

Practical suggestions for sowing and planting at Midsummer (tips for before and after)

You might have asked yourself what are the best times around this Midsummer to sow and plant your garden? It is a sensitive time for many plants, especially if very hot.

Not only did most of Britain experience a drought for weeks up until this weekend, but also this Solstice we are having a particularly strong light impulse with the Moon being at its Apogee which also encourages flowering if we were to sow or transplant our cultivars at this time.

This will be followed by another strong light impulse on the 29th & 30th June. These two days could be used very beneficially for planting seed potatoes for next year using the Austrian method of cutting triangles from an average size and healthy potato and making sure it has one eye for developing one shoot and dip the cut sides into soot and woodash. Planting these triangles at 45 cm between rows and 30cm between pieces produces 4-5 seed potatoes on each plant. These seed potatoes will be more resilient and less affected by diseases. *(Planting for seed potatoes with the moon in Leo as it is on 23/24th is also a recommended BD practice, so choose the time that suits you best.)*

Knowing this strong influence around the solstice is a tipping point in influences for growing in the year, we can relax around this time and wait for the sun to start to descend in the sky and **start again with transplanting our flowers** on the 29th & 30th June, and hold off with sowing until the 5th July, when we will have passed three days of Mercury going through its node creating unfavourable times for garden work in general.

The only exception would be this Saturday and Sunday 17th & 18th June when I highly recommend to **sow the last root crops** of Radishes, Carrots, Turnips and Rutabagas (Swedes) before the solstice and before the Moon is starting to descend on Sunday night. Even though the Moon is descending, I would **wait for transplanting leaf crops** until the 30th June & 1st July, when the moon is descending and in the constellation of Scorpio. Particularly Pak Choi, Chinese Cabbage, Fennel, Mustard Greens and lettuces which are very much affected by the solstice and tend to bolt if sown or planted around this time.

The 1st & 2nd July would be ideal for **transplanting all your salad crops and brassicas** for autumn and to overwinter. Leeks also grow better if transplanted before the solstice. Summer peas like a spring sowing, so before the solstice too.

The next opportunity to sow Radishes and Turnips, etc. which seem to be badly affected if we sow them around the solstice, would do much better if we would wait until the 5th July. I trust you are welcoming the rains that are forecast for all of Britain starting this Sunday and continuing on and off throughout the week.

I suggest you make sure you irrigate your garden before it rains to moisten the soil for the rain to infiltrate deeper and not just to run off superficially. The best time to make use of your watering can is before a rain front with the lower pressure in the air.

Happy Solstice and enjoy the Midsummer festivities

Hans Gunther

