

URBAN FARMER

LOVE THE EARTH

How to: Solve seed storage problems

Some gardeners like to harvest their plant's seeds for many reasons. Some want to grow a special type of plant again in the next year, and others want to save money by using the seeds their plants produce already and not purchasing packets of new seeds each year. Others still just want to challenge themselves and try out the act of seed saving. Regardless the reason, below are a list of the best storage solutions to look at when storing your own seeds after harvesting them.

Staying organized:

One problem gardeners who harvest their own seeds a lot may experience is the mere organizational factor to it. Upon storing a lot of seeds, you may have misplaced your tomato seeds or lettuce seeds and can't find them when planting time comes around. Some ways gardeners have come up with to organize their seeds include putting the seed packets in a photo album so they're listed in an organized fashion all in one place, alphabetically organizing them into file folder or even organizing them into hanging shoe storages. Whatever way works best for you to stay organized, others highly suggest it so you can easily find the seeds when it comes time to plant them. You can harvest the seeds and organize them in the cold days of winter if you don't feel like doing it quite at the time you harvest them. This also gets you thinking about planning your garden for spring.

When organizing, try grouping the seeds together by type and category of planting



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time such as early sow indoors, early sow direct and later sow direct, such as after the frost date. This means your seeds will be organized and ready to go when it's the right time to plant them.

Storage methods:

To stay organized, you first must store your seeds in the correct way. Some gardeners use little plastic baggies, but there are other options, too. Some gardeners use glass jars, some use little paper packets, empty and clean spice jars or a variety of other storage methods. Use whatever works best for you and is easiest for you to keep organized.

How long to store the seeds:

When harvesting seeds, make sure you write the date, including the year, on the storage of your choice. That way, you won't stumble across some tomato seeds that have long expired and go to the trouble of planting



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them to no growth. Some of the most common seeds' storage lengths are:

- Sweet corn, parsnips and spinach: 1 year
- Beans, peppers, Swiss chard: 2 years
- Annual flower seeds: 1 to 3 years
- Tomatoes, carrots, cucumbers, lettuce, melons and oriental greens: 3 years

Make sure you research your seeds and know how long they last so you can reap their benefits for several years.

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