

## Seed Returning Protocol

We want people who borrow seeds to get what was on the label and we want to ensure folks only share healthy plants to minimize the chance of spreading plant diseases. The following is our basic protocol:\*

1. **Save from healthy plants.** Even if a disease does not get passed on through the seed, we do like to have some selection for disease resistance by only saving from healthy, strong plants.
2. **Save from a number of plants so that the seed has some genetic diversity in it.** The quantity that is optimum depends on the type of plant, for self pollinating plants a minimum of 6 plants is necessary, for cross pollinating you want to save from much a larger population- see seed saving information charts.
3. **If the plant cross pollinates you want to make sure you keep it isolated so it stays "true to type."**  
Check with the seed saving chart or book to get isolation distances.
4. **When you bring seed to share at the Seed Library please label with as much information as you can.**
5. On occasions, we may save seed from a favorite plant that might not be from a large population of plants or isn't super healthy, or maybe we like some interesting crosses that happened. You are welcome to bring those seeds in just make sure you clearly write on the label those relevant facts so others know they are participating in your experiment.

\*The *Seed Protocol* is from the [West County Community Seed Exchange](#), California.

## Guidelines for Returning Seeds

- **Dry:** Make sure seeds are dry.
- **Clean:** Have seeds reasonably cleaned by removing as much of the chaff as possible.
- **Properly saved:** Only return seeds from plants that you know how to save properly. "Super Easy" seeds can be fairly reliably saved without cross-pollination (and unintentional hybridization). "Super easy" seeds include tomatoes, beans, peas and lettuce. Do not return seeds from the brassica (ex. broccoli, cauliflower, kale, brussel sprouts, cabbage) or cucurbit (eg. cucumbers, squash, melons) families unless you have taken appropriate steps to prevent cross-pollination, such as hand-pollinating.
- **Label! Label! Label!** Write as much information on the packet as possible. Typing can help by typing directly into the form, available at [www.squamishCAN.net](http://www.squamishCAN.net). Remember that people only have what you have written on the package to decide if it is a plant that they would like to grow. More info is better.
- **Share the abundance:** If you have lots of seeds, consider making multiple packets of the same seeds. Some of the excess seeds can be put in the cabinet.