

Welcome to the SHML Seed Library!

Participation is open to all interested gardeners. You do not need to have an SHML card in order to borrow seeds.

The seed library comprises non-GMO, organic, heirloom seeds. The seeds you borrow from the SHML Seed Library are lent to you at no financial cost. Users are limited to three seed packets per year.

SHML requests that gardeners return to the library a portion of seeds harvested to be placed back in the collection for future use, and that the remainder will be replanted the following year by the gardener.

WHY?

In recent years, commercial agriculture has tended toward a small number of plant varieties, only growing the varieties that are seen as the most commercially successful, to the detriment of others. This narrow focus results in the extinction of 75% of the global food biodiversity within the last 100 years.

Additionally, 90% of the remaining biodiversity is not in use commercially. Not to mention, the largest seed producers discourage the saving of seeds, instead guiding consumers to repurchase of the same seeds year after year. This reduction in diversity can be harmful. For example, growing fewer varieties means that any negative impact on the food supply, such as pests or adverse weather, is much greater than if there were more crop varieties to absorb the impact.

As the SHML seed collection grows, we will boost the biodiversity of the region.

Our Thanks

The core of the SHML seed library has been generously donated by Baker Creek Heirloom Seed Company, Seed Savers Exchange, and High Mowing Seeds.

Additional donations of non-GMO, organic, heirloom seeds will be appreciated. The more seeds in the library, the more others can experience growing their own food. Seeds will be accepted if they are properly dried and identified. If donating commercial seeds, please be sure that the seeds are non-hybrid and non-Genetically Modified Organism (GMO).

Visit shmlibrary.org/events for upcoming gardening workshops



South Haven
Memorial Library
...more than books!

314 Broadway
South Haven, MI 49090
269.637.2403

SHML Seed Library



borrow  grow  save

2017 Seed Harvesting Workshops

Thursday, Aug. 17

Thursday, Sept. 21

6 p.m. @ SHML

A seed library is a self-perpetuating collection of heirloom seeds.

Our goal is to introduce home gardeners to a wider variety of produce and enhance local biodiversity.

South Haven
Memorial Library

BORROW

Select up to three packets of seeds from the SHML Seed Library.



GROW

You can find basic seed planting information in the library's gardening section.



SAVE



At harvest time, please take some extra steps to save seeds from your garden.

Please plan to return a portion of the harvested seeds to the seed lending library to keep the seed library self-sustaining. Explore the resources on this page or come to a seed-saving workshop at SHML for more tips.

SEED DONATIONS

Submit seeds in a small envelope labeled with the type of plant and variety (if known), and the year harvested. **OPTIONAL:** submit a photograph of the plant and/or your garden! Photos may appear in library publicity materials.

RESOURCES

Books @ the library....call number 635 in the nonfiction section

HowToSaveSeeds.com

RareSeeds.com

SouthHavenGardenClub.org

Workshops at SHML

RichmondGrowsSeeds.org

Seedsavers.org

LibertyHydeBailey.org

How to Harvest Seeds

While some plants have fairly obvious seeds, others are typically eaten long before the flowering stage—not everyone will recognize when seeding occurs. Familiarize yourself with the life cycle of the plant you will be growing.

Be sure to collect seeds from your healthiest or tastiest crops. The first step to seed saving is allowing the seed to become fully mature. At maturity, some seed is dry and some is encased in fruit and still quite wet. Processing seed has three basic methods: dry, wet and fermentation.

Dry Seeds

Most garden plants fall in this category. Examples: cabbages, onions and carrots. Allow the seed to partially dry in seedpods while still on the parent plant.

Collect the seed before the capsules open or the seed heads shatter.

Once the seed is fully dry, separate it from the pods and stalks and package in an airtight container.

For plants with seeds in the center of the flower, allow the plant to dry and harvest the seeds when the stem holding the seeds turns brown.

Wet Seeds

Follow these steps for seeds that grow inside the fleshy fruit of the plant, like melons, peppers, and pumpkins.

Scoop out the seeds from the fully ripened fruit.

Rinse to separate the seeds from the pulp.

Spread seeds on a tray or screen to dry for several weeks before packaging.

Fermentation of Seeds

This method is used with plants that have a gel sack around each seed, like tomatoes and cucumbers.

Squeeze the seed into a jar and add a little water.

Cover the jar with a lid and leave at room temperature for a week or so. Yeast will break down the gel sacks, a layer of mold will form on top of the water and good seeds will sink to the bottom.

Keep only the seeds that sink to the bottom of the jar.

Rinse and dry as above.