

# Seed Saving

## Why collect and save seeds?

- Save money
- Have a supply of a variety of seeds. Fresh seeds have a higher germination success rate.
- Protect local species and grow resilient plants that have adapted to your area and conditions through their evolution.
- Avoid gene-tech companies, fungicides and pesticides
- Sustainable, no consumerism, no packaging or transport miles.
- Creates opportunities to swap seeds with other people in area
- Increases species diversity and food security

## Where are the seeds?

- seed heads
- pods
- fruit

## When to collect?

- When plant is fully matured and seeds are fully grown or are drying out naturally. Fruit must be fully formed and ripe.
- Pick in dry weather

## Collection

- Choose non-hybrid plants so they will reproduce same seed as the parent plant.
- Choose the strongest, healthiest plant and label it clearly to prevent harvesting.
- Harvest in dry weather. (Reduce rotting and fungal problems)
- Remove seeds from pods and fruit and clean off any remaining bits of the plant pods and husks to reduce pest and disease problems.
- Place lettuce or small seed heads in a paper bag, tie up and hang upside down until dry, the seeds will shake into the bag and later need to be cleaned of husks and stalks.
- Dry larger seeds on canvas, paper towel, in a paper bag or woven basket (Aeration is important so seeds don't rot or grow moulds)
- Drying takes about 1-3 weeks to dry depending on seed and weather conditions

## Storage

- Place dry seeds in an envelope.
- Place a few bay leaves or a little diatomaceous earth to the (DE) to reduce insect attack.
- Label envelope with Date, Plant name, Place collected and quantity.
- Place in an air-tight container.
- Store in a dry, cool, dark place with an even temperature

## Tips:

- Start with seeds that are easy to grow; ie. beans, peas, lettuce, kale, radish.
- Let some seed heads drop seeds to the ground such as lettuce, mustard greens and parsley to self-seed and provide habitats for beneficial insects.

**Web Reference:** [www.seedsavers.net](http://www.seedsavers.net)

\*Notes are for seeds that naturally loose moisture, dry up and can be stored for a period of time. (desiccation-tolerant seeds) Research methods for saving tomato seeds, seeds from shrubs and trees.

