

# Seed Watch



Seed Buyer's Guide

## BEST Choices

Your Own Saved Seeds  
Locally Grown Seeds  
Open-Pollinated  
Non-Hybrid  
Heirloom  
Organic  
Certified Naturally Grown  
Wild-crafted

Whenever possible, source your seeds first from the area where you live. Seed libraries, seed exchanges, and local seed companies that actually grow the seeds they sell are ideal choices.

**Support genetically diverse, sustainable, small scale, bio-regional agriculture.**

## GOOD Alternatives

Regionally Grown Seeds  
Open-Pollinated  
Non-Hybrid  
Heirloom  
Organic  
Certified Naturally Grown  
Wild-crafted  
Organic Hybrid Seeds

If the diversity you seek is not found locally, source your seeds from regional seed companies and seed exchanges outside your area. Look first to regions with similar climates and similar latitudes. Look for companies dedicated to genetic diversity.

## AVOID

Industrial (F1) Hybrid Seeds  
Treated Seeds  
GMO Seeds\*  
"Big-Box" Seed Rack Seeds  
Industrially-Produced, "One-Size-Fits-All" Seeds from large corporate seed companies

### \*What about GMO?

GMO (genetically-modified organisms) seeds have been lab-engineered to contain genes from other life forms. For a list of seed companies pledging not to sell GMO seeds, visit:

[www.councilforresponsiblegenetics.org](http://www.councilforresponsiblegenetics.org)

## What About Certified Organic?

Certified organic seeds are great, but don't sacrifice diversity by purchasing ONLY organic seeds. Over the last century, we've lost a large percentage of the world's crop diversity. Many of the remaining rare, heirloom seeds are not yet available as organic seeds.

**Find them, grow them organically, save the seeds and in one season add another treasure to the world's growing collection of organic seeds!**

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**HEIRLOOM** Treasures. Includes trusted, new, open-pollinated varieties as well as those passed down over generations.

**HYBRID** Also labeled (F1). Modern hybrids are produced by cross-pollinating two distinct, inbred parents. Difficult but not impossible for home gardeners to save their own seeds.

**OPEN-POLLINATED** Home gardeners' best choice for seed saving. Produced through natural pollination without breeding controls.

**ORGANIC** A set of standards that eliminate or reduce chemical inputs. Regulated by the USDA

National Organic Program. Still the consumer's best bet for safety and health if they do not know the source of their food or seeds.

**CERTIFIED NATURALLY GROWN** A self-regulating, nonprofit agency upholding USDA organic standards.

**SEED LIBRARIES** Public places where seeds are deposited by a community for the benefit of the community. Participants check out seeds, grow them and return new seeds the following year. A resilient way to engender local diversity and seed security.

**TREATED** Seeds coated with a chemical fungicide or pesticide. Not allowed in organic gardens. These seeds can usually be

identified by their fluorescent colors such as pink or blue.

**WILD-CRAFTED** Collected from wild plants growing in natural environments.

## LEARN MORE

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[www.nativeseeds.org](http://www.nativeseeds.org)

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**Community Food Bank  
of Southern Arizona**

[communityfoodbank.com](http://communityfoodbank.com)