much more.

If you can eat it, Gumbo Hill probably grows it!

Every single thing is planted with care and harvested with pride.





“Oh wow, there go the Sisserou Parrots!”

They live here too! And they love the fruit trees on Gumbo Hill.

Did you know that Sisserou Parrots love eating oranges?

There are so many beautiful birds here, and Knowlton loves to take pictures of every single one.





This is where Grandpa has farmed all his life. This is where he built his family's home.

Everything here is beautifully green and fresh because Grandpa takes such good care of it all.

Just like people, every plant on this farm goes through different stages from a tiny seed all the way to delicious food on your plate!





Grandpa tells Knowlton that plants are very sensitive.

“They need water. They need sunlight. They need good nutrients from the soil.

Just like your baby brother,” Grandpa says with a smile. “Watch your plants closely.

If you take care of them they will take care of you!”





Look at all the rows of seasoning plants!

Peppers in red and green, celery with its tall crisp stalks, fresh parsley, and mighty thyme.

Oh, they smell amazing like a pot of soup bubbling on the stove.

Yummmm!





Dad and Grandpa are putting seedlings into trays to get ready for the Farmers Exhibition!

The seedlings stay in the greenhouse first. That’s where all our baby plants live before they go into the ground.

This way, there will always be new plants growing after we harvest.





Planting is so much fun!

One by one, Knowlton, Dad, and Grandpa press the seeds into the soft soil of each tray.

Pepper seeds. Cabbage seeds. Parsley seeds.

"Let'splant some seasoning pepper seedlings just like Grandpa taught me!

I can do this," says Knowlton. "And so can you!"





Now it’s time to water the seeds but we are not going to use just any water!

“We collect rainwater,” Grandpa explains, pointing to the big blue barrels lined up beside the greenhouse.

“When it rains, we save every drop. That water feeds our plants and keeps our farm alive without wasting a thing.”

Dominica gets plenty of rain. And on Gumbo Hill, not a drop goes to waste!





“Knowlton, this is your farm too,” says Grandpa.

“You must farm this land just like I farmed it, just like your dad and uncle farm it.

Every bird, every plant, every tree has a name.

And everybody eats from this farm, the animals, family, and others.”





Grandpa is teaching Knowlton his secret for growing the biggest, most delicious potatoes!

And the secret? It all starts with the soil.

“You must use a tiller to loosen the soil,” Grandpa explains.

“Make sure it is soft, airy, and full of good nutrients and always use compost!”





"Doyou know what compost is?" asks

Dad."Ofcourse I do!" says Knowlton.

"Compost is when we collect vegetable peels, food scraps, and dry leaves and let them break down naturally. It becomes rich food for the soil, and that helps our plants grow big and strong!"

"That'sexactly right!" Grandpa smiles.




TOMATO
PEPPER
LETTUCE
CARROT
BASIL
SPINACH

Knowlton woke up with a great idea!

He is going to start sowing seeds especially chosen for the Gumbo Hill stall at the Giraudel Flower Show.

He has collected everything he needs: the seeds, the trays, the soil, and all of Grandpa's wisdom.

"I'mready," says Knowlton."Let'sdo this!"




ORGANIC
POTTING MIX
Scotch
Bonnet
5/17
SCOTCH
BONNET
SWEET
PEPPER
CHERRY
TOMATO

One by one, Knowlton carefully drops seeds into each small hole in the tray.

Pepper seeds. Cabbage seeds. Parsley seeds.

He covers them gently with soil and presses them down just like Grandpa showed him.

“Every seed holds promise,” says Grandpa.

And Knowlton believes it.




PREMIUM SEED STARTING MIX
Seeds. Dreams. Tomorrow
Plant. Nurture. Grow. Repeat.
BASIL
SWEET PEPPRE
LETTUCE
TOMATO
LITTLE SEED BIG FUTURE
GARDEN LOVE FAMILY

Now it’s time to water the seeds.

Knowlton uses a small watering can and gives each tray just the right amount of water, not too much, not too little.

“Water is life,” says Grandpa. “Give your plants what they need, and they will do the rest.”




Little Seeds.
Big Dreams.
Our Future.
NOURISH
GROW
THRIVE
Water.
Sun.
Patience.
Love.
Magic.
Life.
BASIL
SWEET PEPPRR
LETTUCE
TOMATO
LOVE
ROOTS
EVERYTHING

Three days pass. Then four. Then five.

Every morning, Knowlton runs to the greenhouse to check on his seeds.

And then one day tiny green shoots

appear!"They're growing!" he shouts.

Mum, Dad, Grandpa, and even baby brother come running to see.




GUMBO HILL FARM
FRESH LOCAL LOVE
THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING LOCAL
From Our Family To Yours
Gumbo Hill Farm
GOOD FOOD STRONG ROOTS BRIGHT FUTURES

The Giraudel Flower Show is almost here!

The whole family is busy getting the Gumbo Hill stall ready.

Dad loads the van with trays of seedlings, jars of fresh seasoning, and Grandpa's famous potatoes. Mum wraps everything carefully.

And Knowlton? He is painting the sign for their stall! Featuring all the different birds and parrots in the garden.




THE GIRAUDEL FLOWER SHOW
CELEBRATING NATURE, CULTURE & COMMUNITY
PETAL MAGIC
FLORALS & MORE
ISLAND BLOOMS
GUMBO HILL FARM
GROWN WITH LOVE • SERVED WITH PRIDE
Gumbo Hill Farm
Gumbo Hill Farm
Gumbo Hill Farm
FRESH
LOCAL
ORGANIC
SUSTAINABLE
THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING
EAT
EAT GOOD
LIVE WELL
From Our Family To Yours
Gumbo Hill Farm
LOVE ROOTS
GROW FUTURES

The day is finally here, it's Flower Show Day!

The site is full of colour with flowers, fruits, music, and laughter.

Knowlton walks proudly beside Grandpa to their

stall."We did this together," says Grandpa.

Knowlton smiles the biggest smile of his life. The Gumbohill Stall looks amazing




GUMBO HILL FARM
GROWN WITH LOVE • SERVED WITH PRIDE
FRESH
LOCAL
ORGANIC
SUSTAINABLE
THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING LOCAL
SEASONING BUNDLES
MADE WITH LOVE
• GREEN SEASONING
• CREOLE SEASONING
• HERB BLENDS
EAT GOOD LIVE WELL
Plant. Nurture. Grow. Repeat.
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LETTUCE
TOMATO
Gumbo Hill Farm
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The Gumbo Hill stall looks incredible!

Fresh seasoning, bunches of bananas, shiny peppers, Grandpa's biggest potatoes, and Knowlton's own seedling trays all laid out beautifully.

Visitors stop, look, and ask questions.

"We grew all of this ourselves," Knowlton tells them

proudly."Right here in Giraudel. Right here on Gumbo Hill."




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Gumbo Hill Farm
LOVE ROOTS GROW FUTURES

And then a very special visitor arrives at the Gumbo Hill stall. It's her Excellency Sylvanie Burton the President of Dominica!

Knowlton stands up straight and tells the entourage everything about the seedlings, the compost, the soil, Grandpa's potatoes, and the Sisserou Parrots. "Young man," the President says,

"Gumbo Hill is truly

extraordinary."And Knowlton knows

that, it truly is.




THE GIRAUDEL FLOWER SHOW
CELEBRATING NATURE, CULTURE & COMMUNITY
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LOCAL
Gumbo Hill Farm
Gumbo Hill Farm
Gumbo Hill Farm
Gumbo Hill Farm
Gumbo
Hill
Farm

As the sun begins to set, the family packs up the van.

Knowlton is tired but the very best kind of tired.

The kind that comes from doing something you love, with people you love, on land your family has always loved.

“Same time next year?” asks

Grandpa.“Same time next year!” says

Knowlton.




Gumbo Hill Farm
Gumbo Hill Farm

Back on Gumbo Hill, everything is quiet.

The orange trees glow in the last light of day.

The Sisserou Parrots settle into the branches.

And Knowlton makes a promise to this land, to his family, and to himself.

"I will always farm this land. I will always love Gumbo Hill."



"Before you go here are some amazing things I learned on our farm!"— Knowlton

Sustainable Farming

- Sustainable farming means growing food in a way that
- protects the land for future generations so children like
- Knowlton can farm the same land their grandparents farmed!
- Composting food scraps and dry leaves puts nutrients back into the soil naturally without chemicals. Healthy soil grows healthier, tastier food.
- Crop rotation is planting different crops in different spots each sea son. This keeps the soil strong and stops harmful insects from taking over.
- Family farms like Gumbo Hill feed entire communities. Over 90% of all farms in the world are family farms!

Water Conservation

- Collecting rainwater is called rainwater harvesting. Farmers store rainwater in barrels and tanks to use during dry seasons so crops never go thirsty.
- Did you know? One barrel of saved rainwater can water dozens of seedling trays enough to grow food for a whole family!
- Watering plants in the early morning reduces evaporation, meaning more water reaches the roots where plants need it most.
- Dominica is one of the most water-rich islands in the Caribbean but even here, every drop counts. Saving water protects rivers, streams, and all the wildlife that depends on them.

Protecting Animals & Nature

- The Sisserou Parrot is found only in Dominica and is the national bird. It is one of the rarest parrots in the world and farms like Gumbo Hill help protect its natural habitat by keeping fruit trees healthy and thriving.

- Trees on farms give birds shelter, food, and safe nesting spots. When farmers protect their trees, they protect whole ecosystems!

- Bees, butterflies, and other pollinators visit farm flowers and help fruits and vegetables grow. A healthy farm is a home for hundreds of living creatures.

- When farmers avoid harmful chemicals and pesticides, they protect the soil, the water, the insects, the birds and the people who eat the food

Meet Our Contributors

GranPa Julian Theophille- The heart and soul of Gumbo Hill. Grandpa Julian has farmed this land all his life, passing down his knowledge, his love of the soil, and his secrets for the biggest potatoes in Giraudel one generation at a time.

Farmer Knowlton Theophile Sr. (Dad] Gumbo Hill Farmer-A dedicated farmer and devoted father, Knowlton Sr. works alongside Grandpa Julian to keep Gumbo Hill thriving. He teaches his children that farming is not just work it is a way of life, a legacy, and a gift to the land.

Kellona Theophille - The warm smile behind the hard working farmers at Gumbo Hill. Kellona keep the family grounded.

Baby Theophille- Still learning, always watching and never far from an orange!

Author- Knowlton Theophille is 11 years old and lives in Giraudel, Dominica. He loves farming, painting, and learning from his Grandpa. He wants to make Gumbo Hill the most celebrated farm in Dominica. This is his very first book but he plans to write many more! He hopes every child who reads this book will go outside, plant something, and look up at the birds above them..

Co-Author (Natasha Yeeloy-Labad) is passionate about develop- ment work and is the CEO of Outsource Development Studio Inc., where she is celebrated as a Development Consultant working on passion proj- ects that bring awareness to communities and the causes that shape them. She is also, among many things, an author.
Together with Knowlton, Natasha hopes this book inspires young read- ers across Dominica, the Caribbean, and beyond to love, protect, and celebrate the land they live on.

Gumbo Hill Farm is a real, multi-generational family farm in Giraudel, Dominica. The family has farmed this land for generations, growing ba- nanas, oranges, potatoes, seasonings and a range of other crops. Using sustainable methods that protect the soil, the water, and the precious birds that share their mountain home.



Words From The Farm- Glossary

Sustainable Farming: Farming in a way that protects the land so it can grow food for future generations.

Rainwater Harvesting: Collecting rainwater in drums or tanks to use for watering crops during dry periods.

Plant Nursery: A sheltered area where young seedlings are cared for until they are strong enough for the fields.

Crop Rotation: Planting different crops in the same area each season to keep the soil balanced and healthy.

Tilling: Turning over and loosening the soil with a tool so that air, water, and nutrients can reach plant roots.

Composting: Recycling food scraps and plant waste into rich, dark soil that feeds new plants.

Seedling: A very young plant that has just sprouted from a seed.

Sisserou Parrot: Dominica's national bird, the rarest parrot in the world, found

only in Dominica's mountain forests.

Pollination: When birds, bees, or wind carry pollen between flowers, helping plants grow fruit and seeds.

Giraudel-Eggleston Flower Show: An annual Easter flower and agricultural show held in Giraudel, Dominica, one of the island's most beloved community traditions.

Keep the Learning Growing!

You've explored the beauty of island life, their families, culture, and farming the land that feeds us.
But the journey doesn't end here... it's just beginning!

Scan the QR code for Think and Play Village's website! Get access to:

- **Fun, hands-on worksheets**
- **Short videos that bring each lesson to life**
- **Real interviews with farmers and tons of extras!**

These activities are part of the
ASTEEAMS Curriculum
where Agriculture, Science, Technology, Engineering, Entrepreneurship, Art, Math, and Sustainability come together to help you explore the world in exciting ways.