

Old timers often times planted by the moon signs. I'm frequently asked if I do, and I don't know what to say. Although I pay attention to the moon's phases and signs, I generally go about my business regardless of it. The moon obviously affects that water of the earth, and consequently it can't help but affect plant growth. "However, Nature is not so cruel as to punish man forth with for his slight attention and discourtesy to the Moon in sowing and in reaping. We have the full moon twelve times a year, and that is adequate for a sufficiency of the full-moon influences, i.e. of the forces that quicken the fruiting process. If on any occasion we perform what tends to fertilization, not all the full Moon but at the new, it will simply wait in the Earth till the next full Moon. So it gets over our human errors and takes its cue from great Nature."

I write down in a notebook the days I plant our crops. If there's a failure, I can look up on the calendar to see if I planted at a wrong time. On April 5th the moon was in Leo, the heart, which is barren sign. The peas planted that day failed to sprout, but the lettuce planted then did fine. Lettuce is an easy crop compared to peas. This week I did plant by the signs.

On June 30 the moon was in Virgo, the bowels, a good day for transplanting. I dug two shovelfuls out of a row at four foot intervals, and poured a half gallon of water in the hole. I watered the cold frame and pulled out 60 tomato plants, some of them two feet tall, and put them in a bucket of water. The roots were placed in the mud in the holes, and the stems laid along the row, and then the whole row was covered up with dry dirt. They never wilted, thanks to this old time method called mudding.

On July 4th the moon was in Scorpio, the secrets, which is a prime planting sign. It was also two days before full, and had not started ascending. All of these auspicious signs led me to not plant on July 3rd but wait till the next morning. Let me add, rain was not threatening, otherwise I would have planted.

Late beans and summer squash were sown in an old lettuce bed. These, like the late tomatoes, will come in when our earlier plantings begin to peter out. A shady garden got rows of lettuce, broccoli and Chinese cabbages. I usually plant these later in July, but couldn't resist the good signs. The western shade in this garden will help them though the hot weeks ahead, and we'll have transplants for the fall garden in mid-August. They were up by July 8; the full moon must have been strong.

An eclipse on July 7 kept us out of the garden. We cut weeds along fence rows instead. I'll pull the onion crop during the new moon, which is ascending in mid July. I make a lot of errors in gardening, and must admit to being slightly discourteous to the moon. I take my cues from old time farmers, but I am grateful the moon takes its cues from great Nature.