

NILE THE GAME OF ANCIENT AGRICULTURE

BY DANIEL CALLISTER

SUMMARY:

In NILE, 2–6 players draft cards to plant fields. At the beginning of every turn there is a flood, which determines which fields will harvest that turn. Harvested crops are placed into storage piles, which ultimately determine the winner of the game. Players spend the game competing over crops, trading at markets, and even making offerings to Hapi, the god of the Nile. The winner will be the player who defends his fields and manages his storage pile most effectively.

SETUP:

There are seven different *crops*, each represented by its own color: *Papyrus* (Red), *Wheat* (Yellow), *Lettuce* (Green), *Castor* (Brown), *Flax* (Lavender), *Grape* (Purple), and *Onion* (Tan), as well as several *Speculation* cards. Depending on the number of players, one or more of these crops should be removed from the game. For 2-4 players, remove all cards of two crops, for 5 players, remove one crop, and for 6, leave all crops in play. Don't forget to remove the appropriate *Speculation* cards!

There are also *Stone* and *Monument* cards. If you are not playing with the *Monuments* expansion rules, as described later, remove these from play as well.

Place the *Flood* card face-up in the middle of the table and set the *Plague of Locusts* card aside. Shuffle the remaining cards well and deal each player five cards. Mix in the *Plague* card randomly with the remaining cards and place the deck face down as a draw pile. Select a starting player by any fair method.

STEPS IN EACH TURN:

- 1 - FLOOD
- 2 - HARVEST
- 3 - TRADE
- 4 - PLANT OR SPECULATE
- 5 - DRAW

1) FLOOD:

The top-most card in the draw deck is turned face up and placed on top of the *Flood* card. This card determines what fields will harvest (see HARVEST) and what cards may not be played this turn (see PLANT OR SPECULATE). Speculation cards are also resolved during this step (see SPECULATION CARDS).

2) HARVEST:

What crops may be harvested are based on the current Flood card. Each time a new Flood card is turned over, any Player who has that crop currently planted (regardless of whose turn it is) removes the top card in that crop's field and places it face down into their individual *storage pile*.

Your storage pile is a collection of all of your harvested crops. Besides serving as your score and determining the winner, it may be inventoried and traded from throughout the game. Keep the contents of your storage pile secret from the other players!

If the Flood card is a *Speculation* card, it will show multiple crops. When this happens, all shown crops are harvested. If the *Plague of Locusts* card is drawn as the Flood card, it is immediately resolved and discarded (see PLAGUE OF LOCUSTS). A new card is then drawn in its place to serve as the Flood card.

3) TRADE:

Trading allows you to discard two old cards in order to receive a single new card. There are two options for trading:

MARKET – Discard any two cards (Crop and/or Speculation) from your hand and/or storage pile and draw one card from the draw pile. Add this to your hand.

OFFERING TO HAPI – Discard any two cards (Crop and/or Speculation) from your hand and/or storage pile and replace the current Flood card with a new one from the top of the draw pile. This new Flood card acts as any other Flood card, thus causing a new Harvest and preventing certain cards from being played. Continue as if it's Step 2) Harvest again.

Players need not trade at all during their turn. Players may trade using both options in any order, any number of times

per turn. All cards traded away are discarded. Players may not trade with each other, nor can planted cards be traded.

4) PLANT OR SPECULATE:

The *Plant or Speculate* step is regulated by the Flood card. Any cards showing crop types that are currently flooded may not be played during this step.

PLANT – To plant you must place crops from your hand face up in front of you, forming a *field*. While a field of a given crop type is in play, no one else may create a field using the same crop. As such, there are never more fields in play than there are crops at any time.

When planting a new field, players may:

- ♦ Plant at least two cards of all the same crop type.
- ♦ Plant exactly two cards of differing crops (one of which may be planted into an existing field).
- ♦ Plant any number of crops to any number of fields that already exist in front of you.



A player may not plant a new field if another player currently has a field of that crop type in front of them, *unless* the new field will contain more cards than the existing field. When this happens, all cards in the other player's field of that crop type must be discarded immediately.

SPECULATE – Instead of planting, the active player may play one or two *Speculation* cards. These are cards with two crop types represented on them. When successful, a *Speculation* card allows that player to immediately draw three (3) cards into their hand. As with planting, *Speculation* cards showing crops currently flooded may not be played. To play *Speculation* cards, simply place them face-up in your play area.

Speculation cards are successful when they have at least one crop type in common with the next Flood card revealed. The game pauses and the player who played the *Speculation* card(s) immediately draws three (one card matched) or six (both cards matched) cards into their hand from the draw pile. All speculation cards (successful and not) are then discarded and the game continues.

It is now the Plant or Speculate phase of the bottom player's turn. He has several options:

Plant Two Papyrus. This is possible because this would give him a field bigger than the player to the right. The right player would then discard her Papyrus.

Plant a Lettuce and a Flax. This is possible because a player can plant exactly two cards of differing crops, one of which can be an existing field.

Plant as many Flax as he wants.

He cannot plant Lettuce alone, because he does not have at least two cards of that type.

He cannot plant Castor because he is unable to produce a field bigger than the left player.

He cannot plant Wheat because it is the showing Flood card.

He can also Speculate instead of planting at all.

5) DRAW:

To end a turn, the active player draws the top two (2) cards from the draw pile and adds them to their hand. Once the active player has drawn their cards, their turn is over. The next player moving clockwise starts their turn as the active player. When the draw pile is exhausted, reshuffle the Flood stack, the Plague card, and all discarded cards to create a new draw pile.

PLAGUE OF LOCUSTS:

When the Plague of Locusts card is drawn it must be announced immediately. The player who drew the card sets it aside face up. Determine among all players who currently has the most cards in any one field (including monuments). This field is consumed by the plague of locusts and must be completely discarded. If there is a tie, all cards from the tied fields are discarded. If the Plague is drawn as the Flood card, resolve the Plague, then flip over another card to replace it. If you are drawing cards, finish doing so. The Plague card does not count as one of the drawn cards.

END OF THE GAME:

Play through the draw pile a number of times equal to the number of players (i.e. twice with two players, three times with three players, etc.). Once the final draw pile is exhausted, the game ends. Use the Seasons cards included with the game to help you mark how many times you have progressed through the deck.

SCORING:

Individually, players separate the cards in their storage piles by crop type and then line them up in five piles from left to right, starting with the crop type of which they had the least cards (even if it's zero) and ending with the crop type of which they had the most. Players then start comparing their piles. Whichever player has the most cards in their left-most pile (the crop type with the least cards) is the winner. If there is a tie, the tied players compare their next pile and so on. In the event of an exact tie for all five piles... play again!

It's the end of the game and all players arrange their crops from smallest to largest. None of the players have all five crops in play, so the first pile is zero for all of them. When it comes to the second smallest crop, the top player easily loses. The middle player only has one card in this column, while the bottom player has two. This makes the bottom player the winner, even though they've both collected the same number of Crop cards.



THE MONUMENTS EXPANSION:

In the Monuments expansion for Nile, players are competing with each other to build the largest monuments as well as harvesting resources. Having monuments allows you special abilities and privileges, which help you throughout the game.

SETUP:

Before beginning, simply shuffle the Stone cards into the draw deck after removing the appropriate number of crops for the number of players. Keep the three Monument cards near the center of the play area for now.

The game plays as usual with the following additions:

STONE CARDS:

Stone cards are traded and “planted” along with or separate from crop cards as if they were another crop themselves. However, instead of being used to plant and harvest fields, Stone cards are used to build Monuments. When you play your Stone cards, you must choose a Monument type (Sphinx, Obelisk, or Wall), which is then placed at the top of that Stone pile.

Like any other “crop,” one can only build a Monument if it will be bigger (contain more Stone cards) than an existing Monument of that type. Having the Monument card at the top of one’s Stone pile indicates that the player controls that Monument and is the only person that can activate that Monument’s special ability. Another player can out-build the Monument on their turn by laying down more Stone cards and announcing the same Monument type. The new player immediately takes the corresponding Monument card and places it at the top of their own Stone pile. Once out-built, a player must discard all Stone cards attached to that Monument.

A player may never build more than 1 new monument in a single turn but may have as many as 3 monuments (one of each type) built at any time. Because of this, a player can have as many as 3 piles of Stone Cards, or three players may have a Stone Card pile each. Never can two players control the same Monument type.

When Stone is flooded, all Monuments must *discard*, not harvest, 1 Stone Card. The discarded Stone cards are shuffled along with the other discarded cards to make the draw deck for the next round. If a player controlling a Monument built of only 1 Stone card is forced to discard that card due to a flood, he loses control of that Monument and must return it to the center of the play area. Stone is not a scoreable “crop” at the end of the game.

MONUMENTS & SPECIAL ABILITIES:

Each Monument has its own special ability. The owner of that Monument card may execute that ability as instructed for as long as he controls that Monument card. Players may have multiple Monuments in play at the same time, in which

case they are allowed to execute all special abilities. The special abilities are as follows:

SPHINX:

The owner of the Sphinx Monument may out-plant and/or out-build other players’ fields and monuments using an equal number of cards. For example: if another player has a Field of 2 Flax, the Sphinx allows you to out-plant them using only 2 Flax instead of requiring 3 or more.

OBELISK:

The owner of the Obelisk Monument draws 3 cards at the end of each turn and earns 4 cards instead of 3 for each successful Speculation.

WALL:

The Wall Monument protects the owner’s Fields and Monuments by only allowing them to be out-planted and/or out-built by at least 2 cards instead of 1. This means that a Field of 2 Castor may only be out-planted by 4 or more Castor.

NILE

GAME DESIGN

Daniel Callister

ADDITIONAL DESIGN

James Mathe

ART & CARD DESIGN

Chuck Whelon

EDITING & LAYOUT

Clay Gardner

