

Seed saving

The importance of seed saving

In days gone by seed saving was an important and essential part of growing food, ensuring you could grow varieties of your favourite fruit, vegetables and herbs each year – for free! Nowadays, we can buy seeds more easily in the shops, but some of the old (heritage) and unusual varieties (often from around the world) are now in desperate decline because they have not been saved.

The benefits of you seed saving

- **It's easy, fun and a great source of learning!** – experiment.
- **It's free** – seed saving provides you with a ready supply of seeds which you can share with other schools.
- **It offers you choice and variety** – save seeds from your favourite unusual fruit and vegetables.
- **Growing becomes easier each year** – as unusual varieties gradually become more acclimatised to your local growing conditions.

So, at the end of the growing season don't forget to save some of the seeds from the plants you have grown!

For more seed saving tips...

Read these fantastic Garden Organic resources:

Seed saving guidelines: <http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/seed-saving-guidelines>

Booklet: Seed saving in schools:

<http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk/sites/www.gardenorganic.org.uk/files/resources/fflp/Seed-Saving-in-Schools.pdf>

ACTIVITY:

Learn to seed save

What you need

1. Some very ripe tomatoes – 1 per pupil
2. Paper or kitchen towel
3. A sharp knife – adult supervision required.

Method

- **Cut the tomatoes in half.** One tomato per pupil.
- **Spread a paper towel out.**
- **Squeeze out the inside of the tomato**, and collect the seeds in one pile. You may need to use water to wash off thicker pulp.
- **Now, spread the seeds across the paper towel to dry.** Make a pattern or write your name with the seeds.
- **Write the pupils name, date and the type of seeds** with a pen in one corner of the paper towel.
- **Leave to dry.**
- **Store the seeds** in a cool, dry place until they are ready to be germinated.
- **To germinate** fill a seed tray with compost, lay the paper towel on top and cover with 1cm of soil. Water and put in a warm environment.
- **Water and put in a warm environment.**
- **Check every day** to see if the seeds have started to grow.
- **Watch the pupils name or pattern grow in seedlings!!**

Save extra seeds in a dry, paper envelope not a glass or plastic container, as they can remain moist and rot.

Easy. Now try the same method for saving seeds from unusual fruit and vegetables!

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