Seed saving

The Basics

Use the healthiest plants, vegetables, to save seeds from

Fruit and vegetables used for seed saving should be healthy and really ripe.

Once seeds have been extracted, no matter which method.is used they should be spread on e.g. a plate or tray for a couople of weeks to ensure they are completely dry

Once completely dry, store them in a jar, envelope, or plastic zip lock bag

Label with name of fruit, flower or vegetable and date

Store in a cool dark place for use the following season

Store in a cold place – cool store or refrigerator – if you want to keep them longer

Types of Seed sand How to Save

The easiest – Seeds in pods

The easiest vegetables to save seed from are those that grow in a pod .

- Peas
- Beans,
- Broad beans
- sweet peas.

Simply leave pods on the plant until they are completely dry – the colour of a paper bag. Then you harvest t hem, simply open the pos and remove the seeds. Peas and beans can be used for sowing for next season or next season, or as a pulse like lentils and chickpeas, a source of vegetable protein.

How to save ‘pulpy’ seeds – Using Fermentation

Seeds of pulpy vegetables and fruits, such as tomatoes (Lycopersicon esculentum) and cucumbers (Cucumis sativus), require a fermentation process that mimics the natural rotting that occurs in nature. As the seeds ferment, the pulp separates, leaving behind clean seeds that are suitable for saving.

- Tomatoes
- Cucumber
- Zucchini

- Pumpkin
- Melons

Guide to saving seeds using fermentation

1. Cut open a fruit or vegetable and scoop out its seeds and attached pulp with a spoon. Place the seeds in a tall glass or jar.

2. Fill the glass or jar with water so the seeds and pulp are submerged to a depth of 2 or more inches. Set the glass or jar in a room-temperature location to ferment.

3. Skim the mold and pulp from the top of the water in the glass or jar every one to three days. Add water to the container to replace the amount skimmed. Repeat the skimming process each time mold forms during a seven- to 10-day period, or until most of the pulp and non-viable seeds have floated to the surface and only viable seeds remain at the container's bottom.

4. Pour the container's contents through a mesh strainer. Rinse all remaining pulp from the seeds with clear water.

5 .Spread the seeds in a single layer on a sheet of wax paper. Allow the seeds to dry completely in a warm, well-ventilated location, which may take about one week. Stir the seeds daily so all their sides dry evenly.

Plants that Flower and 'Go to Seen'

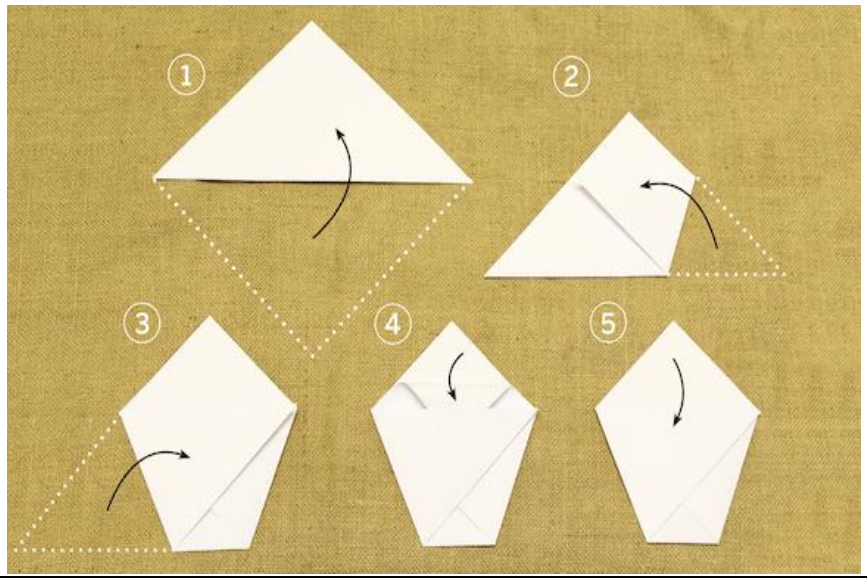
Saving seeds from vegetables that have 'gone to seed' – i.e. flowered and produced seed. There can be quite a time between the flowering and the production of seed. When the plant flowers, it is then pollinated and then a seed produced

This includes

- Parsley
- Carrot , parsnip and beetroot
- Rocket
- Celery
- Onions

Let the plant 'die off; so the sterns and flowers are brown and dry. Then separate the seeds from the plant, spread them on a plate to dry out for a couple of weeks

Guide to making your own seed envelope



1. Begin with a square piece of paper. Fold it diagonally into a triangle and position so the longest side is facing you.
2. Fold the bottom right corner up to meet the centre of the opposite side so there is a straight edge along the top.
3. Repeat with the bottom left corner, again meeting the opposite side. Both corners should line up across the top edge.
4. Tuck the first of the two triangles at the top into the triangular pocket created by making the previous fold in step 3.
5. You will see that you now have an envelope that you can fill with seeds. Once filled, close by tucking the remaining top triangle into the same fold as in step