

Seed Libraries: Basics & Beyond

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Our Website
SeedLibraryNetwork.org



Overview

- Why it matters
- Just getting started – The Steps
- Envelope inspiration ... & a game changer! 🏆
- State of signage
- Library programming
- Staying connected & getting on the map 📍



Seed Libraries

- Free source of seeds for the community
- Opportunity for us to relocalize our seeds
- Place where culturally appropriate seeds can be shared & stewarded



Our Vision & Mission



Our Vision

A robust seed library in every community that is accessible to all and that honors the wisdom of the seeds and their keepers.

Our Mission



The Seed Library Network:
Cultivating Community Seed
Libraries and Seed
Sovereignty.



Why it matters?



- increase access to locally grown food
- social justice
- local resilience
- food security

- seed sovereignty
- preserve stories and culture
- promote seed saving
- community building

- preserve & increase genetic diversity
- climate change
- desire to relocalize systems

Tips

- Pace yourself.
- Plan for going the distance and changes.
- Find partners.
- Keep systems to delegate or transfer (Work Party Template)



Just Getting Started?

Step 1: Purpose & Vision

Step 2: Location

Step 3: Seeds



Our Website
[Obtaining Seeds](#) page

Label! Label!

Mini

Required

Common

Variety

Year

Grower's

X.

tuce, Red Oak leaf, Re

Dry Bean
Phaseolus vulgaris



Bush beans, some are semi vining
(grow as bush beans)
Early, colorful and promiscuous
Plant after last frost. 1/4

Step 4: Cabinet & Storage System

- Alphabetical
- By Family (ex. Legumes: 🌱 🌱)
- Seed Saving Difficulty
- By Type: Vegetables, Flowers, & Herbs
- Season



Our Website

[Cabinets](#) page



Step 5: Establish Guidelines & Procedures

- Seed Borrowing Limits
- Membership Forms
- Seed Packet Information

Seed Library Membership Information

The Seed Library is a free program co-ordinated by ourselves wholesome food by offering a time-honored tradition of seed saving, sharing adapted plant varieties, and foster community sharing.

The Seed Library operates on the honor system and automatically when you withdraw seeds. We encourage basic seed-saving techniques. We encourage you to return seeds from lettuce, tomato, etc. and seed will allow us to keep the library viable to our climate.

Name: _____

Email Address (Please print carefully) _____

Stay connected: Would you like to be on our list?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Background: How much seed saving experience do you have?
☐ None ☐ Some ☐ Lots
How much gardening experience do you have?

Volunteering: Would you be willing to help in any ways you might help: organizing the library, mentoring other gardeners, fundraising, etc.
seeds for the community, social media, etc.

(Please specify) _____

How Much?

QUANTITIES

✓ **Take only what you plan to grow**

✓ **2-3 seeds/plant for larger seeds**

✓ **A pinch for smaller seeds**

SeedLibraryNetwork.org



Our Website
[Membership Forms](#)

Envelope Evolution ... Inspiration... & ...

Richmond Grows Seed Lending Library

Common name: _____

Scientific name: _____

Variety: _____

Seed source: _____

Location of harvest: _____

Year: _____

Notes: _____

Difficulty of seed to be saved:

☐ Easy

☐ Difficult

Thank you for saving seeds!

Please return some at the end of the season.

Visit RichmondGrowsSeeds.org



Jeanette's Love in the Mist

2023



This white Love in the Mist (Nigella) turns deep pink as it ages! Listen to Erika, a Richmond gardener, share her experience with this plant. Her Grandmother Jeannette gifted her these seeds.

Spread seeds around your garden. Cut some flowers for bouquets and let others go to seed. They will self-seed giving you beautiful flowers for years to come. The dried seed pods are also pretty in vases!



Our Website
[Envelopes & Labels](#) page



Community Tips
& Resources 

Add Your
Resources 

Auto Seed Wrapper

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	Drop Downs TEMPLATES		Seed #	Common Name - Manual Entry	Variety Name - Manual Entry	Scientific Name-Manual Entry	Year Grown in - Manual Entry	# of Seeds Per Packet - Manual entry	Grown By - Manual Entry	Notes - Man
5	DRY SEEDED		4	Amaranth / Amaranto	Burgundy	Amaranthus sp.	2025	Take a pinch of seeds.	Grown by local gardeners	Burgundy leaves and
6	DRY SEEDED		5	Amaranth / Amaranto	Copperhead	Amaranthus sp.	2025	Take a pinch of seeds.	Grown by Hall Middle School, Larkspur	Flower/grain. Early m grows 4-7' tall and ha golden colored seeds. greens and grain.

Amaranth / Amaranto	
Copperhead	
<i>Amaranthus sp.</i>	
2025	
Flower/grain. Early maturing variety that grows 4-7' tall and has light tan, almost golden colored seeds. Grown for edible greens and grain.	

Amaranth / Amaranto	
Copperhead	
<i>Amaranthus sp.</i>	
2025	
 Full Sun/Pleno Sol, Plant Spacing - 30 cm (12"), Seed Depth - 0.5 cm (1/4")	

Amaranth / Amaranto
Copperhead
Amaranthus sp.
2020
Take a pinch of seeds.
Notes
Flower/grain. Early maturing variety that grows 4-7' tall and has light tan, almost golden colored seeds. Grown for edible greens and grain.
Planting Instructions
☀ Full Sun/Pleno Sol, Plant Spacing - 30 cm (12"), Seed Depth - 0.5 cm (1/4")
Grown by local gardeners
Save Seeds 🌻 Dry Seeded: Let seeds dry on the plant, harvest. Winnow to remove the chaff. Isolation: Only plant 1 variety or label "Diverse". Save seeds from multiple plants.




Our Website
[Auto Seed Wrapper](#)

To pack or not to pack?

Pre-Packed	Self-Serve Envelopes	Jars
• control the quantity of seeds taken • packing parties can build community • critical info included on all packets • takes more volunteer/staff time	• easier to manage • people may take more seeds so supplies go quicker • people may not write quality info on packet	• easier to manage • reduces risk of rodent damage • easy to restock • people may take more seeds so supplies go quicker • people may not write quality info on packet → can include pre-printed labels in jars



Our Website
[Envelopes page](#)

Signage

What signage do you have in your seed library?

Borrowing

Labeling &
Packaging

Donating



Our Website
[Donation procedures
resources](#)



Legality & Seed Libraries

Note: Seeds from the library may not meet germination or vairetal purite standards per Maryland seed law.

Important!

You can't require returns, but you can encourage them.

- Have a sign about local seed quality .
- In your signage and membership info., state that you don't accept GMOs and patented varieties (PVP).
- Packets should have the date donated/harvested & source.

[theselc .org/ seed_law_resources](https://theselc.org/seed_law_resources)

Local Seed. Global Impact!

Many seeds shared by the Seed Library were grown by community members with love and care like our ancestors have done for thousands of years. Please know they may not meet state germination or labeling standards. We do not knowingly accept or share any seeds that are chemically treated, patented (PVP), or genetically modified.

At Richmond Grows, we try our best to ensure the quality of our seed using best practices in inventory care and labeling. Nonetheless, seeds are alive and people using the seed library have varying degrees of skill in saving seeds. You should know that you might experience low germination rates or receive seeds that were not properly labeled. This is a volunteer-run project, and we do the best we can with the time and resources we have.

If you do have any problems with the seed you get from the seed library, please let us know so we can try to fix it for future users of the library! Email us at richmondgrows@gmail.com.

Thanks for your interest in local seeds!



Librarian Programming

Storytime

Seed bowls: Can you identify the seed? What seed produces what food?

Songs about gardening.

Cultural connections to food and seed.

Coloring Books

Have a gardening themed storytime and **pass out seeds** with seed saving instructions for parents and related **coloring book** for kids.

Make these part of your **storytime**.



Our Website
[Coloring Books](#)

Summer Reading

Add the seed library into your summer reading program:

- Visit the seed library.
- Encourage a gardening or seed saving book.
- Provide seeds as one of the prizes for summer reading program.

Bookmarks

Share seed saving bookmarks & why local seed matters.

Make your own or use ours.

Do you need to increase donations? Could you make this a bookmark to be shared at seed swaps or seed saving classes.



Our Website
[Bookmarks](#)

WHY LOCAL SEED MATTERS!

LOSS OF GENETIC DIVERSITY

Corporate Seeds UNIFORMITY = VULNERABILITY	Heritage, Regional varieties DIVERSITY = RESILIENCE
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PRESERVING CULTURALLY IMPORTANT CROPS

STORIES, TRADITION, FLAVOR

LOCAL CLIMATE ADAPTATION

Seeds learn to withstand OUR SPECIFIC erratic weather (Droughts, Floods, Heat!)

BECOME A SEED SAVER

BUILD COMMUNITY RESILIENCE & SOVEREIGNTY

DELICIOUS & NUTRITIOUS FOOD

SEEDLIBRARYNETWORK.SUBSTACK.COM

NEWSLETTER

EMBRACING DIVERSITY in our Crops

Diversity lets us breed for a changing climate, tough conditions, & community preferences.

VERY LIKELY AS LABELED (Self-Pollinating)

POSSIBLY DIVERSE Plant 1 variety to reduce cross-pollination

VERY LIKELY DIVERSE (Hard to isolate)

Save and Return Your Seeds!

We encourage everyone to save seeds and participate in community stewardship of our seeds!

THE "DIVERSE MIX" RULE:

If your seeds are from the "Very Likely Diverse" category, please save and return them! Just be sure to mark the packet as a "Diverse mix" so future gardeners know what to expect!

HOW TO SAVE BEAN SEEDS

- 1 SEPARATE VARIETIES**

10-20 FEET (3-6 METERS)
IF GENETIC PRESERVATION IS THE GOAL, 100 FT (30 METERS)
- 2 LET BEANS DRY ON PLANT**

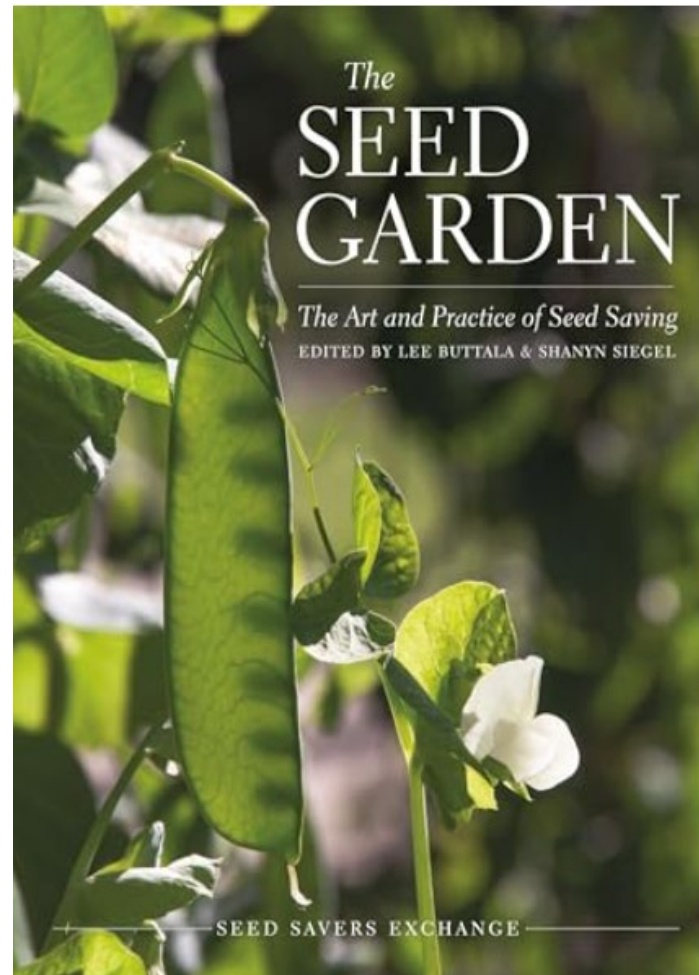
Allow selected pods to fully dry on the vine.
- 3 BRING INDOORS IF FROST THREATENS**

Pull plants if frost comes early. Dry completely indoors.
- 4 FREEZE TO KILL WEEVILS**
Put fully dried beans in a labeled jar in the freezer for 1 week to kill bean weevils.
- 5 LABEL & STORE**
Place in a labeled envelope for proper storage.
- 6 SHARE YOUR SEEDS**
Share some with friends and your local seed library!

SeedLibraryNetwork.org

Displays

Create displays around seed saving books and gardening.



Classes

Seed saving classes
Gardening classes

What classes or programs have you hosted around the seed library?

Seed Saving in Community



July 29 3:30-5 PM PDT

Online – will be recorded

With rising grocery prices, increasing uncertainty in our food supply, and the growing impacts of climate change, now is the time to take a hopeful, empowering step: Learn the ancient practice of saving seeds and how to adapt seeds for the future with Rebeca Newburn of the Richmond Grows Seed Lending Library!

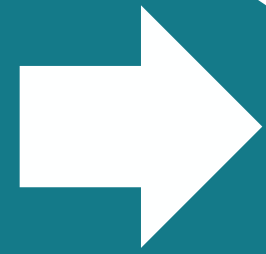


Register:

givebutter.com/seedsavingJuly29



One Book



One Seed

Add to your
Summer reading

Add a One Seed, One Community as part of your programming.

Maybe even connect to a reading that is seed or gardening related.



Our Website
[One Seed, One Community](#)

Plant a Seed, Read

Teen summer reading program
game board

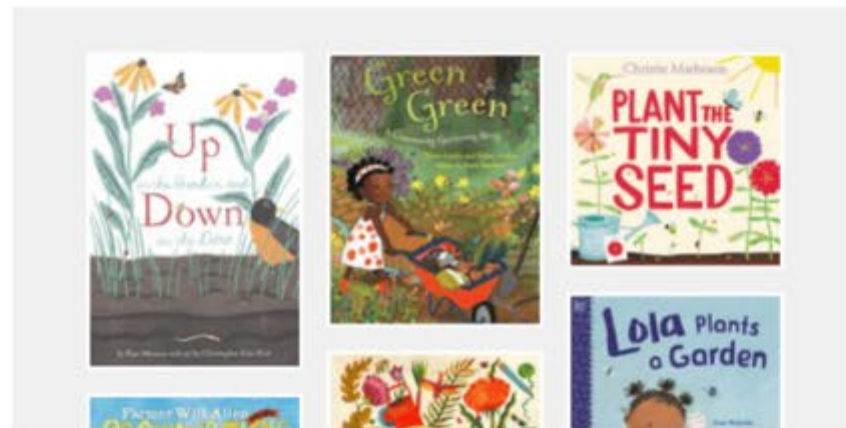


ATTEND A NATIONAL NIGHT OUT EVENT	BORROW AN ITEM FROM THE LIBRARY OF THINGS	LISTEN TO MUSIC ON HOOPLA	NAME A RICHMOND COMMISSION TEENS CAN JOIN	BORROW A MAGAZINE
BORROW A NONFICTION BOOK OR EBOOK	CHECK OUT A BOOK BY A BAY AREA AUTHOR	BORROW A COOKBOOK AND MAKE A RECIPE	NAME A LIBRARY PROGRAM FOR TEENS	BORROW A BOOK ABOUT AN ARTIST OR ARTISTS
VISIT THE LIBRARY @ RICHMOND'S JUNETEENTH FESTIVAL	DO SOMETHING CREATIVE @ THE LIBRARY	FREE	BORROW A GRAPHIC NOVEL	BORROW AN EBOOK ON HOOPLA OR LIBBY
VISIT THE SEED LIBRARY AT 3230 MACDONALD AVE	BORROW A GARDENING BOOK	BORROW AN AUDIO BOOK ON HOOPLA OR LIBBY	READ A BOOK SET IN THE FUTURE	BORROW A BOOK THAT INSPIRED A TV SHOW OR MOVIE
GAME AT THE LIBRARY	MOVIE ON KANOPY	ATTEND A LIBRARY PROGRAM	BORROW A "NEW" BOOK	BORROW A MYSTERY BOOK



Celebrate Culture

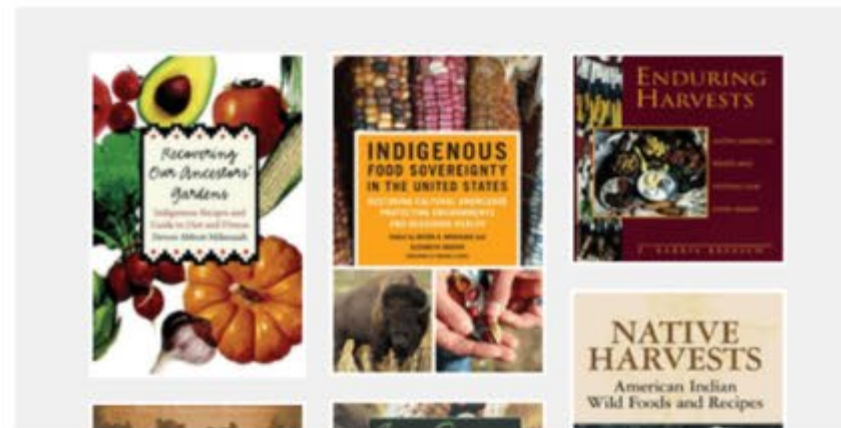
STAFF RECS



Gardening Books for Kids

Stop by an OPL seed library to get seeds and books, and watch your garden grow!

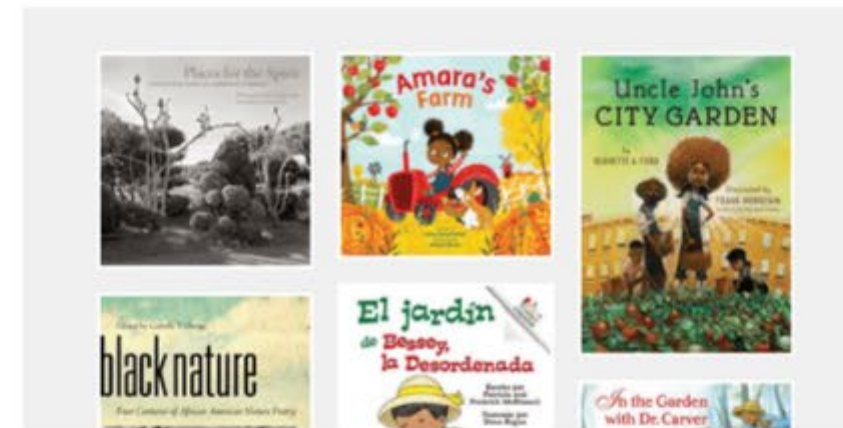
[opl_rebecca](#)



Indigenous Gardening

Indigenous Cook Books and Gardening Books for all ages.

[Xochitlwork](#)



African and African American Gardening

African and African American Cook Books and Gardening Books for all ages.

[Xochitlwork](#)

Celebrate Culture



Arabic
Chinese
English
Spanish
Vietnamese

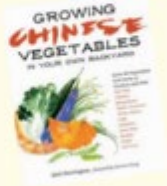
Learn about GARDENING

- ***The Chinese Kitchen Garden*** by Wendy Kiang-Spray
 - growing in containers, watering, seed-sowing, pests, recipes.
- ***Growing Chinese Vegetables*** by Geri Harrington
- ***Golden Gate Gardening*** by Pam Peirce
 - complete guide to year-round food gardening in the San Francisco Bay Area.
- ***A Cook's Guide to Chinese Vegetables*** by Martha Dahlen
- **Alameda County Master Gardener's Help Desk**
https://acmg.ucanr.edu/Contact_Us
- **Oakland Public Library's seed lending & gardening info:**
<https://oaklandlibrary.org/seed-lending>
- ***Minari***
movie about a family of Korean immigrants who try to make it as farmers in the rural United States during the 1980s.

STORIES FOR KIDS

- ***The Ugly Vegetables*** by Grace Lin
- ***Watercress*** by Andrea Wang

To access all resources in this pamphlet, go to:
tinyurl.com/asiangrabandgrowlist



Seed Library Map



Our Website

bit.ly/SeedLibraryMap

Community Created Resources

Community Tips
& Resources 

Add Your
Resources 



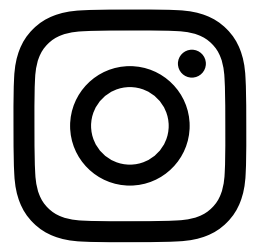
Explore or Share...
SeedLibraryNetwork.org

Questions & Answers

Seedlibrarynetwork.org



seedlibrarynetwork.substack.com



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[Seed Library Network \(LinkedIn\)](https://www.linkedin.com/company/seed-library-network)

[Seed Library Network Conference Recordings](#)

