

The biodynamic garden around the summer solstice



This time of the summer solstice was always much celebrated, and it holds many mysteries and secrets hidden in its presence.

You might have noticed in the past, as I did, that plants sown or transplanted in the period 4-5 days before or after the Summer Solstice seem to be more likely to bolt and go to seed or flower very quickly.

Why might that be?

Some of you might have experienced the same when sowing plants when the moon was in Apogee, (meaning the furthest away from the Earth).

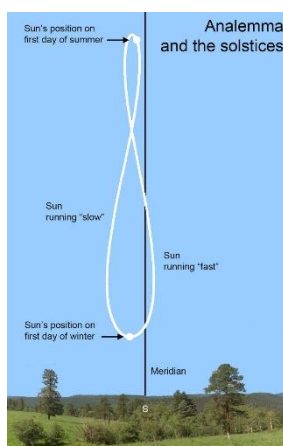
If you think of a swinging pendulum as a dynamic image which you can compare in the yearly cycle of the ascending and descending sun, then you might get very close to possibly understanding, what influences we deal with this time of year with the Sun at the summer solstice or with the Moon at Apogee.

When the pendulum swing goes through the midpoint, we reach the greatest velocity and the dynamic forces of movement are the highest.

In physical terms we have the highest potential for change, you could also say maximum vital, kinetic forces at work.

This can be compared to the time when the Moon moves fastest halfway between Apogee and Perigee.

Or when the sun ascends or descends in the sky the fastest around the Equinoxes and comes to a standstill for 9-12 days in respect to this movement in the Summer and Winter Solstice.



This anomaly of the daylength and the height of the Sun in the sky not changing, is due to the complex movement between the Earth and Sun which is not 100% circular and is called the lemniscate effect or the analemma (see below link).

In the Maria Thun Biodynamic Calendar you will find the 20. & 21. marked in grey, suggesting no work in the garden. In my experience there is a period of 6-8 days around the summer solstice when the sun is in its highest position in the sky and the plants experience a

standstill and are being drawn out, which creates an influence of accelerated maturation making plants go to flower and seed prematurely.

The same happens in the opposite pole around the Winter Solstice with root growth, which tends to stagnate around midwinter.

On the other hand in Spring and Autumn around the equinoxes we experience a tremendous increase of vegetative growth and vitality in plants.

Knowing this anomaly, we can relax around this time and start transplanting beetroot on the 24. June, the last flowering plants on the 25. June after 4 pm and all the leaf crops on the 26. & 27. June sowing and transplanting.

After the 28. June it will be a very good time to start sowing both direct into garden beds and in seed trays all your Autumn and overwintering crops as the Moon is ascending.

All leaf crops and in particular Radicchio, Sugarloaf, Lettuce varieties, Pak Choi, Chinese Cabbage, Fennel, Mustard Green, Radishes will do much better, if we wait until the 26. June to sow them rather than before.

I hope this little hint will suite you, giving you that little breathing space to allow yourself to celebrate the solstice feeling and enjoying the expansiveness of this time and then with the St. John Festival, tuning into the waning of the sun light to start kindling our inner light again.

Happy gardening,

Hans-Günther Kern

The Analemma- depicting the sun's path in the sky throughout the year – the lemniscate effect - <http://www.rolandschrapp.de/lemniskaten.html>

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