

Introduction to Sequential Spraying

by Hugh Courtney

My own more profound introduction to the amazing element of Water took place when we were experiencing a drought in Virginia around 1988. I concluded that, if biodynamic agriculture really worked, it should be able to solve this problem. However, in my somewhat neophyte awareness, I had no surety as to which preparation provided the answer, so I decided to use all nine.

Since the early practitioners in biodynamics usually spent their initial effort at making and applying compost before treating a field with Horn Manure, I determined to start by using the Barrel Compost formulation of Maria Thun (containing Yarrow, Camomile, Nettle, Oak Bark, Dandelion and Valerian preparations). This was followed by the Horsetail herb preparation (*Equisetum arvense*), then by Horn Manure, and finally with the Horn Silica preparation to finish off the sequence.

Since both Barrel Compost and Horn Manure are preeminently soil preparations, I felt that they should both be applied during the evening hours. Horn Silica and *Equisetum* preparations are regarded as foliar sprays with the former almost always recommended as a morning spray. Thus, the obvious sequence to me seemed to be to start by spraying Barrel Compost on the evening of day one, followed by *Equisetum* the next morning, with Horn Manure on the evening of the second day. On the morning of the third day, the sequence was finished with a sunrise spraying of Horn Silica. Only one unit of each was involved and only approximately one acre was covered.

Although my recording of the dates was not exact, I believe that this sequence was applied during a Flower/Air period. To my astonishment, a day later a $\frac{3}{4}$ inch rainfall occurred. Some weeks later, when drought conditions once again prevailed, I repeated the sequence, but this time I made certain that all the sprays were applied when the Moon was in a Leaf/Water constellation.

As I continued to fine-tune my understanding of what might be involved, I came to an awareness that the last spray in the sequence served as a "trigger" of sorts for the desired effect. As a result, if it was moisture that was desired, the best sequence was Barrel Compost in the evening, Horn Silica the next morning, Horn Manure that evening, and ending with *Equisetum* on the morning of day three, all applied within a Leaf/Water period.

If one is experiencing excessive rainfall, then *Equisetum* and Horn Silica exchange places in the sequence as follows: Barrel Compost the first evening, *Equisetum* the next morning, Horn Manure that evening, ending with Horn Silica on the morning of day three. This sequential application for countering excessive rainfall requires that it be completed during a Fire/Fruit period.

After each application of a sequence, the desired results seemed to be effective at least 90% of the time. I also realized that one can have positive results by doing an "abbreviated" sequence by combining Barrel Compost and Horn Manure as an evening spray, followed by Horn Silica and *Equisetum* together the following morning.

Introduction to Sequential Spraying (continued)

The most dramatic result I experienced during those first few years of my experimentation occurred in 1991 when once again the drought was so severe in Virginia that the then governor, Douglas Wilder, called for a ban on the deer hunting season. At that point, a group of six people working with me determined to see if we could have an effect by using the sequential spray during a Leaf/Water constellation at multiple sites over seven separate places in Virginia and North Carolina.

Shortly after our group had completed this spraying, the rains came in sufficient quantity that Governor Wilder withdrew the ban only hours before the hunting season was scheduled to start. Although I had shared this

Sequential Spray Technique with many people during those early years of experimentation, I did not broadly publicize the methodology until I wrote the article "Sequential Spraying – Illusion, Remarkable Coincidence, or Reality" for the Winter 1993 issue of *Applied Biodynamics*. Since that issue was published, I no longer know how many people have tried the sequence, but I frequently receive feedback from people saying that it is effective.

In the face of a severe drought such as California experienced in recent years, the sequence might have to be repeated numerous times, and I have recommended that even if a full sequence could not be accomplished, it would be helpful to at least apply *Equisetum* whenever the Moon was in a Leaf/Water constellation.

I believe that the preparations serve as tools for the elemental beings. By providing the biodynamic preparations in a sequence, the elementals can accomplish the tasks that Nature desires.

I have come to see *Equisetum* preparation as a major factor in influencing the watery element in nature. When Steiner, after indicting that stronger Moon forces were a major factor in rampant weed growth in lecture six of the *Agriculture Course*, said, "Now we cannot 'switch off' the Moon," he may have done so with a certain degree of humor. As it turned out, Steiner may really have provided us with a means to "switch off" the Moon when he gave us the recipe for making a dilute tea of *Equisetum arvense* to sprinkle as a liquid manure over the fields.

This *Equisetum* (Horsetail) preparation, labeled as BD508 by Ehrenfried Pfeiffer, may also be able to "switch on" the Moon as well, which seems to be the case with the Sequential Spray Technique. It is all a matter of the right timing to enlist the help of the appropriate elemental beings to aid our efforts.

One outcome that manifests when one begins to employ this technique, is a definite awareness not only of the power of the biodynamic preparations, but also an awareness of the elemental forces that can come to our aid. Most dramatically, we can become more aware of the Being of Water and the elementals that serve that Being.

Note: "An Introduction to Biodynamic Preparations" by Hugh Courtney, published in the 2017 *Celestial Planting Calendar*, is available on the earthhavenlearning.ca website.

*"When moon runs low, put compost down
To build the humus in the ground.
Apply 500 in the fall,
Cover with leaves that start to fall.
Scatter wood ash, clay and lime;
Crused rock and burned bone are fine.
Feed bushes, trees and bramble fruits
To help the new year's fruiting shoots.
When soil has frozen, but not too deep,
Mulch carrots, parsnips, and kale to keep.
In sandy soil the roots stay sound,
But they will rot in clayey ground.
Keep some lettuce under glass,
Dry, cool and airy while frozen fast."*

— Dennis Klocek, *A Bio-Dynamic Book of Moons*