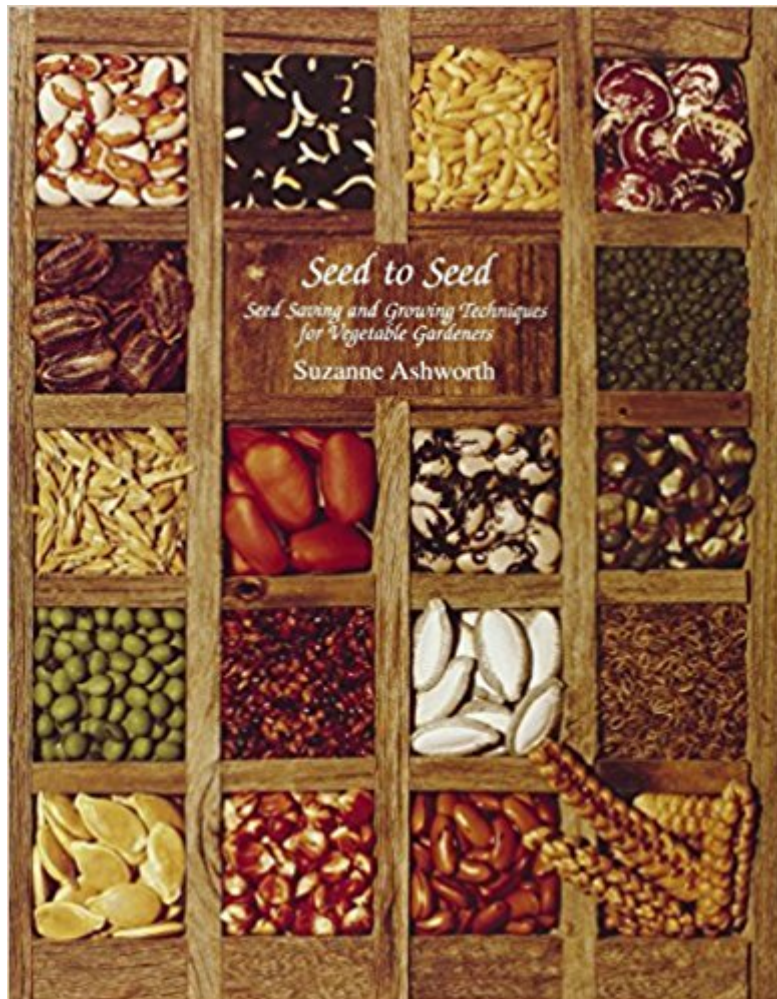


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# Seed To Seed: Seed Saving And Growing Techniques For Vegetable Gardeners, 2nd Edition



## Synopsis

Seed to Seed is a complete seed-saving guide that describes specific techniques for saving the seeds of 160 different vegetables. This book contains detailed information about each vegetable, including its botanical classification, flower structure and means of pollination, required population size, isolation distance, techniques for caging or hand-pollination, and also the proper methods for harvesting, drying, cleaning, and storing the seeds. Seed to Seed is widely acknowledged as the best guide available for home gardeners to learn effective ways to produce and store seeds on a small scale. The author has grown seed crops of every vegetable featured in the book, and has thoroughly researched and tested all of the techniques she recommends for the home garden. This newly updated and greatly expanded Second Edition includes additional information about how to start each vegetable from seed, which has turned the book into a complete growing guide. Local knowledge about seed starting techniques for each vegetable has been shared by expert gardeners from seven regions of the United States-Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, Southeast/Gulf Coast, Midwest, Southwest, Central West Coast, and Northwest.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is very practical and easy to understand. It's more encyclopedic in style rather than conversational, so if you aren't sure that you'll be saving seeds from your garden this year, you'll probably find it kind of boring. If you are slightly interested but unconvinced, I would recommend Carol Deppe's "How to Breed Your Own Vegetable Varieties" instead. Her enthusiasm for the subject carries over into her writing style, and she includes lots of entertaining anecdotes and information that will be useful even if you don't decide to save seeds. But if you know you want to

start saving seeds, or enjoy saving seeds and want to get better, this book will be indispensable. The book is mostly about vegetables, with a few grains and herbs also described. For each type of garden plant, several topics are covered:--A general description (where it originated, how it is used in different cultures, etc.)--Botanical classification--Pollination (such as wind vs. insects), crossing and isolation--Seed production and harvesting--Seed statistics (% germination, how many seeds in an ounce, how many varieties offered in major catalogues)--How to grow the plant from seed--Regional growing recommendations for 5 very generalized regions (Mid-Atlantic, Southeast/Gulf Coast, Upper Midwest, Southwest, Central West Coast, Maritime Northwest) These are very brief, but useful. I wish I would have gotten the book sooner, because I don't have too much gardening experience and I would like to have a big garden (well, as big as my yard will allow...) The regional recommendations often include when you should plant a vegetable indoors and when to transplant or direct seed outdoors. It would have been nice to do the last few weeks' seed starting with a little less guesswork.

This is the complete and definitive seeds saving guide for 160 non-hybrid vegetable crops, with detailed information about each vegetable. It is technical but clearly written so that the reader can understand the intricacies of maintaining varietal purity and proper seed harvesting, drying, cleaning and storing of seeds. Botanical classification, flower structure, pollination method, isolation distances, caging, and hand pollination techniques are included. If you're looking for information on saving ground cherry seeds, you'll find it here. Sources for supplies and seed saving organizations are listed in the back. This is the definitive source on seed saving and is invaluable to growers interested in conserving unique vegetable varieties. This book should sit on your shelf next to a copy of Carol Deppe's "Breed Your Own Vegetable Varieties" because saving seed is the basic method of plant breeding. When you save the seed of your biggest tomatoes rather than your smaller ones, you are practicing plant breeding by selecting what genetic material to perpetuate. The seeds from your big tomato will produce plants that also will produce big tomatoes.

I don't know if there's a better book on the subject of seed saving, but I've found this book frustratingly incomplete. There's certainly a lot of information, but it seems like a lot of really important basics were left out. I would say for a majority of the plants I would like to save seed from this year I can't figure out from the book whether the plants will cross with other things I'm growing or how far to isolate them if they would. I'm trying to figure out right now, for instance, if tabasco peppers (*Capsicum frutescens*) will cross with bell peppers and other *Capsicum annuum*. The book

has about a half a page of information on *C. frutescens*, which I think is a lot for such a minor species, but it still fails to give me that most basic information. I'd also like to know how many plants of each type I should grow to maintain adequate genetic diversity. The author mentions the importance of this, and there are a couple plants where numbers are given, but in most cases the reader is left without any numbers. I wish all this kind of information were covered more systematically, maybe with a simple chart or short paragraph at the beginning of each of the 20 plant families covered in the book.

It's wonderfully complete for seed saving. I've saved my own carrot seeds now! And the squash from last years saved seeds looks just like it should. This book covers all the techniques, issues and risks although I think it's very much geared towards multi-generation saving of entirely pure seed - you don't need to be quite so careful on the isolation if you just want to grow one generation of kale for your own use (mine came out okay in spite of only minor control of nearby brassicas), and saving seed with only two chard plants, not enough genetic diversity to preserve a variety for long, can by themselves produce enough seed so you'll eat chard every day for 5 years. It's also a great reference for unusual vegetables, it's amazingly complete; you can find out about 4-sided bean or other tropical type vegetables. And it sorts out the different squash and pepper species very well. The gardening information in each section hasn't impressed me much as useful or accurate; but we are in-between the zones they provide.

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