

WHAT'S TRENDING?

SEED SAVING - ANNUALS AND PERENNIALS

Katie Childs, Master Gardener Volunteer - Spooner Agricultural Resource Center
Meet Me In the Garden 2018 Series, Sat. September 8 - 10 AM

PURPOSE

The why and how of saving annual and perennial seeds - with proper techniques, it can reap multifold dividends.

BENEFITS

- Appreciation of the mighty fascinating seed - from a spec to #40
- Explore/experiment options - biodiversity within your ecosystem
- Expansion of pollinators/others – unique to your gardening area
- Invasiveness control - maintenance of current plant space/size
- Cost saving - plant budget reduction
- Social opportunity - gift giving and seed exchanges
- Garden status assessment - future planning/development
- Seed mixes opportunity - like the Pros, combine several pollinators
- Preservation - Special preferred variety or heirlooms

SUPPLIES

1. Cutting tools - clippers, shears, scissors
2. Collection vessels - Variety of kitchen items - trays, dishpans, tubs, paper bags, large and small clear plastic bags, large leaf collectors, etc.
3. Storage containers i.e. glass, plastic, metal - must be rodent, insect, moisture, heat proof
4. Miscellaneous - gloves, newspaper, permanent markers, labels

THE BASIC STEPS

1. Key to success - Learning what plants are good candidates, which aren't. It can be a gardening adventure! F1 Hybrids* are good garden plants, but not candidates for seed saving.
2. Select the best - characteristics of your healthiest plants include good flower color, heavy flowering, size, disease resistant, length of flowering, plant size, vigor, resistance to bolting. Seed saving can begin with deadheading spring/summer blooms - it is not just a fall task.
3. When to collect - In dry weather, preferably no wind, just before seed is fully ripe, tan or brown mature dried flowers - if plant is dropping them, it's time! Note info in garden records - take photos!
4. Remove seeds - Discard stems, husks or pods - winnow process, shaker bag, strainers, etc.
5. Continue drying process - Use a staging area - garage, shed, home via open tray, upside down hanging bouquets, etc. to continual airflow. - Rub, Stir, shake, whatever daily, or spread over newspaper, cardboard box. Dry as quickly as possible to avoid mold/rot. DO NOT USE OVEN. May take one to four weeks.
6. Store seeds in airtight containers - Must be cool and dry! Winter storage - you decide where! Perennials below freezing - Annuals above freezing
7. Label containers - Identify the seeds by variety and year, color code
8. Sow in spring or fall - determined by your schedule, as well as annual or perennial
Germination test - place a dozen seeds or so between several layers of moist paper towels. Keep the towels moist in a plastic container in a warm place, check often for germination. 50% not so good - 50-85% sow seed thicker - over 85% good

MOST SEEDS STORED PROPERLY WILL LAST FOR SEVERAL YEARS

*1F Hybrid Plants - Some modern or nursery plants may be 1F Hybrids, meaning they were grown from seed obtained by cross-fertilizing two unlike parents. Beware, seed gathered from 1F Hybrid plants do not "come true," offspring /may vary from parent plant, but are selected for their superior trait, may mature faster, flower earlier, often better for shorter growing seasons as well as larger crops from small acreage and more disease resistant.

Over 16,000 different varieties of fruits, vegetables, fruits, herbs and flowers

SHORTLIST OF SUGGESTED FLOWERS FOR SEED SAVING
EXPERIMENT WITH OTHERS IN YOUR GARDENS

<u>ANNUALS</u>	<u>BIENNIALS/PERENNIALS</u>
Bachelor's Button	Balloon Flower
Black Eyed Susan	Bellflowers
Celosia	Baptisia
Cosmos	Coreopsis
Forget-me-not	Chrysanthemum
Four O'Clock	Daisy
Larkspur	Delphinium
Marigolds	Dianthus
Moonflower	Hollyhock
Morning glories	Lupine
Nasturtium	Yarrow
Petunia	Money plant
Snapdragon	Coneflowers
Spider flower	Oriental Poppy
Sunflower	Primrose
Sweet Pea	Perennial milkweed
Zinnia	Sweet William
Impatiens	Verbena

“START SEEDS WARM, GROW SEEDLINGS COOL.”

NANCY BUBEL

KDChilds

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