**SIMPLE SEED SAVING 101 – CONCORD SEED LENDING LIBRARY**

**MISSION**

*To collect and share biodiverse locally adapted plant seeds, cultivated by and for area residents*

**WHAT ARE SEEDS?**

A plant produces seeds in order to reproduce. Just as an egg has to be fertilized to become a new animal, a seed must be pollinated to produce a new plant.

Understanding pollination is key to getting seeds to produce the plants you want. Some plants are **self-pollinating** or **selfers**—the male and female parts are contained within a single flower that fertilizes itself. Other plants, called **cross-pollinators**, have separate male and female flowers; their pollen has to get from one flower to the other in order for the plant to be fertilized.

**WHY SAVE SEEDS?**

The time-honored tradition of seed-saving promotes biodiversity and nurtures locally adapted plant varieties. Saving seed increases our community’s capacity to feed itself wholesome food by encouraging gardening and the cultivation of open-pollinated and heirloom seeds.

**SEED-SAVING BASICS.**

Seeds require different levels of work, experience, and space for saving to succeed. If you’re new to saving, we recommend starting with beans, lettuce peas, or tomatoes. These “selfers” are self-pollinating, which means that their saved seeds will reliably produce plants like the original one.

Other seeds are more likely to cross-pollinate with different varieties of the same plant growing nearby. Special planning is required to make sure the seeds you save will grow into the original variety rather than a hybrid. We want to ensure that the seeds you return to the library are indeed what you think they are, so we recommend returning seeds other than self-pollinators ONLY AFTER you have successfully isolated your crops against cross-pollination.

**WHAT’S A SEED LENDING LIBRARY?**

The Concord Free Public Library is growing one of the first seed lending libraries. We hope one day to see every library in Massachusetts lend seeds. When you borrow seeds from the library, we ask that you plant them save some of the seeds from your best plants, and return the saved seeds so that other may borrow them.

**NEXT STEPS**

* Visit **concordseedlendinglibrary.org**
* Read about seed-saving
* Talk with experienced seed-savers
* Keep good garden records
* Take a seed-saving class or workshop
* Should we start a seed library in Carlisle?

Concord Seed Lending Library is located in the Fowler Branch of the Concord Free Public Library

at 1322 Main Street, (West) Concord, MA 01742

