

Examples

Seed Saving Level of Difficulty (due to cross-pollination):

Easy (open pollination) :

Peas, beans, cilantro, dill, marigold, morning glory, petunia

Advanced (hand pollinate or tent to prevent cross-pollination) :

Broccoli, squash, pumpkin, cucumber, melon

Seed Saving Methods:

Dry Processing: beans, broccoli, corn, lettuce, okra, onions, sunflower, turnips

Wet Processing: squash, pumpkin, peppers

Fermentation Processing: tomato, eggplant, cucumber, melon

Note: While multiple methods work, these methods are suggestions to get the most viable seeds from your harvest.



Borrow. Grow. Return



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“Weeds are flowers too,
once you get to know them. ”

A. A. Milne



Seed Saving Guide






Saving and Sharing Seeds

The seeds you borrow from the Montauk Library are free. We hope this provides the opportunity to learn a lot and experience the joy of gardening. As you harvest the fruits of your labor, please bring some seeds back to share and circulate with the Montauk community.

Choosing Seeds

The seeds you'll find in our seed library are mostly open-pollinated or heirloom varieties. These seeds do not cross-pollinate and produce fruit the next season the same as the parent plant. The seeds are categorized by how difficult they are to save.

Easy Seeds: great for beginners and are less likely to cross-pollinate with other plants in that family (i.e. squash)



Advanced Seeds: these grow plants that are wind, insect pollinated or biennial and very likely to cross pollinate with other plant varieties, resulting in a "mystery" plant or inedible fruits.


Three Ways to Save Seeds

When choosing seeds to donate back to the seed library, select a portion of seeds from your healthiest, tastiest and most vigorous plants.

Dry Seed Processing

For plants with seeds that grow on the outside of the plant, allow the seed pods to dry on the plant and be sure to collect before they break open.

For plants with seeds in the center of the flower, allow the plant to dry and when the stem holding the seed head turns brown, harvest the seeds.



Wet Seed Processing

For seeds that grow inside the fleshy fruit of the plant, rinse the seeds and dry them thoroughly. If the seeds have a gel-like coating (tomatoes), use the fermentation method.

Fermentation Seed Processing

Harvest seeds with a gel-like coating when the fruit is fully ripe.

Place seeds and "goo" in a container with a lid and let stand at room temperature for 2-3 days.

When mold forms on top the fermentation is complete. Add more water and shake, then remove the mold and the pulp. You will see the good seeds settle at the bottom of the container. Rinse them through a strainer and spread on a plate, coffee filter or screen to dry for about 3 weeks.

