

What is a Seed Library?

The NPPL Seed Library is a free service for patrons of the North Perth Public Library. The Seed Library hopes to foster wellbeing through gardening and sharing resources with the community.

The idea behind a Seed Library is to promote equity in food growing, by providing seeds to the community at no cost. With the goal to increase awareness of our food system through education and a sense of community.

Borrow seeds from the library and plant them at your home. At the end of the growing season, collect seeds from a few plants and return them to the library using the original envelop. Then next season, pick up more seeds to grow!

The NPPL Seed Library includes heirloom vegetables, herbs, and flowers to offer a variety of plants to our gardening patrons.

Seed Saving Basics

- No hybrids please: Do not save seeds from hybrids. Seeds saved from hybrids will not be true to the parent plant.
- Reduce cross-pollination: Grow only one variety of each species. Isolate by distance.
- Healthy plants: Always save seeds from the healthiest, "true-to-type" plants.
- Seeds that have pods or husks can be left to dry on the plants. When they are dry, break or smash the pods, then pick out the seeds.
- Wet seeds, such as tomatoes, cucumbers, or melons, need to be washed thoroughly, and then spread flat to dry. Stir the seeds often to stop mold from growing.
- If you have questions about saving seeds from your plants, library staff can help you find gardening resources.

SEED LENDING LIBRARY



Listowel Branch 519-291-4621
Visit us online: www.nppl.ca

Growing Tips

Some Seeds like to be started indoors.

- Start these seeds inside according to the time on the packet. Plant them in good quality soil near a bright window or light source.
- Before you take your plants fully outside they need to be hardened off. This means taking them outside for a few hours each day gradually increasing the length of time. This allows them to be exposed to wind and sun which will toughen them up. Examples: tomatoes, peppers, celery and eggplant.

Other seeds can be planted directly outside. Our current selection can all be started directly outside for an easy growing experience. Examples: lettuce, beans, and carrots.

- Sow according to package directions.
- In small spaces, only grow one variety of each plant.
- In larger spaces, keep varieties separated.

How Does it Work?

Patrons can take up to 5 packets of seeds per visit, this will allow as many people as possible to use this service.

Take your seeds home, plant them and enjoy growing, harvesting and eating your crops. If you wish to save some of your seeds to donate to the Seed Library you can collect them at the end of the growing season or as the plants produce seeds.

How Do You Donate or Return Your Seeds?

Once you have collected seeds from your crop, set some aside for yourself and the library if you wish to return some. You must let your seeds dry before storing them in paper envelopes in a cool dry place.

We will accept seeds returned in their original envelop, or an envelop labeled with the following information:

- Common Name
- Days to Maturity
- Year Saved
- Location Grown

Drop your seeds off to a staff member any time.

We will also take donations of new packages of seeds including vegetables, herbs, flowers and fruit to help us add to our collection.

Why Do We Need a Seed Library?

Almost 15% of Huron Perth residents (about 20,000 people) in 2020 struggled to pay for food.

In 2023, the cost of groceries for a family of four in Huron Perth was \$267 per week, or \$1,155 per month. As these costs continue to rise so does the number of people experiencing food insecurity.

Adults and children who experience food insecurity are at higher risk for chronic health issues and are likely to experience mental health issues. This increase in health issues causes a strain on our health care system.

By promoting the use of locally adapted seed varieties and supporting seed saving and preservation, the Seed Library will help to promote sustainable food systems that are resilient, diverse, and environmentally friendly.

By offering a free Seed Library and providing the knowledge and tools to grow their own food we hope to create more food stability and improve the well-being of our community.

<https://www.hpph.ca/en/news/health-unit-releases-report-on-food-insecurity.aspx>