

Intro to Seed Saving Basics

Seeds are the most magical living thing you'll ever put in your hand. They're living, hibernating embryos – which can remain dormant for decades before springing to life in the garden.

Why is saving seeds important?

Cost Savings and Self Sufficiency: by eliminating the need to purchase seeds annually it offers long-term savings and a reliance on seed companies.

Climate Adaptation and Resilience: Saving your seeds from year to year helps them adapt to your specific microclimate, resist pests and diseases, and become more resilient over time.

Improved Quality and Traits: By selecting the most healthy, high producing, delicious, and superior crops tailored to your garden and taste.

Preserve heritage and Biodiversity: You can help preserve rare, heirloom varieties that might otherwise disappear from the market. This helps to foster biodiversity.

Reduce Gardening Footprint: It reduces the consumption of packaging, shipping, resources, transportation, and makes your garden more sustainable.

Connects You With Nature and History: Some plant histories are quite fascinating, and often families pass down plants seeds for generations.

1. Intro

Heirloom (OP) vs Hybrid (F1) Only OP seeds breed true to type.

Vocabulary: Annual, biennial, cross-pollination, self pollination, winnow ...

Selection: Select seeds from the most desirable plants (early producers, pest-resistant, tasty)

2. Dry Seed Saving Techniques

Target crops: beans, peas, lettuce, herbs, flowers, etc

Allow pods/seeds/ to dry until brown and brittle on the plant. Harvest, shell, winnow

3. Wet Seed Saving Techniques

Target Crops: tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, melons, squash

Scoop seeds into a jar, add water, and cover with burlap or muslin.. some sort of cover that will let air flow. The water will help to break down the gel around the seeds and eliminate diseases. Skim off the floating scum and non-viable seeds (which will be floating at the top - all good seeds will sink to the bottom.

Rinse the good seeds and dry on a screen or paper plate - I use a paper plate so that I can write the name of the seed on it.

4. Storage and Labeling

Store in a cool, dark place. Paper envelopes are best for air circulation, while glass jars are better for long-term storage and refrigerator storage.

Always label your seeds with the name and the year they were stored.