Supplying Seeds & Cultivating Community

SIMPLIFYING THE MYSTIQUE OF STARTING, SAVING, AND STORING SEEDS WITH MACDONALD CAMPUS LIBRARY

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Seed Library
Macdonald Campus
Bibliothèque de semences

McGill | Libraries Bibliothèques

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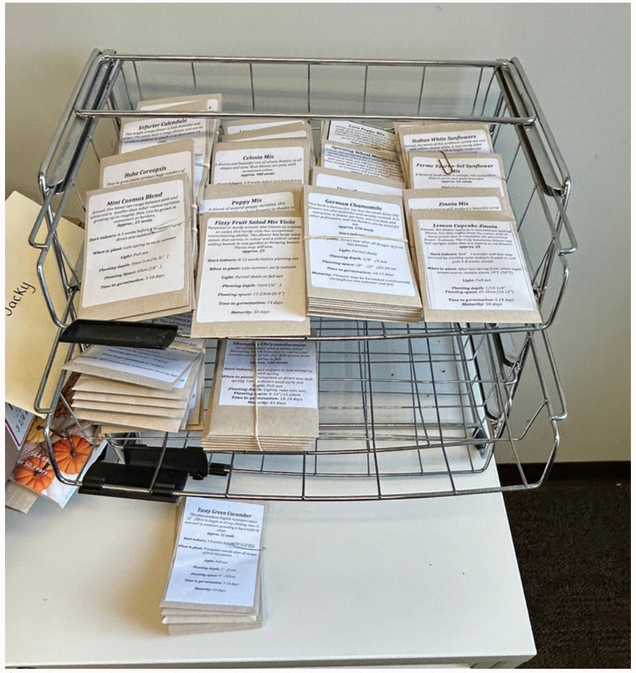
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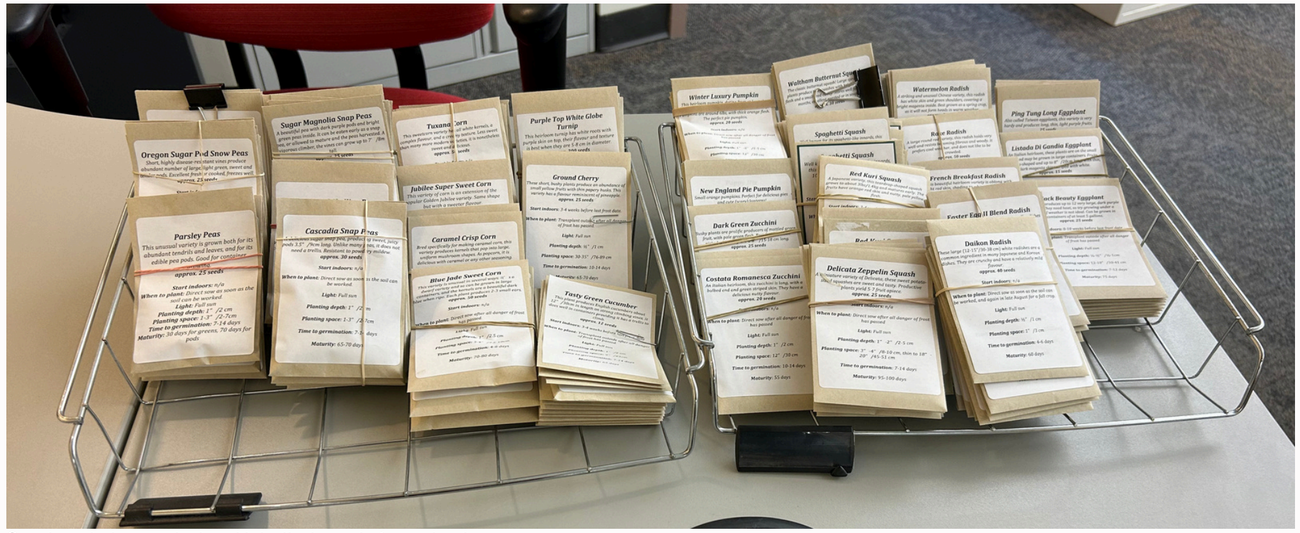
01 Of an Heirloom Variety: Seed Library History

A brief history

- Founded in 2017 by a Macdonald Campus Liaison Librarian
- Serves all members of the McGill University Community
- Key outcome for operations to be sustainable long term



Seed packets counted and labelled, ready for orders!



Seed packets counted and labelled, ready for orders!

01 Of an Heirloom Variety: Seed Library History

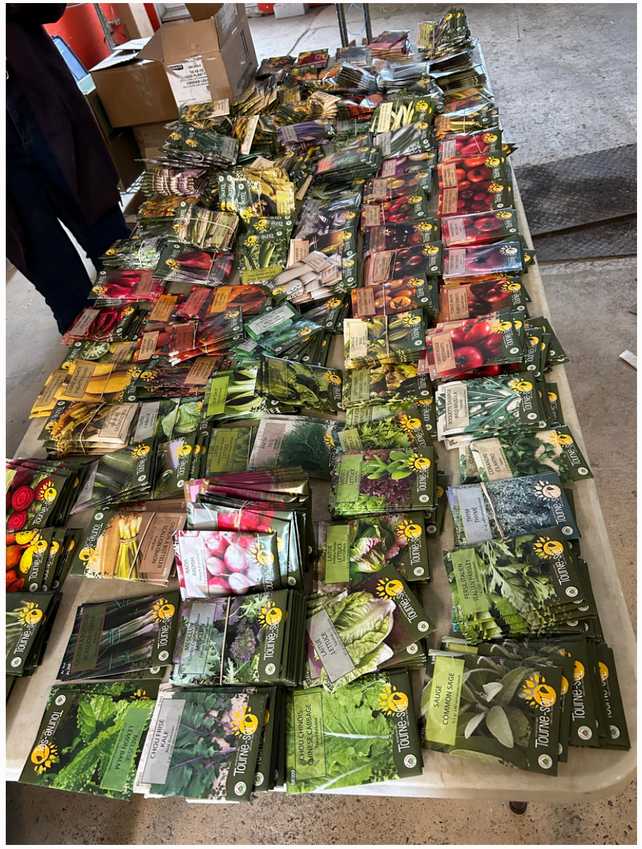
Simple Stats

Collecting & using data to better serve the Seed Library Community!

Membership & Inventory numbers:

- This year library staff packed over 3000 packets and filled roughly 300 seed requests from borrowers!
- Today there are over 1200 members and growing! 57% students (688), 38% faculty & staff (456), 4.9% alumni (66) and 0.1% external McGill libraries card holders
- This year we offered: 18 flowers (9%), 17 herbs (9%), 161 vegetables (82%) varieties in our catalogue!





Seed donations from Ferme Tourne Sol!

02: Plumes & Fluff, Rollers, Wings & Flyers: Types of Seeds!

Anatomy of a Seed

There are hundreds of thousands of plant varieties on earth and their seeds come in all shapes and sizes. However, despite these physiological differences, all seeds contain the same three components: the seed coat, the embryo, and the endosperm.

The seed coat is the outer layer of the seed that provides protection.

The embryo is the tissue within the seed that develops into various elements of the plant: the stem, roots, leaves, etc.

The endosperm is the storage area of the seed which holds reserve food/protein to be used later to support plant growth.

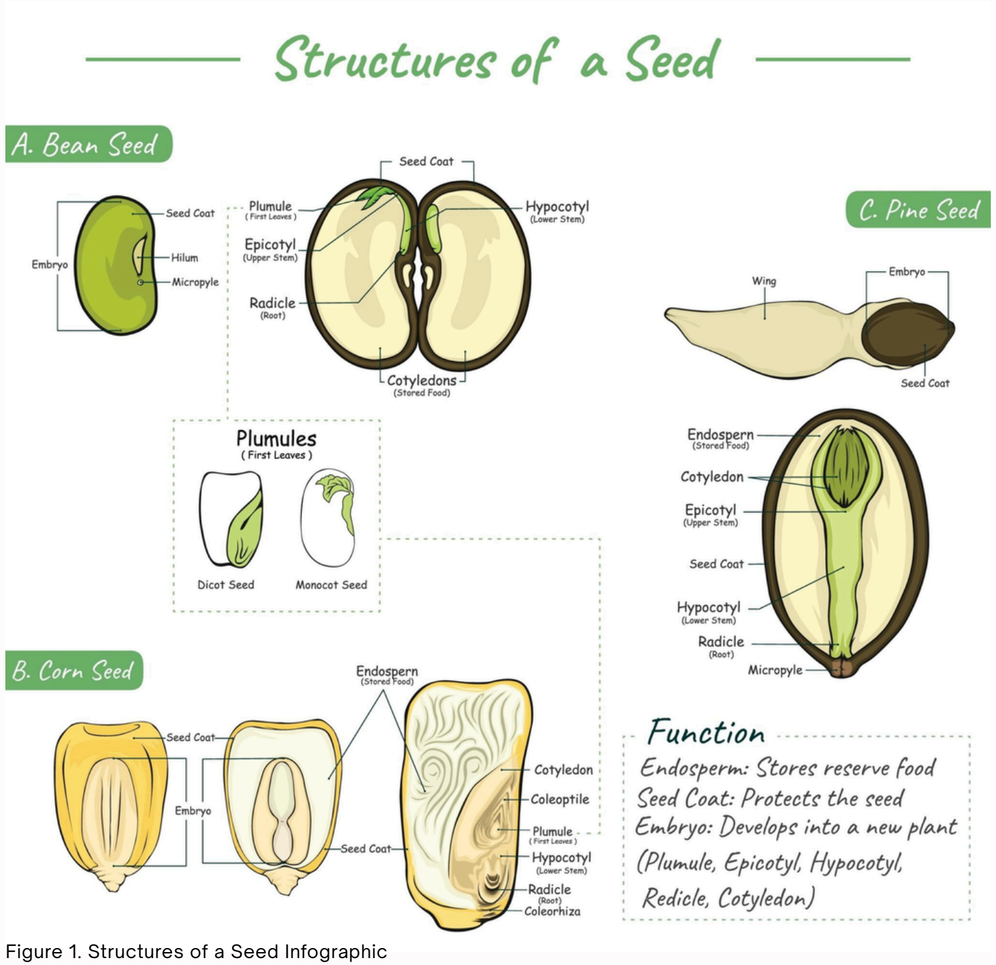


Figure 1. Structures of a Seed Infographic

1. Seed Parade (2023) Structures of a Seed. [Infographic] Seed Parade. Retrieved August 19, 2026 from https://www.seedparade.co.uk/news/guides/anatomy-seeds/.

02: Plumes & Fluff, Rollers, Wings & Flyers: Types of Seeds!

Types of Seeds

While there are several parts of the plants we eat that provide nutritional value for our diets, seeds make up the majority of our calorie and protein intake we get from plants.

Seeds may come in the forms of grains, nuts, spices or parts of fruits!

Most seeds come from **Angiosperm**, flowering plants which bear flowers and/or fruits IE: apple trees.

However, seeds also come from **Gymnosperm**, plants that are woody IE: coniferous trees. These seeds typically have rough exteriors.



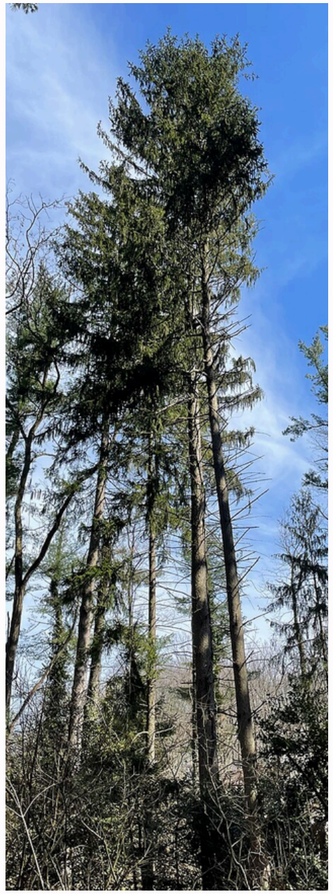
1. Red clover (Trifolium pratense). Keila, Northwestern Estonia.



2. Red clover seeds



3. A pine cone (around 10 cm long) in the edge of pine tree forest. Istria, Croatia.



4. Eastern White Pine and Norway Spruce in Forwood Preserve Delaware

1. Leidus, Ivar. (2016) Red clover (Trifolium pratense). Keila, Northwestern Estonia. [Photograph] Wikimedia Commons. Retrieved August 17, 2026 from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Trifolium_pratense_-_Keila2.jpg.
2. (N.d.). 10 Lbs Medium Red Clover Seed Deer/Wildlife/Weed Suppression/Hay./ [Photograph] Hillbo. Retrieved August 17, 2026. https://store.hillbournea.com/product-p-589456.htm.
3. Milošević, Petar. (2015). A pine cone (around 10 cm long) in the edge of pine tree forest. Istria, Croatia. [Photograph] Wikimedia Commons. Retrieved August 17, 2026 from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:A_pine_cone.jpg.
4. Fox, Jackson. (2022). Eastern White Pine and Norway Spruce in Forwood Preserve Delaware. [Photograph]. Wikimedia Commons. Retrieved August 19, 2026. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Evergreen_Trees_in_Forwood_Preserve_Talleyville_Delaware.jpg

02: Plumes & Fluff, Rollers, Wings & Flyers: Types of Seeds!

What is an Angiosperm?

The term angiosperm is derived from the Greek word ***angeion*** meaning “container or vessel” and ***sperma*** meaning “seed”. Angiosperm seeds are always contained within the fruit.

These seeds typically have a hard protective exterior, embedded within an ovary.

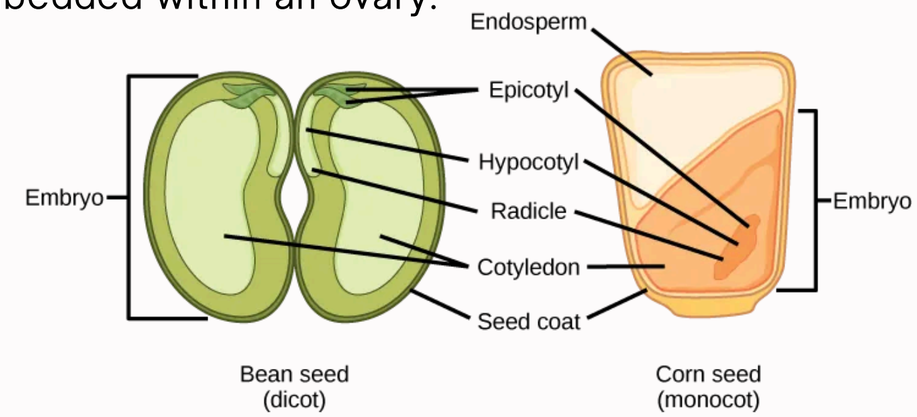


Figure 2. Structures of an Angiosperm seed



2. Orchard, tree, leaf, agriculture, branch, fruit, apple, grass

1. Rye, C., Wise, R., Jurukovski, V., DeSaix, J., Choi, J., & Yael Avissar. (2016). *Biology. Houston, TX:* OpenStax. https://openstax.org/books/biology/pages/1-introduction
2. Pixel2013. (2018). Orchard, tree, leaf, agriculture, branch, fruit, apple, grass. [Photograph]. Pixnio. Retrieved September 5, 2026. https://pixnio.com/flora-plants/fruits/apple-pictures/orchard-tree-leaf-agriculture-branch-fruit-orchard-apple-grass

02: Plumes & Fluff, Rollers, Wings & Flyers: Types of Seeds!

What is a Gymnosperm?

Seeds also come from **Gymnosperm** first used colloquially by John Ray in 1703 (Earle 2026), the roots of the words derive from Greek ***gymno*** meaning “naked” and ***sperma*** meaning “seed”.

Gymnosperm are distinctive group of plants found most frequently in boreal and temperate ecosystems. As the name suggests, unlike Angiosperm, Gymnosperm seeds do not have the protective outer shell casing an inner ovary. Instead gymnosperms develop rough exteriors, taking on a conical shape.

Conifers, the most prominent and well-known gymnosperm can be found in forests across North America. Unlike Angiosperm these plants are hardier and adapt to cooler drier climates (Rye, et al, s.26.1, 2016).

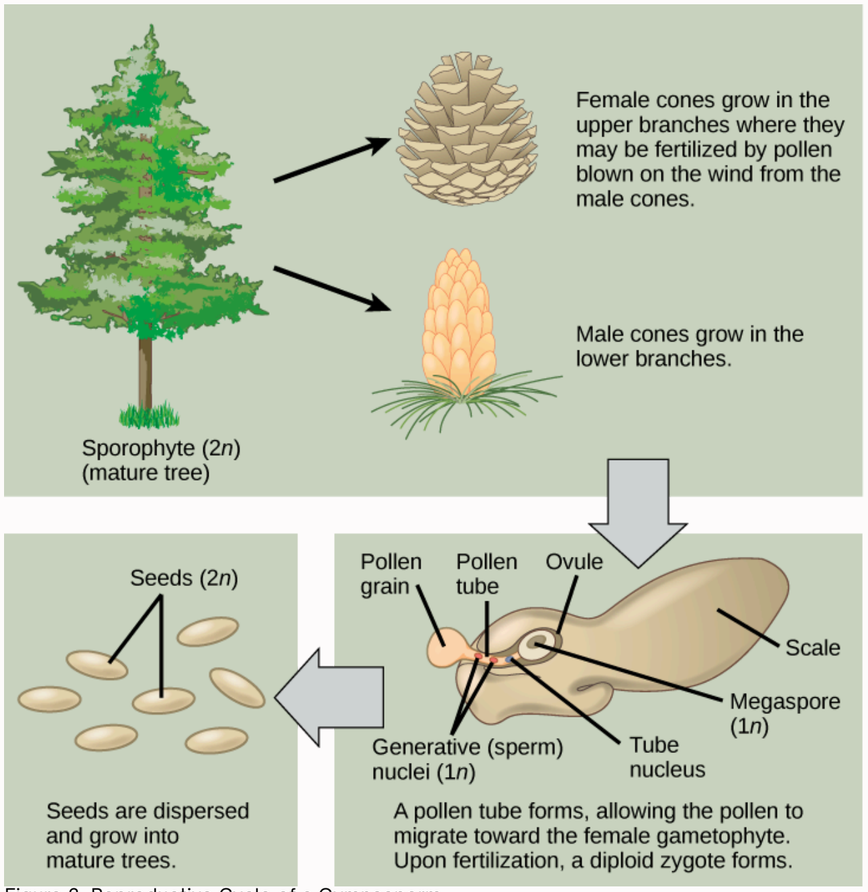


Figure 3. Reproductive Cycle of a Gymnosperm



Female cone



Male cone

1. Clark, M. A., Choi, J., & Douglas, M. (2018,). Reproductive Cycle of a Gymnosperm. [Photograph] Gymnosperms. Biology 2e. Retrieved September 3, 2026. https://bccampusbiology.pressbooks.tru.ca/chapter/gymnosperms/
2. Rye, C., Wise, R., Jurukovski, V., DeSaix, J., Choi, J., & Yael Avissar. (2016). *Biology. Houston, TX:* OpenStax. https://openstax.org/books/biology/pages/1-introduction

02: Plumes & Fluff, Rollers, Wings & Flyers: Types of Seeds!

Different Types of Seed Dispersal Methods!



1. Anemochory (by wind)



3. Endozoochory (unintentional carrying of seeds by animals, fecal matter)



5. Chiropterochpry (by bats)



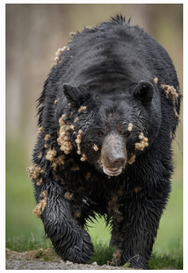
7. Ornithochory (unintentional carrying of seeds by birds)



8. Atelechory (dispersal over a very limited distance)



2. Hydrochory (by water)



4. Epizoochory (accidental dispersal by animal, external)



6. Myrmecochory (by ants)



6. Synzoochory (intentional carrying of seeds by birds by beak)



9. Barochory (by gravity)

1. GrimmHowell, George (2024) Asclepiade at the end of summer. [Photograph] Public Domain Pictures. Retrieved September 5, 2026 from https://www.publicdomainpictures.net/fr/view-image.php?image=56541&picture=asclepiade-en-fin-dete.
2. Earth Rangers (2015) Seed dispersal. [Photograph] Wikimedia. Retrieved September 5, 2026 from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Seed_dispersal.jpg
3. Diliff (2006) Eastern Grey Squirrel in St James's Park, London. [Photograph] Wikimedia. Retrieved September 5, 2026 from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eastern_Grey_Squirrel_in_St_James%27s_Park,_London_-_Nov_2006_edit.jpg
4. Bear With Us Centre for Bears Sanctuary (2026) Black bear with burrs. [Photograph] Facebook. Retrieved September 5, https://www.facebook.com/bearwithus.bears/posts/black-bear-with-burrs-burdock-plants-possess-spiny-burrs-that-pose-a-risk-to-fur/1402175868602842/
5. Indian Flying Fox (n.d.) [Photograph] Wikiwand. Retrieved September 5, 2026. https://www.wikiwand.com/en/articles/Indian_flying_fox
6. Lambers, H. (2025). seed dispersal. [Photograph] Encyclopedia Britannica. https://www.britannica.com/science/seed-dispersal
7. Blue jay eating at a feeder (n.d.) [Photograph] Wikipedia. Retrieved September 5, 2026. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bird_feeder
8. Peanut Plant (n.d.) [Photograph] Encyclopedia Britannica. Retrieved September 5, 2026. https://www.britannica.com/plant/peanut#ref1237952.
9. Russell Orchards apple picking (2009) [Photograph] Dries Buytaert. Retrieved September 5, 2026. https://dri.es/album/beverly-farms-2009/russell-orchards-apple-picking-1

03: Seedkeeping: Saving and Storing Seeds!

The Basics of Seed Saving

Getting Started
Learning the scientific names for plant varieties can help you to determine if the plants will cross pollinate! Peas, beans, lettuce, tomatoes are self-pollinating plants and their seed is easy to save for the novice gardener and seed-saver. If you have not saved seed before, these are excellent plants to start with.

Dry vs. Wet Seeds
Depending on the type of seed harvesting may follow a dry or wet seed harvesting process.

Length of Time & Yield
Caring for seeds properly can allow for seeds to last for some time. However, seed potency will deplete for each year it remains unused. Certain seeds may have a longer shelf life than others. Some seeds are notoriously bad for longer term storage. IE: parsnip, onion, and leek.


Watermelon seeds fermenting in a glass jar.

Dry vs. Wet Seed

Dry Seed
Examples: Dill, sunflower

Terminology

Thresh
Process of separating seeds from the plants/stalks.

Techniques include striking, pulling and stomping.

Screen
Sifting debris from seeds.

Techniques might include using a collander or other types of handheld strainers.

Winnow
Using wind or a light breeze to remove left over husks from the seeds.

Technique includes taking seeds outside and pouring from one bucket to another.

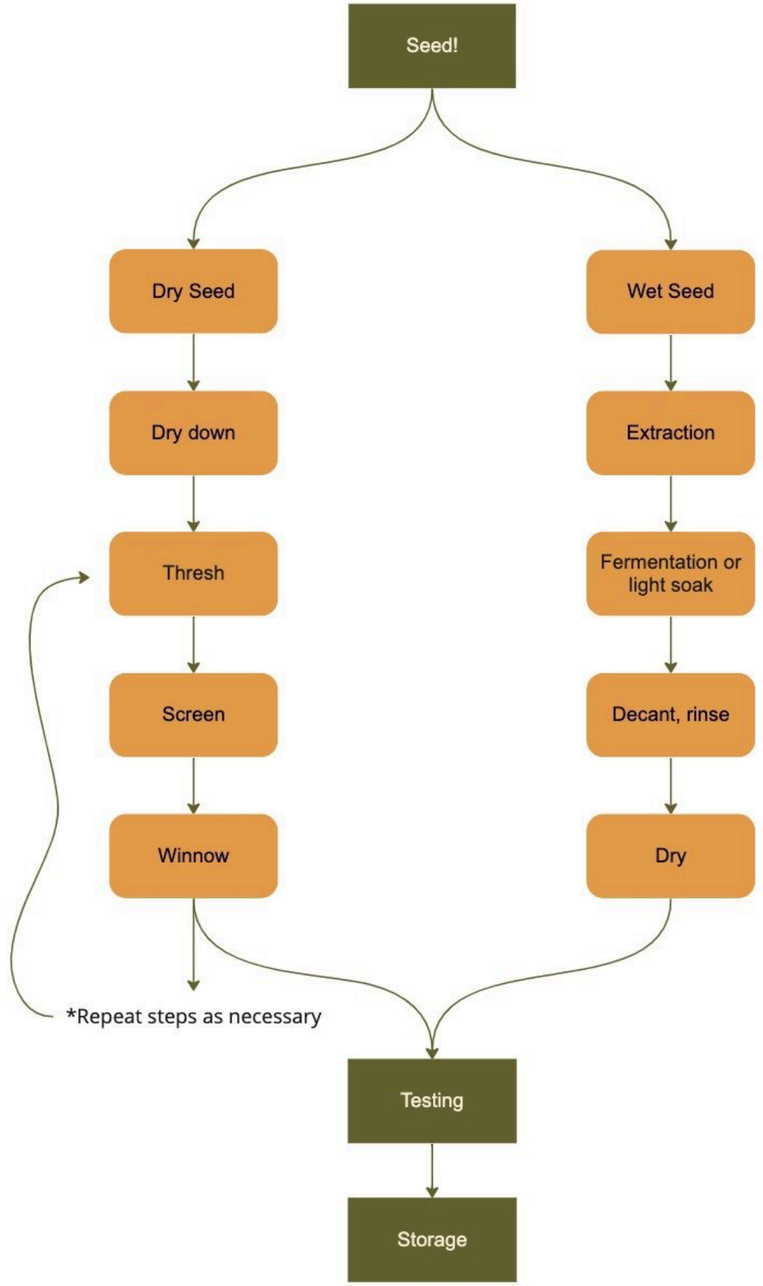


Figure 2. Wet Versus Dry Seeded Crops Infographic from Organic Seed Alliance Seed Cleaning Toolkit

Wet Seed with Pulp
Examples: Tomato, cucumber, watermelon

Terminology

Ferment
Adding seeds to a small container of water to allow for seeds to separate from the outer gel coating.

Seeds may need to sit for 1-3 days in the mixture to ensure complete separation.

Decant
Stir/shake container at regular intervals to help with separation. Empty water with gel from the top of the container, leaving seeds at the bottom.

If coating remains on seeds still in the jar, add water to repeat the process.

Wet Seed with no Pulp
Examples: Squash, melon
Scoop out seeds from plant and rinse with water. Allow seeds to dry on a plate.

1. Organic Seed Alliance (n.d.) Wet Versus Dry Seeded Crops. [Figure] *Organic Seed Alliance*. Retrieved August 2025 from https://seedalliance.org/resources/seed-cleaning-toolkit/

03: Seedkeeping: Saving and Storing Seeds!

The Basics of Seed Saving

Beans
Bean seeds are fairly straightforward to harvest and clean.

Leave pod on plant, when they turn yellow/light brown the pods are ready for picking. Let the seeds dry for a few weeks before removing the seeds from the pods.

To remove the seeds from the pods you can simply split open the pods. If you are removing seeds from an entire plant, you can stomp on them (this process is called threshing). If you use the threshing technique, you will need to dry clean your seeds.

Is the seed dry enough and ready for storage?
Test seed dryness by biting into a seed if it cracks this means it is ready for storage (Brisebois, pp. 50)!



1.Phaseolus vulgaris white bean seedpods

1.Rasbak (2009) Phaseolus vulgaris white bean seedpods. [Photograph] Wikimedia. Retrieved September 3, 2026 from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Phaseolus_vulgaris_white_bean_seedpods,_witte_boon_rijpe_peulen.jpg.

03: Seedkeeping: Saving and Storing Seeds!

The Basics of Seed Saving

Peas
Very similar process to harvesting bean seeds.

Although peas self-pollinated similarly to beans, they are prone to crossing when planted to close (Brisebois, pp.52). Peas also typically take a little longer to dry than beans.

To harvest the pea pods, let them yellow, turning a little brown colour. Peas are easy to seed by hand. If you have multiple plants you can try using dry cleaning techniques.



1. Pea, fruits and seeds

1. Culos, Roger(2013) Pea, fruits and seeds. [Photograph] Wikimedia. Retrieved September 6, 2026 from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Pisum_sativum_MHNT.BOT.2010.12.9.jpg

03: Seedkeeping: Saving and Storing Seeds!

The Basics of Seed Saving

Peppers
Fruit needs to be mature before the extracted seeds and viable, this means partial or full colouration. If you are picking a pepper that only has partial colour variation, let the fruit sit for a few days to continue ripening before removing the seeds.

Slice open pepper and remove seeds. Allow seeds to sit out for a week or two to dry. If you are working with a hot pepper wear gloves to avoid accidental burning.

If you are working with a lot of peppers you can stomp on the fruit to remove the seeds or use wet seed techniques to separate the healthy seeds from flesh and nonviable seeds.

Seeds removed by hand do not require cleaning, seeds removed by stomping may require dry seed cleaning techniques.


1. Smoked Hot Pepper - photos and recipe

1. woodleywonderworks (2022) Smoked Hot Pepper - photos and recipe. [Photograph] Wikimedia. Retrieved September 6, 2026 from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Smoked_Hot_Pepper_-_photos_and_recipe_-_52614054957.jpg

03: Seedkeeping: Saving and Storing Seeds!

The Basics of Seed Saving

Eggplant
Eggplant is a more challenging plant to harvest seeds from. Eggplants cross pollinate very easily and plants that cross pollinate with other varieties tend to produce less viable seeds and/or inedible fruit. It is recommended to only plant one variety of eggplant at a time. If you are planning to plant a few varieties, ensure these varieties have at least 50ft / 15 metres of spacing between them.

Unlike a number of vegetables, we eat eggplants before they fully mature. To save the eggplant seeds the fruits need to be left on the plant for an extra month. When eggplants turn brown and/or yellow they are ready for picking. These fruits will feel hard and look shrivelled (Boness, para. 3).

One recommendation for ensuring higher seed viability is to pick most fruits off, only allowing a small number of fruits to mature on the plant (Brisebois, pp. 43).

Cut open fruit to harvest seeds; squish seeds out and rinse then allow seeds to fully dry. To make this process easier you can cut eggplant into smaller pieces first then remove seeds by hand.



1. Eggplant Seeds

1. Perepelytsia, O. (2022). Eggplant Seeds. [Photograph] Gardening Know How. Retrieved September 6, 2026. https://www.gardeningknowhow.com/edible/vegetables/eggplant/saving-seeds-from-eggplant.htm

03: Seedkeeping: Saving and Storing Seeds!

The Basics of Seed Saving

Squash

You may see squash divided into summer and winter categories. Summer squash has a solid middle with edible skin, whereas winter squash has a harder skin that allows the fruit to be stored much longer.

Squash can be difficult to harvest for seeds as they cross pollinate easily. This means that while the fruits are mostly still edible, they may not be the most flavourful. Unfortunately you will not be able to tell if this has happened until you grow plants from your seeds the following year.

Squash seeds are ready to harvest when the fruit has changed colour and the stem has dried out. Squash seeds to not need to be harvested right away, fruits store well, typically lasting a few months.

Cut squash in half and scoop out stringy innards wth seeds. Separate seeds from flesh, rinse with water, and leave to dry on plate.



Butternut Squash Seeds ready for a germination test., August 2025.

03: Seedkeeping: Saving and Storing Seeds!

The Basics of Seed Saving

Tomatoes
Tomato needs to be mature for seeds to be viable, but does not need to be fully ripe.

Pick seeds out of fruit. Add seeds to jar with water and place in a sunny spot for 2-4 days. You can put a lid loosely on the jar but do not tighten it, as this will allow fermentation gases to escape. You may notice a white film on the top of the water, this means the fermentation process is working.

Stir 2-3x daily to separate seeds and gel. Germination prevents potential for some diseases to develop while also dissolving the membrane around the seed.

Only seeds that fall to bottom of jar are viable. Scoop out top layer of gel/seeds. Remove water, strain and rinse, then place seeds on a plate for a few weeks to dry.

How can I tell if my seeds are ready to be harvested?
You can tell if a tomato is ripe by cutting it open, if there is gel surrounding the seeds they are ready to be harvested.



1. Ferment Tomato Seeds

1. Ly, L. (2020) Ferment Tomato Seeds [Photograph] Garden Betty. Retrieved September 6, 2026 from https://www.cabidigitallibrary.org/doi/full/10.1079/cabicompendium.18017.

03: Seedkeeping: Saving and Storing Seeds!

The Basics of Seed Saving

Carrots
Biennial plants, so you will not collect carrot seeds until year two.

This means you will plant your first crop of carrots leaving a few to become your seeding plants. This means these plants can be kept in a cold room over the winter to be replanted in the spring, or if properly wrapped and covered with mulch can overwinter in the field (Brisebois, pp.149).

Replant the following year and let plants grow for 3-4 months. Carrots produce little pods called “umbels” that contain seeds. The two largest umbels can be harvested for seeds (ibid).

To harvest these seeds clip the umbels once they turn brown. Rub the carrot seeds to separate them then use dry seed techniques to clean the seeds!

Dill and cilantro follow similar a similar process.



1. Daucus carota (wild carrot). dry, fruiting umbel. Southern Heath Nature Park, Lower Saxony, Germany.

1.©HAJOTTHU (n.d.) Daucus carota (wild carrot). dry, fruiting umbel. Southern Heath Nature Park, Lower Saxony, Germany. [Photograph] CABI Compendium. Retrieved September 2, 2026 from https://www.cabidigitallibrary.org/doi/full/10.1079/cabicompendium.18017.

03: Seedkeeping: Saving and Storing Seeds!

The Basics of Seed Saving

Broccoli
Broccoli seeds can only be collected once the plant has flowered. Little pods will grow.

Remove the entire plant to allow pods to dry on the stalk. Gently pry open the pods to remove seeds.

There are a few options for removal including using a brown paper bag to shake the seeds out. However, since they are very small it is easier to collect seeds onto a white piece of paper (Venetta, 2013).

If you are harvesting seeds from multiple plants, you can use threshing or stomping followed by dry seed washing techniques.



1. Broccoli Seeds at Bonsallo Avenue Urban Garden - Los Angeles

1.Dietrich, Craig (2013). Broccoli Seeds at Bonsallo Avenue Urban Garden - Los Angeles. [Photograph] Wikimedia. Retrieved September 3, 2026 from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Broccoli_Seeds_at_Bonsallo_Avenue_Urban_Garden_-_Los_Angeles.jpg.

03: Seedkeeping: Saving and Storing Seeds!

The Basics of Seed Saving

Cucumber
Easy to collect seeds from cucumbers and even easier to clean! Similar to squash and eggplants, cucumbers will cross pollinate. Although the fruits from these plants are edible, they typically do not taste as good as the original varieties.

Fruits are to be left on the plants for an extra six weeks to ripen. The fruits will get bigger and turn yellow or orange which means the fruit has reached maturity.

To extract seeds cut the fruit in half and scoop out seeds into a container. Collect juice and seeds from fruit and let ferment for maximum 2 days; seeds will have sunk to the bottom of the container. Following this process rinse seeds.

Seeds can be laid out to dry as with the squash seeds.



1. Halved nogak (Korean Cucumber)

1. gghite (2020). Halved nogak. [Photograph] Wikimedia. Retrieved September 6, 2026 from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Halved_nogak.jpg.

03: Seedkeeping: Saving and Storing Seeds!

The Basics of Seed Saving

Lettuce
A hardy annual, it is recommended to plant lettuce as early as possible to support plants getting to seeds.

Much easier plant to try for seed saving. Very unlikely for varieties to cross pollinate; can be planted close together without seeds losing viability or varietal integrity. However, plants thinned to between 6-12" prevent likelihood of spreading disease (Brisebois, pp. 91).

Seeds are found in the flowered tip. Make sure not to destroy this part of the plant if you are wishing to harvest seeds. After bolting, lettuce takes 2-3 months to develop seeds.
The flowers on lettuce plants will look like miniature dandelions when the seed is ready to harvest. These are known as Pappus or plural pappi (ibid, pp.91).

To harvest seeds shake plants seeds into a container. If you are harvesting several plants, these can be left to dry 1-2 weeks before shaking plants to extract seeds.



1. Has my romaine lettuce bolted?

1.Kolojang (2026) Has my romaine lettuce bolted? [Photograph] *r/vegetablegardening.* Reddit. Retrieved September 6, 2026 from https://www.reddit.com/r/vegetablegardening/comments/1vdjyo0/has_my_romaine_lettuce_bolted/

03: Seedkeeping: Saving and Storing Seeds!

The Basics of Seed Saving

Onions
Save preferred onions for seed planting. Recommended for onions to have at least 8-10 weeks stored at 12 degrees for optimal next season growing.

Plant onions in ground, plants will develop leaves and flowers which will turn into seeds. Onion seeds are notorious for losing viable quickly (within a single season); however, this can depend on plant quality. Onion plants take 3-5 months to seed.

Onions are ready to harvest once black seeds can be seen poking through the white flowers. Cut stem 6-8" below umbel. Allow stems to dry while seeds to mature for at least another week. Shake umbels to release seeds. Dry cleaning techniques can be used to remove dried flower pieces from seeds.



1. Onion seed head in Tashkent botanical garden

1.Mehridinov, H. (2023) Onion seed head in Tashkent botanical garden. [Photograph] Wikimedia. Retrieved September 6, 2026 from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Onion_seed_head_in_Tashkent_botanical_garden.jpg

03: Seedkeeping: Saving and Storing Seeds!

The Basics of Seed Saving

Flowers
The key to harvesting flower seeds is patience. Plants should completely dry out; allow the seeds to harden and turn brown.

If you are worried that may have picked the plants too early; you can leave the stalks to dry inside to dry.

Once you have removed the sees from the plants, allow the seeds to dry further.

Flower seed viability is tricky and typically depends on plant quality and storage conditions. If you have a few flowering plants, choose the best ones for seed saving!



1. Mexican marigold (lat. Tagetes erecta)



2. Saving Marigold Seeds

1.Mehridinov, H. (2023) Mexican marigold (lat. Tagetes erecta). [Photograph] Wikimedia. Retrieved September 6, 2026 from https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mexican_marigold_(lat._Tagetes_erecta).jpg
2.Gigi's Garden Gifts(2023) Saving Marigold Seeds. [Photograph] Facebook. Retrieved September 6, 2026 from https://www.facebook.com/GigisGardenGifts/posts/when-saving-marigold-seeds-dont-rush-it-the-best-germination-comes-from-seeds-th/1194159186069263/

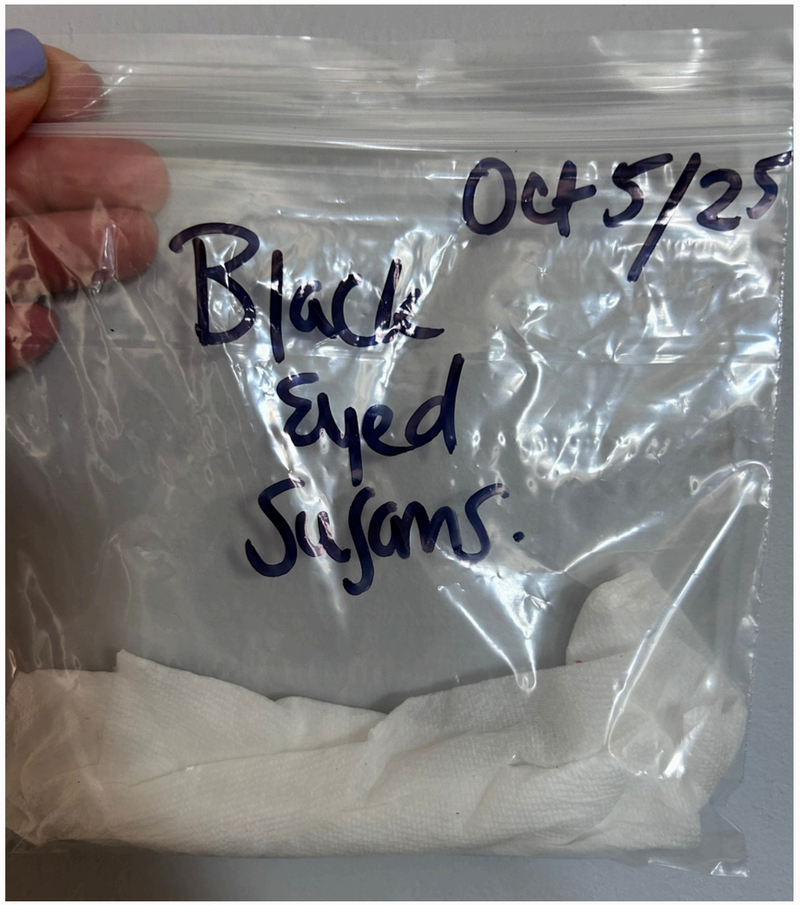
03: Seedkeeping: Saving and Storing Seeds!

Germination & Testing

I have harvested my seeds now what?

A germination rate of 70% or higher is suitable for returns.

1. Moisten paper towel (wet but not dripping).
2. Select seeds to be tested at random. 10 seeds are the minimum for testing purposes.
3. Place seeds on one side of the paper towel. Fold paper towel in half and place inside a partially sealed plastic bag that has been labeled to indicate variety.
4. Place seeds in a warm location.
5. Check seeds every day for 10–14 days. Seeds that sprout are counted as viable, seeds that fail to sprout or become molded or rotted are marked “not viable.”
6. Keep paper towel moist (a spray bottle is a good way to do this).
7. Calculate your seed viability (i.e. if 12 out of 15 seeds sprout your germination rate is 80%).



Germination test of harvested seeds

03: Seedkeeping: Saving and Storing Seeds!

Seed Storage

I have harvested my seeds now what?

Storage
Seeds need to be stored in a dry location with minimal fluctuations in temperature. Cooler storage (10-15 degrees) is preferable. However, consistency of temperature is key as fluctuations can affect seed yield times. Fluctuations may cause seeds to break dormancy.
IE: change in temperature signals transition of winter to spring

What types of containers should be used for seed storage?
Paper over plastic as it is breathable and does not trap moisture which can cause seeds to mold if the seeds have not be allotted enough time to dry or there are fluctuations in temperature.

Length of Time & Yield
Caring for seeds properly can allow for seeds to last for some time. However, seed potency will deplete for each year it remains unused. Certain seeds may have a longer shelf life than others. Some seeds are notoriously bad for longer term storage.
IE: parsnip, onion and leek.


Box of seed packets.



1. The Importance of Seed Saving

1.giantveggiegardener (2020) The Importance of Seed Saving [Photograph] giantveggiegardener. Retrieved September 6, 2026 from https://giantveggiegardener.com/2020/12/17/the-importance-of-seed-saving/.

04 Anemochory: Importance of Seed Saving locally & globally

Local Impact

Food Access & Accessibility

- Seed saving & sharing is a great way to combat hunger
- Cost of living crisis, shrinkflation
- Localized food production and economic growth
- Individual or social activity
- Gardening encourages movement
- For all gardener levels and abilities

Human Rights & Cultural Agency

- Cultural significance, identity, and agency
  - Traditional growing practices
  - Shared community memories and recipes
- Development of knowledge networks

Conservation

- Environmental reintegration of seeds
- Companion planting
- Feeds wildlife
- Outgrowth and soil rejuvenation



Two women in a garden

05 Successive Sowing: Resource Sharing

Helpful Resources

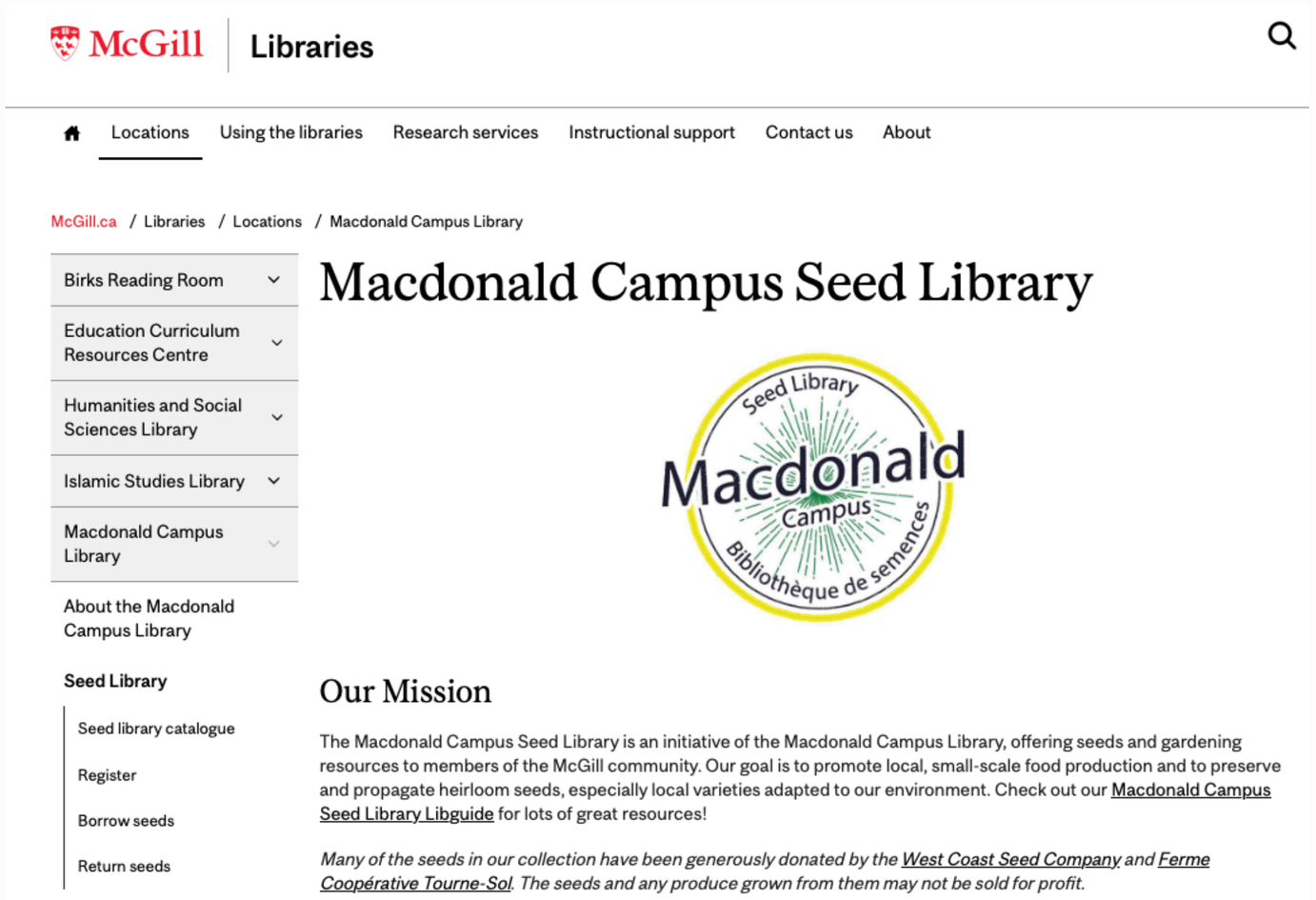
Macdonald Seed Library Libguide & Website

Macdonald Seed Library Website
https://www.mcgill.ca/library/branches/macdonald/seed-library

Macdonald Seed Library Libguide
https://libraryguides.mcgill.ca/seedlibrary

Access McGill Libraries!

- McGill Libraries is open to the public, anyone can walk into a library to use our resources & services
- For off-campus use: alumni can create an account or community members can pay to join



05 Successive Sowing: Resource Sharing

Information Sharing

Join the community! Building an information sharing network & interactive tools. Seed Libraries do not exist in silos. There is a growing network of Seed Libraries globally and across North America.

Research Community

- Seed Library Census & Map
- Canadian Seed Companies Map
- Companion Planting Guide
- Seed Cleaning Toolkit

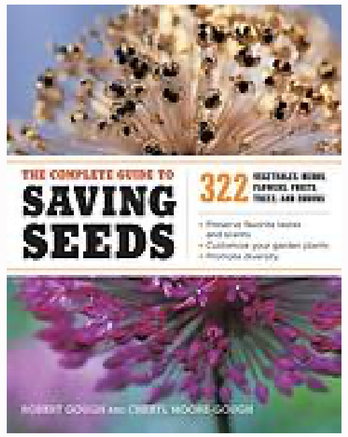
Seed Library Interactive Tools

- Ottawa Wildflower Seed Library: Donation Guide, Donation Spread Sheet
- Canadensys: Online taxonomy database and repository which is helpful to determine local vs. invasive species managed by Université de Montréal Biodiversity Centre

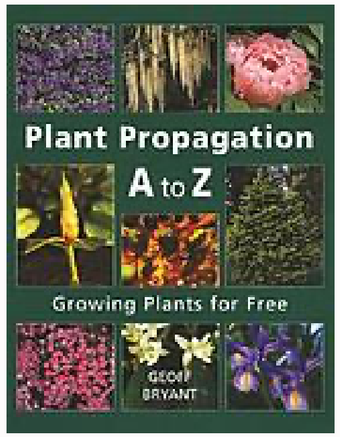
05 Successive Sowing: Resource Sharing

Helpful Resources

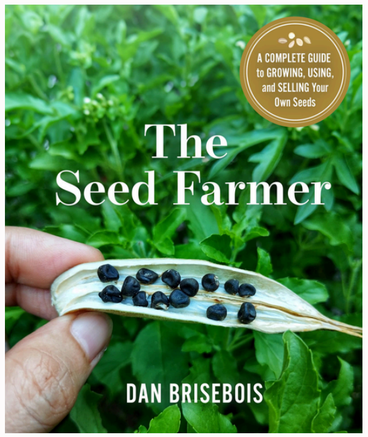
Booklist & Resources: Some great seed reads!



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ALMANAC

Montreal Gardening Almanac
Live updates on when to harvest, yummy recipes and more!

Quebec Interactive Plant Map
Find out the estimated first and last frost dates of the planting season.

garden therapy

SEED STARTING 101: YOUR STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE FOR STARTING SEEDS
By Stephanie Rose, Garden Therapy blog

Québec

Quebec Plant Hardiness Zone Maps

Seed Library
Macdonald
Campus
Bibliothèque de semences

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THANK YOU!

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https://www.mcgill.ca/libraries/locations/macdonald/seed-library

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