

Why Save Seeds?

Saving seeds can significantly reduce the cost of producing healthy and sustainable food for you and your family. Saved seeds can become locally adapted to your unique growing conditions, helping the plants grow better in your garden. Saved or unused seeds can be returned to the seed exchange or used again in your garden next year!

Store all seeds in a cool, dry location.

When saving seeds, choose open-pollinated varieties. For seeds marked F1 or hybrid, you can try to save seeds after growing these out, but the second planting will have variable results. Hybrid seeds are crosses of different varieties. This is not the same as genetically modified seeds. Did you know it's not legal to sell GMO seeds to general consumers in Canada?

This means that all garden vegetable seeds are GMO-free.

Funded by:



Questions? Comments?

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Saskatoon Seed Exchange

In partnership with



Anyone can take part in the Saskatoon Seed Exchange. Just visit your local library location to donate, exchange and collect seeds for your garden, free of charge. The Saskatoon Seed Exchange runs February to October.

Library locations:

Frances Morrison Central 311 23rd St E

Alice Turner 110 Nelson Rd

Carlyle King 3130 Laurier Dr.

Cliff Wright 1635 McKercher Dr.

Dr. Freda Ahenakew 100 - 219 Ave K S

J.S. Wood 1801 Lansdowne Ave

Mayfair 602 33rd St W

Round Prairie 170 - 250 Hunter Rd

Rusty MacDonald 225 Primrose Dr.

About the Seeds

The seeds in this exchange have been donated by local businesses, gardeners and seed savers. Funding for this project was generously provided by EcoFriendly Sask. We have tested the seeds for germination when possible; CHEP and Saskatoon Public Library make no assurances of the viability or quality of the seeds in this exchange.

We accept donations of all types of garden seeds to the exchange, except those regulated by law (e.g., controlled substances, invasive weeds, commercial seeds, etc.).

This guide is intended for planting, growing and saving seeds for common vegetable crops. If you have questions on how to plant your seeds, check out vegetable growing guides online, from the library or contact CHEP.

Tip: If you are starting transplants indoors, seedlings should be hardened off by reducing water and putting the plants outdoors incrementally 2 or 3 days before transplanting.

LETTUCE



Planting Instructions: Direct sow or start seeds in small pots 4 to 6 weeks before the last spring frost date. Plant seeds about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch deep or on the surface where the soil can be easily kept moist. Seeds can be densely sown for leaf lettuce that is harvested frequently. For head lettuce or other large leaf varieties, thin plants to about 10-12 inches apart. Space rows for all types 18-36 inches apart.

Growing Instructions: For continuous harvest, sow additional seeds every 2 weeks. Plants require regular watering.

Seed Saving: Clip your lettuce head from the stalk and rub the dry flower heads between your fingers over a paper plate. The seeds will pop right out and fall onto the paper plate. Store seeds in a cool, dry and dark place.

Fun Fact: Lettuce is about 95% water. Simply toss into a salad or add to any sandwich.

BEANS & PEAS



Planting Instructions: Plant bean seeds ¼ inch deep, directly into the soil after last frost (end of May). Plant pole beans about 6 inches apart and near a structure, or trellis support. For bush beans, plant seeds 3 inches apart in rows 24 inches apart.

Growing Instructions: Pole beans require full sun and 75+ days to reach maturity. Deeply water when soil is dry. Bush beans require full sun as well, and 53 days to reach maturity. Indeterminate pole beans will require a trellis support. Bush beans should be harvested regularly.

Seed Saving: Bean seeds are simple to save. First allow bean pods to completely dry, resulting in brown beans that are nearly half their original size.

Fun Fact: The world's tallest bean plant was over 45 feet tall!



Planting Instructions: Soak peas in water overnight before planting. Plant seeds 1 to 1 ¼ inch deep and about 2 inches apart. Plan to seed peas as soon as soil can be worked in mid-April to mid-May. Plant in rows spaced 12–24 inches apart.

Growing Instructions: Once germinated, peas will need a fence or trellis to climb anywhere between 2 and 8 feet tall, depending on the variety. Water sparsely, unless dry, then water periodically. Keep beds weeded, avoiding fragile roots.

Seed Saving: Save pea seeds when pods have completely dried to easily remove seeds. Let peas dry for several days. Store pea seeds in a plastic container, paper bag or small envelopes until spring.

Fun Fact: A pea is most commonly green in color but can be purple or yellow. Garden peas are shelled to eat while snow and snap peas can be eaten whole.

TOMATOES



Planting Instructions: In March, plant seeds 0.5 to 1cm deep in small pots. Keep watered and near a light source until after the last spring frost. Plant outdoors in a sunny spot.

Growing Instructions: Transplant tomatoes into the garden about 24 inches apart. Plant deeply, up to the first set of leaves.

Indeterminate tomatoes will require a trellis for support.

Seed Saving: To save tomato seeds, choose the healthiest plants and take 2 to 3 tomatoes from each. Cut tomatoes in half, scooping seeds and pulp into a jar. Cover and set aside for 3 days. Mold will form. Rinse seeds through a sieve and lay on paper towels to dry. Once completely dry, seeds can be stored for next year, or returned to the seed exchange.

Fun Fact: There are over 10,000 tomato varieties worldwide. Combine sliced tomatoes, mozzarella cheese and fresh basil, then drizzle with oil and balsamic for a delicious summer salad.

PEPPERS



Planting Instructions: Plant seeds in a small pot about ¼ inch deep in early March. Keep watered and near a light source until ready for transplant in mid-May.

Growing Instructions: Transplant peppers into the garden about 18 to 24 inches apart. Peppers need at least 6 to 8 hours of sunlight per day. If the weather is warm, water every day.

Seed Saving: Allow the pepper to become fully ripened, until it begins to wrinkle. Once fully ripened, remove seeds from the peppers. Remove any that are discoloured or damaged and spread the remaining onto a dry paper towel or newspaper. Turn the seeds every couple of days to ensure they are drying out properly. Store seeds in an air-tight plastic bag or an air-tight container in a cool, dark and dry area.

Fun Fact: Peppers are considered fruits because they grow on a flowering plant and contain seeds. For a healthy burger, you can cut a pepper in half and use as a replacement for the bun.

CARROTS & BEETS



Planting Instructions: Plant carrot seeds directly in the garden. These tiny seeds only need to be just buried, about ¼ inch deep.

Growing Instructions: It's important to thin the carrots out so they have room to grow. Thin to 2 to 5 inches between plants once sprouted. Carrots need well worked soil for their tap roots. If they hit a rock or compacted soil, they may grow stunted or misshapen.

Seed Saving: Carrots are biennial plants. This means that they produce seeds in their second year of growth. To save carrot seeds, consult a seed-saving book at your local library or contact CHEP to connect with an expert.

Fun Fact: Carrots are one of the best sources of Vitamin A.



Planting Instructions: Plant beet seeds directly in the garden. Sow seeds ½ inch deep, with row spacing of about 12 to 18 inches.

Growing Instructions: Be sure to thin beets out so they have enough room to grow. Thin to about 6 inches between plants.

Seed Saving: Beets are biennial plants. This means that they produce seeds in their second year of growth. To save beet seeds, consult a seed-saving book at your local library or contact CHEP to connect with an expert.

Fun Fact: Beets are closely related to Swiss chard. You can eat beet leaves and roots. Try beet greens sautéed with a little butter and fresh pepper.

