



Practical Guide for Saving Seeds from Small Gardens

	Common Name	Scientific Name	Pollination	Isolation between varieties (ft)	Notes
EASY	Arugula	<i>Eruca sativa</i>	Insects	800	Easy to save if only 1 variety is allowed to bolt and flower. Harvest seeds like lettuce.
	Basil	<i>Ocimum basilicum</i>	Insects	800	Easy to save if only 1 variety is allowed to bolt and flower. Harvest when seeds are dry on the plant. Winnow away chaff.
	Chile	<i>Capsicum spp.</i>	Self, but can outcross	75-300, or bag	If active insect populations varieties can cross. Harvest when fruits are fully red. Cut open and remove seeds.
	Cilantro	<i>Coriandrum sativum</i>	Insects	800	Easy to save if only growing 1 variety. Plants will bolt and flower. Harvest when seeds are dry. Winnow chaff.
	Dill	<i>Anethum graveolens</i>	Insects	1600	Easy to save if only growing 1 variety. Plants will bolt and flower. Harvest when seeds are dry on the plant. Winnow away chaff.
	Beans (common, tepary, lima)	<i>Phaseolus vulgaris, acutifolius, lunatus</i>	Self, can outcross via insects	10-500, farther for lima	Harvest pods when dry and brittle. For large plots pull entire plant when ca. 80% of pods dry, dry for a few additional weeks on a tarp, stomp on drying plants to release beans, thresh and winnow away chaff.
	Lettuce	<i>Lactuca sativa</i>	Self	10-20, or bag	Plants will bolt and flower. Save only from those plants that bolt late to save those traits. Seed pods will mature from the bottom to the top, harvest daily or place bag over maturing seed to prevent them from opening and dropping seeds.
	Okra	<i>Abelmoschus esculentum</i>	Self, can outcross	500-1600	Allow pods to fully mature and dry. Crack open pods to remove seeds.
	Parsley	<i>Petroselinium crispum</i>	Insects	800	Easy to save if only growing 1 variety. Plants will bolt and flower. Harvest when seeds are dry.
	Pea	<i>Pisum sativum</i>	Self	10-20	Harvest pods when dry and brittle. Crack open pods to remove seeds.
	Radish	<i>Raphanus sativus</i>	Insects	1600	Easy to save if only 1 variety is allowed to bolt and flower. Seed pods will mature from the bottom to the top, harvest daily or place bag over maturing seed.
	Tomato	<i>Solanum lycopersicum</i>	Self, can cross	10-50, or bag	Harvest when fully ripe to over ripe. Seeds need to be processed with the fermentation technique. Currant and potato-leaf varieties have higher potential to cross.
	Sunflower	<i>Helianthus annuus</i>	insect	800-1600 or bag and hand pollinate	Because of their ability to attract pollinators they have a high potential to cross with other varieties. Isolate if you need to maintain varietal purity. Allow heads to dry as long as possible on the plant. They will get heavy. Bag to protect from birds. Cut heads and dry further. Shake into paper bag and the winnow away chaff.



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ADVANCED	Amaranth	<i>Amaranthus spp.</i>	Wind	800-1600 or bag	Will cross with wild amaranth. Bag several heads together to prevent crossing. Cut off dried heads and shake in a bag to remove seed. Winnow away chaff.
	Corn	<i>Zea mays</i>	Wind	800-1600 or hand pollinate	Grow >100 plants to maintain diversity and health. No matter the variety, allow ears to fully mature and harvest when husks are dry and brittle.
	Cucumber	<i>Cucumis sativus</i>	Insects	800-1600	Grow >5 plants to maintain diversity and health. Harvest fruits when overripe, enlarged, and yellowish/white. Scoop out seeds and rinse. Fermentation technique necessary.
	Melon	<i>Cucumis melo</i>	Insects	800-1600	Grow >5 plants to maintain diversity and health. Harvest when vines and tendrils are dry. Rinse seeds with high pressured water to remove all flesh.
	Sorghum	<i>Sorghum bicolor</i>	Wind or self	100-200 or bag	Some varieties will cross with Johnson grass. Bag seedheads to protect from birds. Strip dry seeds from stem and winnow away chaff.
	Squash, summer	<i>Cucurbita pepo</i>	Insects	800-1600 or hand pollinate	Grow >5 plants to maintain diversity and health. Crosses with other C. pepo. Harvest fruits when they are large and over ripe. Store for an additional 21 days for seeds to mature inside. Rinse under running water and dry.
	Squash, winter	<i>Cucurbita argyrosperma, maxima, moschata, maxima, pepo</i>	Insects	800-1600 or hand pollinate	Grow >5 plants to maintain diversity and health. Possible to grow multiple varieties if different species but be advised C. argyrosperma and C. moshata are more closely related and will cross. Harvest when plants dry, store for >20 days for seeds to mature inside. Rinse seeds under running water and dry for several weeks.
	Water-melon	<i>Citrullus lanatus</i>	Insects	800-1600	Grow >5 plants to maintain diversity and health. Harvest when vines and tendrils are dry. Rinse seeds with high pressured water to remove all flesh.
VERY ADVANCED	Beet	<i>Beta vulgaris</i>	Wind	800-1600	Biennial. Will cross with Swiss Chard. Should grow ca. 15 plants to maintain diversity and health.
	Brassicas	<i>Brassica oleracea</i>	Insects	800-1600	Includes broccoli, brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collards, kale, kohlrabi, mustard, turnip. Biennial except mustards greens. Will cross with wild London rocket. Grow >20 plants to maintain diversity and health.
	Carrot	<i>Daucus carota</i>	Insects	800-160	Biennial. Requires long hours of cold to trigger flowering. Grow >20 plants for diversity and health.
	Onion	<i>Allium cepa</i>	Insects	800-1600	Biennial. Plants will bolt and flower. Grow >20 plants to maintain diversity and health.