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Harvest Time

Autumn is the end of the growing season; the onset of a process of involution that prepares us for winter. It is also the time of harvest, a period to claim the rewards of the labors of the previous spring when planting took place. Spring was followed by the work of summer, irrigating and weeding, to sustain and assure growth.

There is a similar cycle in training younger physicians, scientists and technologists: the didactic lectures at the beginning of training; the planting of facts and ideas followed by the period of growth with its probing questions and discussions; the phase of acquiring experience by apprenticing next to senior staff, being nurtured and guided until harvest time. At this time, we may reap the fruits of our labor. It is the time when the junior colleague meets or exceeds our unspoken expectations, is creative beyond instruction, beyond minimal requirement and is now able to perform on his/her own. At that time, we know that the growth cycle is complete.

Like the farmer at harvest time, there is joy in beholding the bounty, the fruits of our labors, and there is exhilaration in the knowledge that the earlier effort has been rewarded. It is very gratifying when this occurs; it is very disappointing when it does not. Let us enjoy this time of the year—this harvest and the fruits of our labors.

Stanley J. Goldsmith, MD, Editor-in-Chief
The Journal of Nuclear Medicine