



# The Seed Library

*A Seed-Lending Program at the Round Valley Public Library*

## Donating Seed to the Library

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*Thank you for wanting to share your abundance with your community!*

To improve the chances of success for your seed's next grower, donated seed should be:

- **Open-pollinated:** Make sure the seed you donate was harvested from an open-pollinated variety, not a hybrid. Fruits and vegetables purchased at the store, or even a farmers market, may not be open-pollinated.
- **Mature:** Many seeds should be collected from plants that are well past market maturity. Be sure your seeds have reached maturity before you harvest them.
- **Dry:** Make sure seeds are dry.
- **Clean:** Have seeds reasonably cleaned by removing as much of the chaff as possible.
- **Labeled:** Make sure your seed is packaged with information as to type, variety, place, *and year* of harvest. If you isolated the crop and met the recommended population size, let us know that, too!
- **Saved from healthy plants:** Even if a disease does not get passed on through the seed, we do like to have some selection for disease resistance by only saving from healthy, strong plants.

- **Saved from a number of plants:** Saving seeds from a number of plants gives the seeds genetic diversity. The optimum number depends on the type of plant and their method of pollination. Self-pollinating plants (such as tomatoes) require a minimum of 5 plants. Cross-pollinating plants (such as corn) require a much larger population.

- **Saved from properly isolated plants (if they're cross-pollinators):** If plants cross-pollinate you want to make sure to keep them isolated. Isolation means preventing pollen from plants within the same species from commingling. This keeps the seeds "true-to-type" so that they will grow the exact same plant again. "Easy" seeds can be fairly reliably saved without cross-pollination (and unintentional hybridization). "Easy" seeds include beans, peas, lettuce, and most tomatoes.

*Do not return seeds from the brassica family (broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collards, kale, mustard) or cucurbit family (cucumbers, melons, pumpkins, squash) unless you have taken appropriate steps to prevent cross-pollination.*

The simplest way to isolate varieties is to grow only one variety of each species or to plant varieties far enough away from each other that cross-pollination is unlikely. Check with a seed saving chart or book to get isolation distances.

*We ask that you follow these protocols to help us ensure that the seeds in the library are what the label says they are and that they will produce healthy plants. Our community's gardeners thank you!*

