



The Three Sisters

By

Dehowähda·dih - Bradley Powless



When Mother Earth was new, from her grew three plants. They are onéñha•' (corn), ohsahé'da' (beans), and ohnyóñhsa' (squash).

Because they came from his mother, the Good Twin called them his Three Sisters.



When the Haudenosaunee plant, they plant the Three Sisters together. But they do not plant them at the same time.

In the gardens mounds of earth are prepared.



On a mound of earth, the corn is planted first. Usually, a few corn seeds are planted on top of the mound just before a full moon.



Once the corn is growing, it is now time to plant the other sisters.

The bean is planted next to the corn plant.

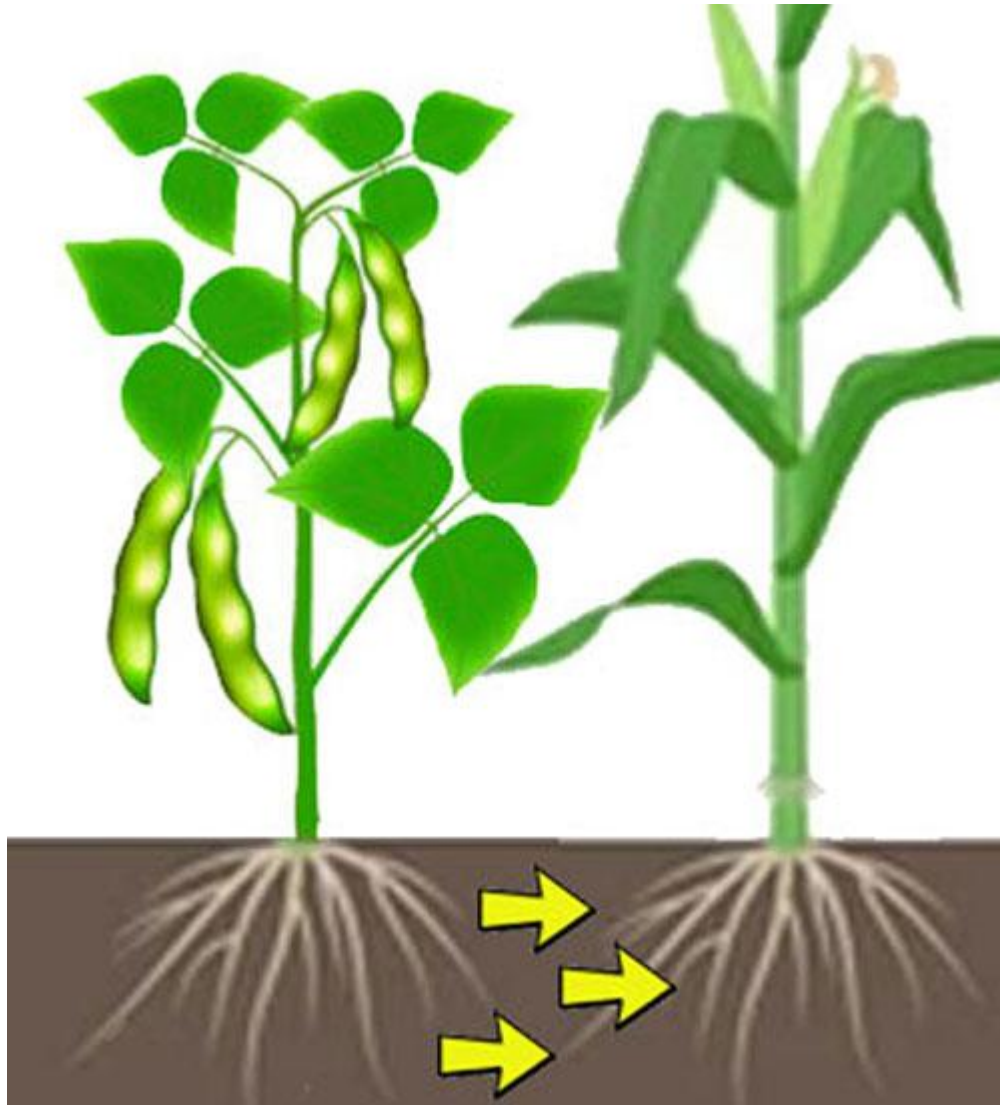


Next to the bean seeds, the squash seeds are planted around the other two sisters.

The 3 sisters are real sisters as they help each other.



The corn provides a place for her sister the bean to climb and grow on her stock.



The bean helps her sister the corn by releasing nutrients into the soil that the corn needs to grow.



The squash helps her sisters too. Her large leaves grow and covers the mound keeping the ground moist and the weeds away.



When you eat corn, beans, and squash together, they provide the right balance of nutrients to keep people healthy.

So, the Three Sisters help us too.



Our sisters are very important to us! We have songs and ceremonies for them. We eat them in soups, breads, or all by themselves.

We even celebrate them with art.