



## Star Light, Star Bright

**My house sits on a ridge overlooking the fields of a nephew.**

*Jim Ruen*

Tuesday, May 5, 2009

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Do you think the phase of the moon determines the best planting time? Read Amy Grisak's article on Mother Nature's Planting Guide and determine for yourself if there's any merit to this centuries-old belief. My house sits on a ridge overlooking the fields of a nephew. The other evening he was going late into the night working up the corn stubble from last fall's harvest.

As I set out for my late night walk with my dog under a clear and star filled sky, I thought back to nights as a young man working late in the fields.

Spring work, like harvest, is a time of intense energy. There is so much to get done and seemingly so little time to do it.

When the weather is good, you work...all day and into the night. In that time before tractor cabs, working into the night meant getting a different view of your working world, one covered by a spectacular light show.

It isn't that I would disk a field with my eyes on the stars. I had to concentrate on the field before me, and the eyestrain was considerable. Tractor lights weren't that good, and there was no such thing as GPS and satellite assisted steering.

That said, there were times when the fieldwork halted, perhaps to talk to my brother or father, to change fields or simply to head home.

That's usually when the stars overhead would break through the clutter of the day and the pressure of work yet undone. That's when something primeval would grab at my soul and remind me that what I was struggling with was only a passing fancy.

I'll have to ask my nephew in his heated tractor cab equipped with stereo sound systems and high tech guidance if he ever notices the stars above. You can't see stars through the roof of a cab.

Does he pause as he moves from tractor cab to pickup to look up? If not, he is missing out on the best reason of all to work at night.

I don't do field work anymore, but I still savor the night sky. Ironically, it is a free show for anyone living in the country, and you pay a terrible price if you don't enjoy it.

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