

SEED COLLECTING

- Collect and germinate ripe seeds. If you collect wild seeds, please note that you should get permission from the landowner first.
- Do not destroy a native plant colony, or compromise creatures which depend on seeds as a food source.
- Take no more than 10% of the available seeds. If there are signs that someone else has already collected, you should not take any more.
- Learn about common and rare plants in your area. Never collect seeds from rare species.
- Ripe seeds will be hard, dry and dark. The parent plant may show signs of dying back. Some seeds may have already dispersed. Sometimes you can pull or shake off the seeds or it's easiest to cut-off the seed-head and clean it at home later.
- To dry seeds, put them in a paper (not plastic) bag until they are cleaned and dried fully. After that you can use plastic bag if needed.

SEED COLLECTING

- Store seeds in a dry, cool, and dark place. Label them with the species and date picked.
- Typically, seeds mature in fall, and germinates in spring.
- It is often necessary to store native seeds in a cold environment for one or more months before planting, depending on the species.
- Useful websites:
 - <https://nanps.org/seed-collecting/>
 - <https://northerngardener.org/collecting-native-seeds/>

NEW TO SAVING SEEDS?

Start with seeds that make seed saving easy. The following seeds are great for beginners and produce plants like the ones you planted.

- Basil
- Beans
- Beets
- Carrots
- Chard
- Lettuce
- Onions
- Parsley
- Peas
- Sunflowers
- Tomatoes



NORWOOD SEED LIBRARY

GUIDE TO SAVING SEEDS

CONTACT US



Morrill Memorial Library

781 769 0200 ext 2



Website

www.norwoodlibrary.org/seed-library



Email

norwoodseeds@norwoodma.gov



THREE WAYS TO SAVE SEEDS

Dry seed processing:

For plants with seeds that grow on the outside of the plant.

- Allow the seed to dry on the plant, and collect the seedpods before they break open.
- For plants with seeds that develop in the center of the flower, allow the plant to dry.
- When the stem holding the seed head turns brown, harvest the seeds.
- Collect dry seeds under dry, warm conditions to prevent mold and reduce additional drying time.



THREE WAYS TO SAVE SEEDS

Wet seed processing: for seeds that grow inside the fleshy fruit of the plant.

- Rinse off the seeds and dry them thoroughly.
- If the seeds have a gel-like coating, use the fermentation process.

Fermentation seed processing: for seeds with a gel-like coating.

- Mix the seeds and the seed juice with a little water in a small plastic or glass container with a lid.



THREE WAYS TO SAVE SEEDS

- Allow the seeds to ferment for 4-6 days. When a layer of mold has formed on top of the water and the seeds sink, the fermentation is complete. Add more water, swish it around, and remove the mold and pulp. The good seeds will sink to the bottom, while the bad seeds will float to the top. Remove the bad seeds.
- Drain the water from the seeds and set them out on a plate, screen, or paper towel to dry thoroughly. Once the seeds are completely dry, place them in a moisture-proof container. Label and store the seeds.

