

## Seed Saving Difficulty: What types of seeds should I save?

Seeds require different levels of work, experience and space to save. So what are the best seeds for you to save? We encourage people to start with what we've labeled as the "super easy" plants. We ask people who check out seeds to grow them organically for your benefit and the benefit of others.

### Super Easy: Easy Peas-y

These seeds can most reliably be saved by the home gardener, even if you've never saved seeds before. Watch our videos on Peas and Beans and Lettuce to help you get started.

- Peas
- Beans
- Lettuce
- Tomatoes
- Arugula - can cross with wild arugula
- Dill - can cross with wild dill

### Easy: Takes a little time & know-how

Some plants are biennials, which means they produce seeds the second growing season. These are still suitable for some beginners. The issue is do you have the space! Many of these require large populations and isolation from things that could cross-pollinate with them. Check out the information on this [Seed Saving](#) page.

- Beets and chard - these are the same species; not many save them so they are relatively easy at the moment. Once our neighbors start to save them, they will be moved to the difficult category:
- Parsley
- Parsnips
- Carrots - not practical for most home gardeners to save since they need to overwinter and you need to have a population of at least 50 carrots and no Queen Anne's Lace around (wild relative)
- Peppers - not a biennial, but can cross with other peppers; plant only one variety of a species (need 450 ft distance from other varieties)

### Difficult: You don't always reap what you sow

Some plants cross-pollinate; that means that if there is another variety around they can pollinate each other and the seeds you save will not be what you originally planted. These plants need to be isolated by large distances or hand-pollinated. Cucurbits (squash, pumpkins, cucumbers and melons) are not hard to save seeds from, but you need to hand-pollinate them

if you want to return quality seeds for others to borrow. We have labeled them "difficult" because you need to take steps to ensure that insects don't pollinate them. If you don't hand-pollinate cucurbits, you can't assure other borrowers that the seeds you return have not been cross-pollinated by another variety.

- Broccoli - Brassica oleracea
- Cauliflower - Brassica oleracea
- Cabbage - Brassica oleracea
- Kale - Brassica oleracea
- Brussel sprouts - Brassica oleracea

All of the above are the same species and are insect pollinated. If any of these are flowering at the same time, cross-pollination is likely. You need to bag or isolate the different varieties.

- Corn
- Pumpkins
- Squash
- Cucumbers
- Melons