

Can talking to plants help them grow?

by Lauren Ann Heess

I remember hearing in my high school science class that talking to plants could potentially help their growth. Since I enjoy planting flowers, I've always been curious, yet skeptical about this claim. However, research has shown that some element of talking or just sound in general, may truly be helping plants grow faster and healthier.

There are a few theories as to why scientists believe talking may help plants grow. One theory is that the carbon dioxide we breathe on the plants while talking to them helps growth, but there is very little supporting evidence for that. Another theory is that talking causes vibrations and scientists "have found evidence that plants do react to a number of environmental stimuli in which they rely on for survival, this includes vibrations." Since vibrations have been found to stimulate plants, it would make sense that vibrations from speaking can have a positive impact on the growth of plants.



Multiple studies have been conducted to test the sound and vibration theory, one of which was done on a show called Myth Busters. They did an experiment where they had greenhouses set up with either no music, looped recordings, or various genres of music playing. The results showed that the plants had the best growth rate in the greenhouses that had music playing. The plants in the greenhouses that played recordings still grew faster than the control plants.

Another reason researchers believe sound may improve plant growth is because "a 2007 paper from scientists at South Korea's National Institute of Agricultural Biotechnology proposed that two genes involved in a plant's response to light—known as *rbcS* and *Ald*—are turned on by music played at 70 decibels." That amount of decibels is about the same level as someone speaking, so both talking and music can potentially help activate these genes in plants.

The best advice for people who want healthy plants is to provide them with water, light, and nutrition. However, I think there is enough evidence to convince people that it may not hurt to start talking to your plants, or at least play some music for them.

Lauren Ann Heess, September 17, 2015

<https://sites.psu.edu/siowfa15/2015/09/17/can-talking-to-plants-help-them-grow/>

Graphic and article

https://luv2garden.com/talking_to_plants.html