



SEED TO

SEED

my.nflibrary.ca/seedtoseed



OVERVIEW



Seed to Seed offers vegetable and herb seeds to the Niagara Falls community **free of charge**. Simply stop by any NFPL location and browse through our collection of seeds. **No library card is required.**

You can choose up to **3 varieties of seeds** to take home with you. Once you've made your selection, fill out the seed form and hand it to a staff member. Each packet of seeds comes with brief instructions about planting and care to help you get started.

As your plant reaches maturity at the end of its growing season, **collect the seeds, dry them out, place them in a labelled envelope** (tell us the common name, variety, and year), and return them to any NFPL location. This will help restock the Seed to Seed collection for the following season.





WHY SAVE SEEDS?

Learn more: saving seeds will teach you more about gardening.

Save money: produce is expensive at grocery stores and farmers markets, but free seeds are, well, free!

Become self-reliant: saving seeds will teach you to rely on yourself and your community for sustenance.

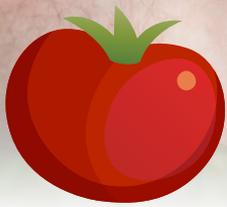
Grow your community: giving seeds back to your library will help strengthen the community so that everyone has access to healthy food.

SEED SAVING INSTRUCTIONS

BEANS & PEAS

1. Allow your beans or peas to fully mature (about 4-5 weeks past eating time). They will eventually become dry and hard.
2. You will know when they are done when you shake them and hear them rattling around inside their pods.
3. Remove the bean or pea pod from the plant, open them up, and remove the seeds.
4. Store on a plate for another day or so to ensure beans are totally dry.
5. Put them into an envelope.
6. Date and label the envelope and drop seeds off at the counter of the Niagara Falls Public Library to share with your community next year!





TOMATOES

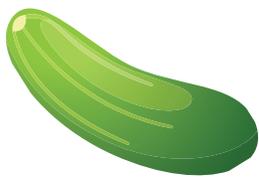
1. Slice fully ripened tomatoes in half and scoop pulp and seeds into a clean bowl or jar.
2. Add a cup or so of water so that the seeds are floating in the liquid and pulp.
3. Cover and place in a warm, out-of-the-way spot to ferment for 2-4 days (it will begin to smell after a while so make sure it isn't in a high-traffic area).
4. Fermentation is complete when there is a layer of scum floating on the surface of the pulp and seeds and/or when the seeds have sunk to the bottom of the container in watery liquid with scum/pulp floating on the top. (Once this occurs, DO NOT leave the seeds to sit in liquid as they will begin to germinate).
5. Skim/remove scum and thick pulp from the top of the liquid and pour the remainder into a fine sieve.
6. Rinse seeds under running water, removing any pulp bits as you go.
7. Carefully tap and spread seeds out onto a paper or glass plate, not on paper towels.
8. Set in a warm dry spot and allow seeds to fully dry.
9. Put them into an envelope.
10. Date and label the envelope and drop seeds off at the counter of the Niagara Falls Public Library to share with your community next year!



PEPPERS

1. Allow peppers to fully develop on the plant. They should be dark in colour and slightly wrinkled.
2. Pick the pepper, cut it in half, and rub/shake the seeds out in a bowl.
3. Spread the seeds out as individually as possible onto a plate or tray lined with a paper towel.
4. Allow to dry for 1-2 weeks or until the seeds are completely dry.
5. Put them into an envelope.
6. Date and label the envelope and drop seeds off at the counter of the Niagara Falls Public Library to share with your community next year!





CUCUMBERS

1. Let them ripen on the vine past the eating stage. They will turn yellow, enlarge, and the vine they are growing will die.
2. Pick the overripe cucumbers from the dead vine and put in a dry place to allow them to soften.
3. Slice the cucumber lengthwise and scoop the seeds out into a large bowl or jar.
4. Add a few cups of water so that the seeds are floating in the liquid and pulp.
5. Cover and allow to ferment for 5 days.
6. Fermentation is complete when there is a layer of scum floating on the surface of the seeds and/or when the seeds have sunk to the bottom. Once this occurs, do not leave the seeds in the liquid or they will begin to germinate.
7. Remove the scum and thick pulp from the top of the liquid and pour the remaining liquid into a fine sieve.
8. Carefully tap and spread seeds out onto a paper or glass plate, not on paper towels.
9. Set in a warm dry spot and let the seeds dry out completely. This will take around 3 weeks and the seeds are ready when they snap in half when bent.
10. Put them into an envelope.
11. Date and label the envelope and drop seeds off at the counter of the Niagara Falls Public Library to share with your community next year!



LETTUCE

1. Once your lettuce plants have sent up their flower stalks, the seeds will begin to ripen.
2. When the stalks are dry and producing fluff, the seeds are ripe and ready to be collected.
3. To collect the seeds, shake the stalk into a paper bag or bucket. Do this over a couple of days or all at once depending on how ready the seeds are.
4. Gently remove the fluff from the seeds.
5. Put the seeds into an envelope.
6. Date and label the envelope and drop seeds off at the counter of the Niagara Falls Public Library to share with your community next year!

HERBS

1. Allow the herbs to flower and the flower heads to dry.
2. Snip the flower heads off and dry them out in a warm, dry place.
3. To collect the seeds, shake the dry flower head into a paper bag or bucket.
4. Put the seeds into an envelope.
5. Date and label the envelope and drop seeds off at the counter of the Niagara Falls Public Library to share with your community next year!



MELONS, SQUASH, & ZUCCHINI

1. Slice open the fully matured fruit.
2. Remove the pulp and seeds with a spoon and place them in a strainer.
3. Rinse them thoroughly and remove any remaining pulp under running water.
4. Spread the seeds on a tray and allow them to dry completely.
5. Put the seeds into an envelope.
6. Date and label the envelope and drop seeds off at the counter of the Niagara Falls Public Library to share with your community next year!





SPINACH

1. Spinach seeds normally ripen unevenly in the latter part of summer. Remove plants that bolt to seeds without producing good spinach.
2. Strip the mature seeds from the stalks with your hands into a paper bag or bucket.
3. Put the seeds into an envelope.
4. Date and label the envelope and drop seeds off at the counter of the Niagara Falls Public Library to share with your community next year!





BEETS

1. In the fall before the ground freezes, cut the tops of the beets an inch above the crown. Handle beets carefully as damaged ones may rot.
2. Layer the beets in a box between dampened sand or fresh sawdust and keep them at a cool, but not freezing temperature.
3. In the spring, beets should be thinned or replanted to about two feet apart, the crowns even with the soil surface.
4. In summer, when plants are completely dry, brown mature seeds are easily stripped by hand from the branches. Beet seeds are actually seed balls, each containing up to six seeds.
5. Put the seed balls into an envelope.
6. Date and label the envelope and drop seeds off at the counter of the Niagara Falls Public Library to share with your community next year!

CARROTS & PARSNIPS

1. In the fall before the ground freezes, cut the leafy tops of the carrots to one inch.
2. Layer the tops in a box between dampened sand or fresh sawdust and keep them at a cool, but not freezing temperature.
3. In the spring, replant carrots a foot apart.
4. In the summer, the carrots will grow large head with a series of branches beneath it in which stalks nearly equal in length spring from a common center. It's best to harvest when the heads have ripe brown seeds that are starting to turn brown. This is usually around September.
5. Remove the heads as they mature or entire stalks can be cut and cured for a few weeks.
6. Rub off seeds when completely dry and use a screen to remove the chaff.
7. Put the seed balls into an envelope.
8. Date and label the envelope and drop seeds off at the counter of the Niagara Falls Public Library to share with your community next year!



BRUSSELS SPROUTS, CABBAGE, & KALE

1. Overwinter them outside or take them into storage conditions of high humidity and near-freezing temperatures.
2. Replant them in spring, two to three feet apart.
3. For cabbages, make cross cuts about an inch deep into the top center of each head to facilitate the emergence of the seed stalk. Staking keeps cabbages, which grow to five feet the second year, from falling over.
4. Pods burst open as they become dry and brittle. Harvest them a little early and cure them further in paper bags or on trays after harvest to avoid losing any seed.
5. Put the seed balls into an envelope.
6. Date and label the envelope and drop seeds off at the counter of the Niagara Falls Public Library to share with your community next year!



LEARN MORE



1. Check out one of our many books or resources on gardening and growing.
2. Do your own research through Internet search engines.
3. Join the seedsavers.org forum.
4. Talk to experienced seed-saving gardeners.
5. Attend programs and workshops at the Library throughout the year on seed saving and other gardening topics.
6. Check out these links:

seeds.ca/diversity/seed-catalogue-index

webpal.org/SAFE/aaarecovery/1_farm_recovery/ftpfiles/basic_seed_saving.pdf

iuhoakland.com/seedsaving.pdf



“I have great faith in a **seed**... Convince me that you have a seed there, and I am prepared to expect wonders.”

- **Henry David Thoreau**

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