

Lesson 5. Growing by the Moon

There haven't been many in-depth studies on lunar planting, or planting according to the moon cycle. However, there is record of this farming method being used for centuries. As you learned in the previous lessons, the native Hawaiians valued understanding the moon phases and the affects on crops. There are also records of the Mayans planting their crops according to the moon phases. While we know that this practice has been used by multiple cultures, it is not clear why it works. Some individuals believe it is because of the moon's gravitational pull. In the same way that the changing phases of the moon affects the ocean and waves, it is said to impact the amount of moisture absorbed by seeds and in the soil.

Lunar planting has increased in popularity in western cultures. In the United States, lunar planting has a specific technique to planting crops. The table below explains the best time to plant different types of flowers and crops.

Light/Waxing Moon – New/Full Moon	Day After a Full Moon/Day Before a New Moon
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Flowers (Flowers that complete an entire life cycle (seed-death) in one season and do not regrow in the next season) • Fruits and vegetables that grow above the ground (Ex. Corn, Tomatoes) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flowering Bulbs (A tuber of nutrients and flower parts that is created when a flower goes dormant. This ensures that the plant can grow back in the coming season.) • Biennial Flowers (Flowers that grow leaves, stems, and roots during their first year, go dormant for winter, and flower, produce seeds, and then die in their second year.) • Perennial Flowers (Flowers that live more than two years) • Fruits and vegetables that grow below the ground (Ex. Carrots, Potatoes)

Respond to Reading

Directions

Respond to the questions below. Underline and identify specific lines from the passage that support your claim.

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Native Hawaiian Lunar Farming	
<p>Ho'onui (or <i>Mua</i>): Increasing Waxing Phase</p>  <p>PoePoe: Full or Rounded Phase</p>  <p>Emi (or <i>Hope</i>): Decreasing Waning Phase</p>  <p>(Image by Liz Dacus)</p>	<p>In poepoe, the Moon is beginning to round and becomes a full Moon. The phases seen in this anahulu are Huna, Mōhala, Hua, Akua, Hoku ili, Hoku palemo, Māhealani, Kulu, Lā'aūkūkahi, Lā'aūkūlua, and Lā'aupau. It is important to note that 'ole Moons reflect their name. 'Ole means "without or lacking" and these Moon phases are typically bad times for planting and fishing. The best Moons for planting are any phases from Hua to Māhealani.</p>

Compare the United States method of lunar planting to the Hawaiian method. What differences do you notice? What are the reasons for these differences?