

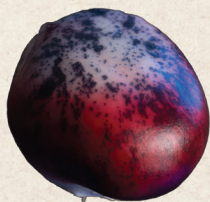
Indigenous Lunar
Planting Workbook

Developed by
Rowen White



Restoring, supporting, and developing
Indigenous food systems

Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance



The mission of the Indigenous Seed Keepers Network (ISKN) is to nourish and assist the growing Seed Sovereignty Movement across Turtle Island (North America).

As a national network, we leverage resources and cultivate solidarity and communication within the matrix of regional grassroots tribal seed sovereignty projects.



ROWEN WHITE

Cooperative Seed
Hub Coordinator



Rowen White is a Seed Keeper, farmer, and author from the Mohawk community of Akwesasne. As a passionate activist for Indigenous seed and food sovereignty, she has made significant contributions in this area. Rowen is the Educational Director and lead mentor of Sierra Seeds, an innovative Indigenous seed bank and land-based educational organization located in Nevada City, CA. She is also the Founder of the Indigenous Seedkeepers Network (ISKN), which is committed to restoring the Indigenous Seed Commons, and currently serves as a Cooperative Seed Hub Coordinator, facilitating workshops and conversations on seed/food security in tribal and small farming communities.

AARON LOWDEN

ISKN Program
Coordinator



Aaron Lowden (He/Him/His) is traditional farmer, land-based skills instructor, and seed caretaker from the Pueblo of Acoma (Big Bear and Little Yellow Corn Clans). As a lifelong student of the Acoma Tribe's traditional ecological and agricultural knowledge systems, he has led, developed, and instructed the program's agricultural initiatives to restore traditional food systems. With a strong passion for this work, he has created and facilitated the Acoma Ancestral Lands Seed Bank as well as food sovereignty gatherings and workshops for the Acoma community and tribal partners.



“...And season merged into season
and we learned the life cycles of all around us,
like the moon, the face of each thing is in constant change
and yet life goes into death a seed awaiting rebirth.

And season into season,
we grew into a nation of many lodges and cornfields,
and ceremonies were given us,

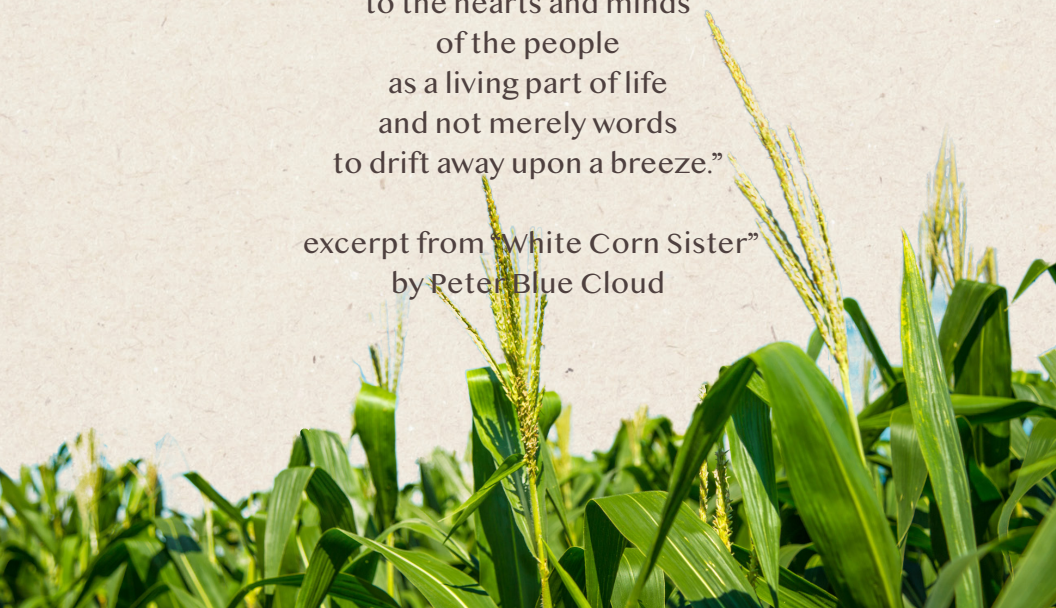
And season into season,
like the sapling pine,
grew the thinking of our elders
into a great tree,

and the laws by which our nation was to live,
became known as the Great Good.

And these laws were like seeds of corn,
each separate, yet bound to a single core,
and these laws were spoken often to our people
that none forget.

And the memory of these laws
were woven into beaded belts,
like rows of seed corn,
and the words were said
to the hearts and minds
of the people
as a living part of life
and not merely words
to drift away upon a breeze.”

excerpt from “White Corn Sister”
by Peter Blue Cloud





Following the Dance of

Introduction to Lunar Planting

As a foundational teaching of many Indigenous communities, we begin the planting season with tuning into the lunar cycles, and begin to set an intention to rehydrate the original rhythms that guide our planting and seed stewardship. As we move into spring, and begin the planning and planting of our seed gardens, this knowledge of lunar planting in an integral part of our proverbial Seedkeeper basket.

Plants sown in the ideal lunar phase show increased vigor, which is something that our ancestors have always known. In nearly every intact indigenous traditional agricultural community, the moon guided planting hands. In many traditional Indigenous communities, the seeds are entrusted to the women, for it has been that way since the dawning of time. In the Haudenosaunee cosmology, it was Original Woman who came to this



Grandmother Moon

earth clutching a handful of seeds, and proceeded to sing the World awake, sowing her seeds into the earth that was on the back of a Great Turtle. It is this same Original Woman who upon her parting from the Earth, returned to the sky in the form of Grandmother Moon, who continues to look over us, and guides the cycles of life, fertility, death and rebirth. Her beautiful luminous changing face pulls at the salty oceans that cover a large percentage of

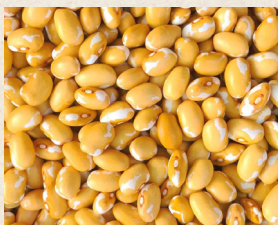
our planet to create waves and tides. It is this same gravitational force that moves the smaller oceans that reside inside our own bodies and also the tiny pools to water that exist within everything that is alive; the tiny oceans that sit at the heart of the seeds, the earth, the sapling trees.

So naturally, our Grandmother Moon watches over the cycles of our Plant kin, as they move from tiny little seeds into sprouts and then around the season into bud, blossom, fruit and seed once again. The creation story that began so long ago continues to unfurl and come alive in every moment, as our life sustainers emerge from our Mother Earth and remind us of our Original instructions. Dancing in the direction that the sun goes, First Woman put into place the cycles of continuous creation, continuous birth. As human beings we have been given the original instructions to follow, which maintain the cycles of continuous creation, of this continuous birth put forth by SkyWoman.

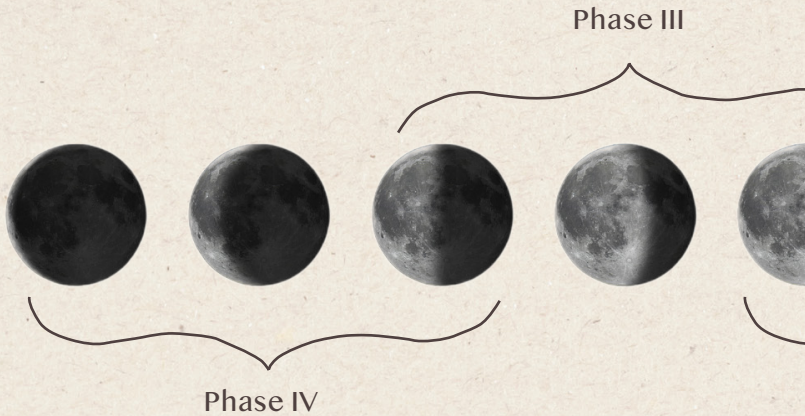
We invite you to explore all the aspects of lunar planting, and we will share with you some of our reflections of this approach as we move along into the planning and planting of our gardens.

Beginning in the spring months, we are continuously planting seeds of all manner of herbs, flowers and vegetables until late summer. When we begin to overlay our understanding of the basics of lunar planting, we create for ourselves a wonderful framework and timeline for planting that encourages the best growth for our little seedlings.





So how exactly does



The moon has four phases which last seven days each. The first two quarters are during the waxing or increasing light, between the new and the full moon. The third and fourth quarters are after the full moon when the light is waning, or decreasing.

The Earth is held in a powerful gravitational field, influenced by the moon. The

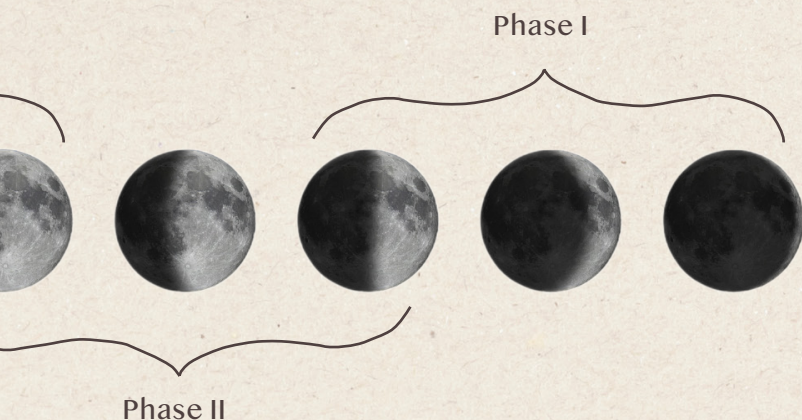
tides are highest during both new and the full moon, as the sun and moon lines up with earth. Just as the moon pulls the tides in the oceans, it also pulls upon the subtle bodies of water that exist in all living things including our bodies, the soil, and the seeds.

This gravitational pull from the Moon causes moisture to rise in the earth. These

Notes:

A grid of yellow dots for taking notes, consisting of 10 rows and 20 columns.

lunar planting work?



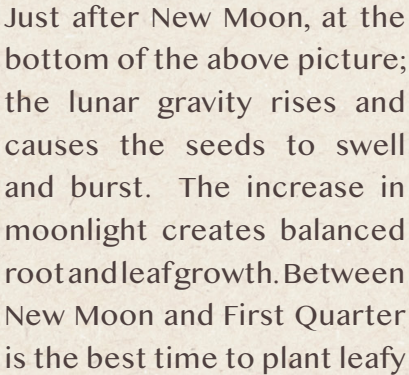
same forces affect the water content of the soil, which creates more moisture in the soil at the time of Full and New Moons... I love imagining this as the tide of the Earth. This increased moisture encourages the seeds to sprout and grow.

The highest amount of moisture is in the soil at Full moon and we see that

the seeds can absorb more moisture as the moon Waxes towards Full.

Paying close attention to the cycles of the moon and the subtle manner in which affects both people and plants can help to determine when to plant in order to improve our health and yield from our garden activities.





Notes:

First quarter waxing to Full moon:



From First Quarter to Full moon, the gravitational pull is decreasing but the moonlight grows stronger each night, creating strong leaf growth. The time just before the Full moon is an especially great time to plant. This is generally when I plant my corn, just 3-4 days before Full Moon. The

types of crops that prefer this window between First Quarter and Full Moon are annuals that produce above ground, but their seeds gestate inside the fruit, such as beans, corn, melons, peas, peppers, squash, and tomatoes.

Full moon to Third Quarter waning moon:



After the Full Moon, the energy draws down as the moon wanes. The gravitation pull is high, creating more moisture in the soil, but the moonlight is decreasing, putting energy into the roots. This is a favorable time for planting root crops,

including beets, carrots, onions, potatoes, and peanuts. It is also good for perennials, biennials, bulbs and transplanting because of the active root growth. This is also a wonderful time for pruning.

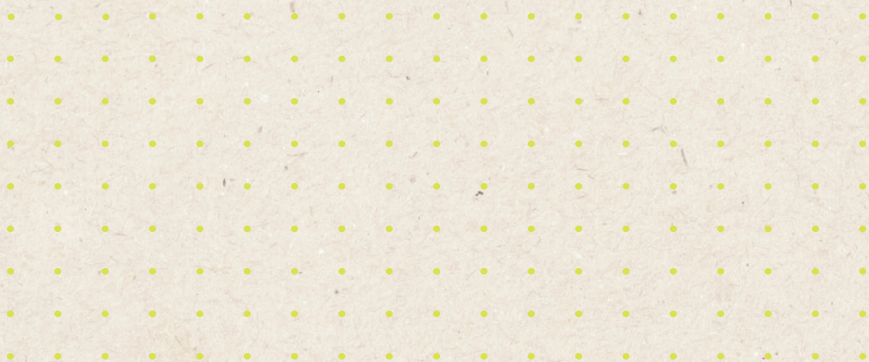


Third Quarter waning moon until New Moon:

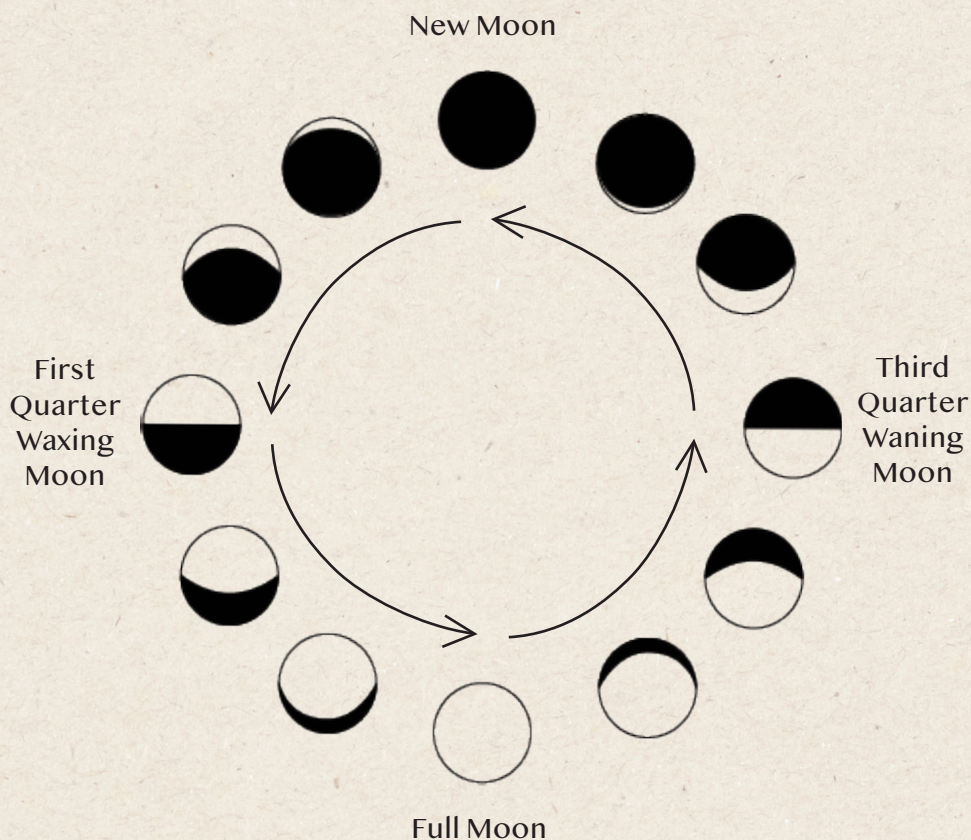


In the fourth quarter towards new moon, there is decreased gravitational pull and moonlight, and

it is considered a resting period. This is a great time to cultivate, harvest, transplant and prune.



We begin to see the cycles within the cycles, and we begin to see the metaphorical stories that come alive in each day and season. We begin to see references to all these cycles in our stories, in our creation cosmologies and our songs. We begin to view the multi-dimensional aspects of time through this lens of lifecycle, and we ignite our deep creative capacity to witness and enjoy this life more fully and completely.



Note: the Image above, the moon cycles are moving Counterclockwise, which is the way lunar cycles move. Note the waning cycles on the left and the waxing cycles on the right. Sometimes we are accustomed to following a circle clockwise, so readjust your eyes to moving around the cycle counterclockwise.

Ways to Integrate These Teachings:

- Begin to track the lunar cycles on your planning and planting calendars.
- Create a lunar cycles journal and begin to share what you are observing when you plant in alignment with the moon cycles
- Talk with trusted members of your community to learn more about your specific teachings about moon and lunar cycles.

Notes:

A large grid of yellow dots on a light brown background, intended for taking notes. The dots are arranged in a regular pattern, with approximately 20 columns and 30 rows.

Month:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
			
			
			
			
			

Notes:

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			
			
			
			
			





@nativefoodaalliance