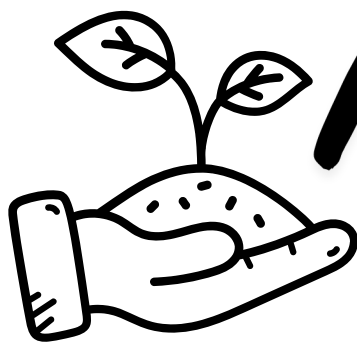


SEED LIBRARY

NEWSLETTER

MUSKOKA LAKES PUBLIC LIBRARY



How-to-Save SEEDS

Hopefully you have had some success in growing over the course of this season- and if it wasn't with physical plants, I'm sure you learned a thing or two which counts as growing for sure!

We hope you are able to bring seeds back to the library at the end of the season. But things don't always work out as planned. The weather doesn't cooperate, insects or other predators take out the plants, we take on more than we can handle and the list goes on...

This edition of our newsletter is focused on what we came here to do- save seeds! So that we can keep this seed library going (and growing) season after season, year after year!.

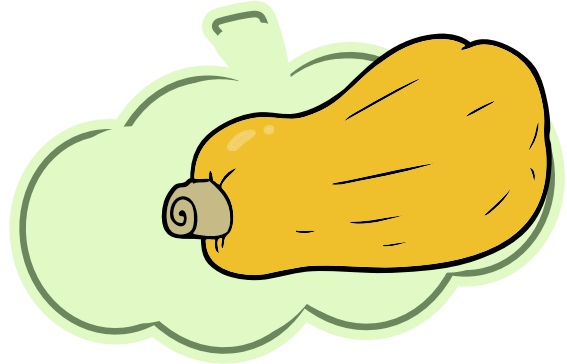
In the pages that follow, we have mapped out the steps that you can take to save seeds from the specific seeds we shared with you in our seed library. We hope this proves to be helpful on your seed saving journey!

If you have success in saving seeds, we hope that you might bring some back to the library to continue the cycle.



LETTUCE

- Pick seed heads from plants exhibiting strong growth and desirable traits. Look for plants that are robust, flavor-rich, and resistant to bolting.
- Wait until the plant's seed heads are brown and dry. This usually happens in late summer or early fall.
- Use scissors or pruning shears to cut the seed heads off the stalk, ensuring you leave enough stem for easy handling.
- Hang the seed heads upside down in a dry, airy location. This prevents moisture accumulation, which can spoil seeds.
- Gently rub the seed heads between your fingers to dislodge the seeds from the chaff.
- Optionally rinse the seeds in cool water to remove any remaining chaff. Spread them out on a paper towel to dry.
- Ensure seeds dry completely in a shady area with good airflow. This prevents mold growth and extends storage life.
- Once dry, store seeds in a cool, dark place in an airtight container, such as a glass jar or a sealed bag. Label them with the variety and date for easy reference.



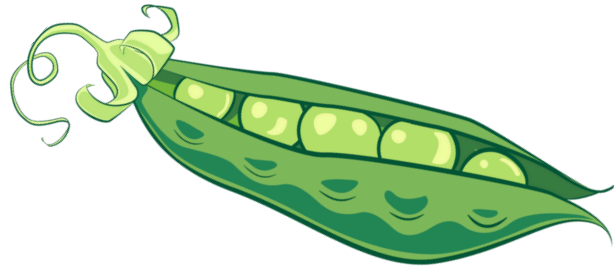
SQUASH

- You can have your squash and eat it, too. That is, you can save the seeds from the same squash that you eat. It's a win-win! But with our summer squash, which we harvest when they are young—this can be a bit confusing. A good rule of thumb is to wait for these squash to reach their mature size and then start slightly changing color. Once their color begins to shift, they're not going to get any bigger. At this point, the rinds should begin to harden as well. If you can't easily dent the rind with your fingernail, then the fruit is likely fully ripe (and so are its seeds).
- Scoop out as many seeds as possible.
- Transfer into a clean glass jar.
- Add some water to your jar of goopy innards, and put a lid loosely on the jar. You want to leave this jar alone for a day or two, which should encourage its contents to ferment just slightly. This process breaks down a gelatinous lining that many seeds have and will allow them to dry fully for long-term storage.
- Discard any seeds that float.
- After a day or so, pour the contents of the jar over a fine mesh strainer to remove the liquid and the pulp. Be sure to rinse all the goop off.
- Dry + store.
- When you're ready to use your seeds, you may want to test their viability first. Test the viability by soaking in water. Those that sink are viable.

TOMATO



- Choose a perfect tomato. The best fruit yields the best seeds.
- Allow tomatoes to fully ripen on the vine and select a large, unblemished fruit. Choosing healthy, ripe or overripe tomatoes will ensure the seeds are fully developed.
- Wash and cut
- Thoroughly wash the tomato and allow it to air dry. Cut the fruit in half along the center.
- Remove the seeds
- Gently scoop the seeds from the tomato cavities into a small jar. The seeds will be coated with a jelly-like material. Pulp and liquid will likely also end up in the jar. The seed-pulp mixture is perfect for fermentation. (Tomato seed saving involves fermentation. The fermentation process prepares tomato seeds for storage by producing antibiotics that help control seed-borne diseases. Fermentation also promotes a protective seed coat that prevents the seeds from germinating until they are planted.)
- Cover the jar for fermentation
- Cover the jar of seed-pulp mixture with a paper towel or coffee filter secured with a rubber band. Leave the jar in a warm location, ideally between 15-22 degrees C, for three days.
- Stir the mixture once a day
- Gently stir the mixture once a day to dislodge the jelly-like material around the tomato seeds. Don't be surprised if a white fungus appears on top of the mixture after a few days. This helpful fungus will consume the jelly, preparing the seeds for storage.
- Separate the seeds from the pulp
- After three days, fill the jar with warm water and wait for the seeds to settle to the bottom. Gently pour out the water along with tomato pulp and any seeds that float. The viable seeds are heavy and sink to the bottom of the jar. Repeat the process of filling the jar with warm water, allowing the seeds to settle, and pouring out the water and debris until the discarded water is nearly clear.
- Dry the seeds
- Pour seeds into a strainer, allowing any excess water to drip out. Then, spread the seeds on a paper plate or newspaper. Allow the seeds to dry at room temperature in a well-ventilated place for several days. Stir the seeds daily with your fingers to separate them and promote even drying.
- Store in a cool, dry place
- Place dry seeds in a labeled container or bag. The best storage place is cool, dry, and dark, such as a cabinet.

BEANS + PEAS (PODS)

- Allow pods to grow and mature on the plant until they are dry, and brown and crisp.
- Pull out pods and shell to remove seeds.
- Place seeds on a paper towel to air dry away from moisture for a few days.
- They are dry enough to store when seed coats can no longer be dented with your fingernail.
- Store seeds in a tightly sealed glass jar or container or envelope labeled with name, variety and collection date.
- Keep seeds in a dark, cool location.

**PEPPER**

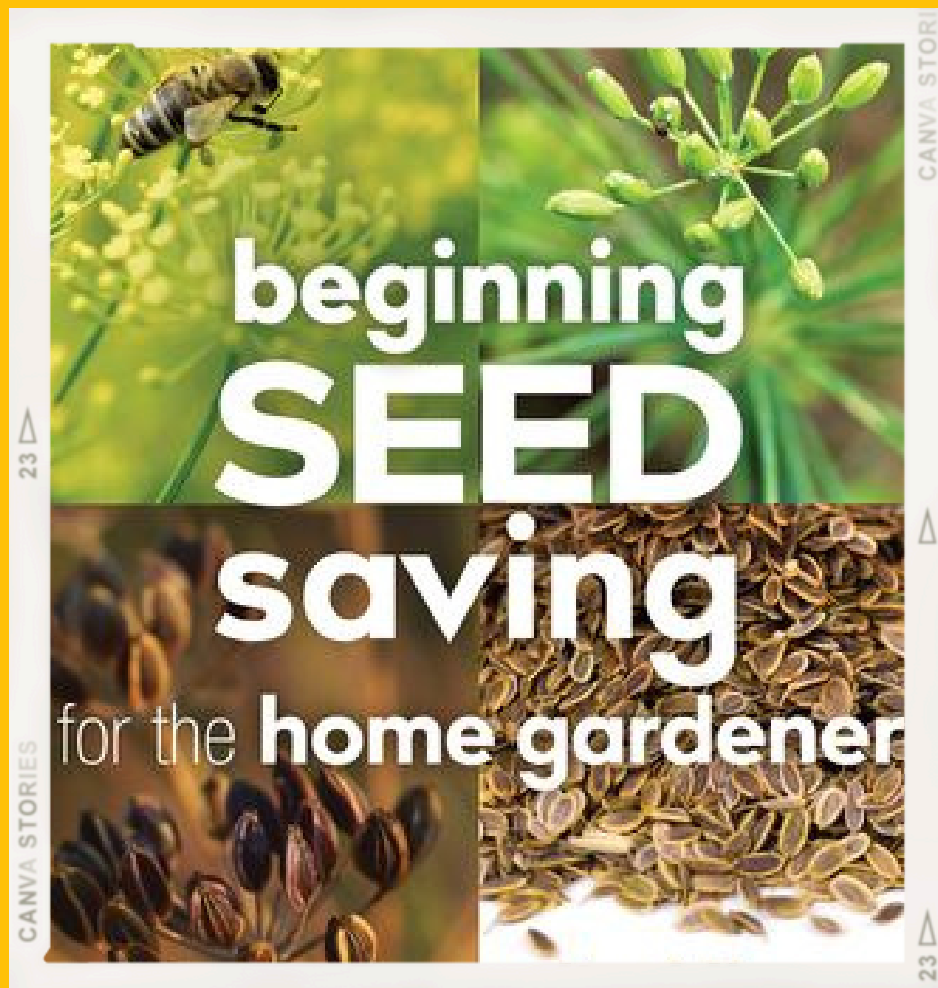
- Harvest mature peppers- leave peppers on the plant until they get wrinkly.
- Slice the fruit open vertically and shake the seeds out into a bowl.
- Spread the seeds on a flat surface away from direct sunlight and leave them in a space with low humidity.
- Store the dried seeds in a cool, dark, dry area.

FOR ALL SEEDS

Spread them out to dry on a plate, cookie sheet, coffee filter, paper towel, waxed paper, window screen, baking sheet, or in a fine-mesh strainer. They should be in a single layer, and hopefully, spaced out from one another.

LIBRARY RESOURCE

for learning how to save seed



*Book: Beginning Seed Saving
for the Home Gardener
Available in the library!
([Reserve the book here](#))*

We will have envelopes available here in the library that you can pick up for returning your saved seeds in. Or use this template to print off your own.

SEEDS

plant name

date



MLPL
MUSKOKA LAKES
PUBLIC LIBRARY

save some seeds and donate them to the Muskoka Lakes Public Library seed library for others to check out!

notes...

borrow | grow | share

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