



T.B. Scott Free Library

2024 SEED GUIDE

**Includes Growing and
Seed Saving Tips**

The T.B. Scott Seed Library provides starter packets of open-pollinated, non-hybrid seeds of heirloom-variety plants to increase the array of plants grown in our community and to enlarge each Seed Library user's personal seed bank.



Content



Borrow - Garden - Return



Genovese Basil



Greek Oregano



Bloomsdale Spinach



Healthy Pepper



Tommy Toe Tomato



Green Globe Artichoke



Red Milkweed



Zinnia Mix



Borrow • Grow • Return

Borrow

- Select one "BORROW" seed packet and a matching "RETURN" seed packet for each of the eight seed varieties available
- Checkout your seeds with the helpful Library staff

Grow

- Grow your seeds

Return

- Harvest your seeds; **keep enough seeds for you to use next year**, about 90%.
- Put the remaining 10% of your seeds into the "RETURN" envelope.
- Return seed packets to the Library to be used next year!





Genovese Basil

This classic large-leaved Italian sweet basil, prized for its flavor and heady aroma, is a top pick for many cooks when making pesto. Fragrant plants grow 18-24" and produce densely branched plants when pinched back regularly. Can be chopped and frozen in olive oil for winter use. Annual.

Instructions - Sow seeds outdoors when soil is warm and temperature does not drop below 65°F. Can also be started indoors 4-6 weeks before planting out. Direct seed: 1/8" deep. Thin 4-6" apart. Full sun. Pinch back flower stalks as they appear to keep plants from bolting. Prefers rich well-drained soil.

Save seeds by allowing flowers to start turning dry and brown. Snip off flower stems, place into a paper bag and close. The tiny black seeds will eventually fall out and into the bag.

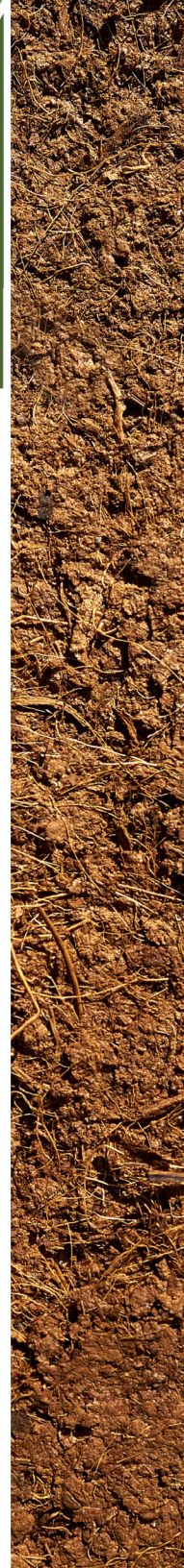


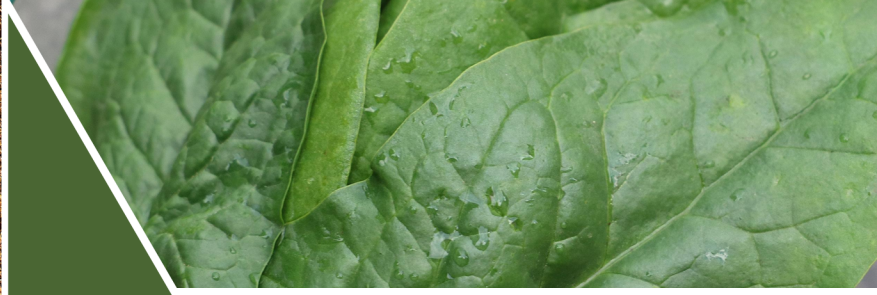
Greek Oregano

This species is thought to have a cleaner and sharper taste than true oregano. An essential garden herb with a pungent flavor, this perennial bears light green, pointed, oval leaves that are slightly wavy at the edges.

Instructions - Sow seeds indoors, 6-8 weeks before last frost, just beneath surface of soil. Transplant outdoors, 12" apart, after danger of frost has passed. Oregano is a perennial warm-season herb, hardy to frost and light freezes. Prefers very well-drained soil. Full sun.

To harvest seeds, snip the flowers off the plant as they begin to dry. Hang them upside down for 2 to 3 weeks, then shake the flower heads into a bag to collect the seeds. Store seeds in cool, dry place for next year.





Bloomsdale Spinach

Vigorous upright plants with dark green, glossy leaves. Fine quality, very tender, excellent flavor. Quick growing variety with heavy yields. Well adapted for late spring or summer plantings, slow to bolt. Great for all spinach uses.

Instructions -Spinach grows best in cool weather and should be planted in early spring or late summer to produce a fall crop. Direct seed, 1" apart and 1/2" deep. Thin plants to 6-8" apart. For best yields, harvest continually and make successive plantings every ten days.

Once you see the seed forming, just let that plant keep growing. Eventually, the spinach will die and turn yellow. At this point you can either carefully pull the seeds from the stalks and heads, or you can just put the whole stalk/head in a bag upside down. Allow the seeds to completely dry out in a cool, dry location. After the stalks have dried and turned brown, start collecting the seeds. Store seeds in a cool, dry place for next year.



Healthy Pepper

Sweet 4" long conical fruits ripen from yellow-green to orange then red. Early maturing 30" plants are resistant to disease and rotting and will ripen even during cloudy summers. Great for fresh eating, roasting, and salsa.

Instructions - Sow seeds indoors, 8 weeks before last frost, $\frac{1}{4}$ " deep. Peppers germinate best in warm soil, so gentle bottom heat may be helpful until seedlings emerge. Wait to transplant outdoors until soil is warm. Plant seedlings 12-24" apart in full sun.

When saving pepper seeds, try to choose a fruit from the best-producing plant. Allow the chosen fruit to remain on the plant until completely ripe and begins to wrinkle. Cut open the fruit and remove the seeds, spreading them out on newspaper or paper towels to dry for about a week. Store in cool, dark, dry area.





Tommy Toe Tomato

Exceptionally vigorous plants yield hundreds of large red cherry tomatoes throughout the season. Can be used for fresh eating, roasting, or drying.

Instructions -Sow seeds indoors, 6 weeks before last frost, ¼" deep. Tomatoes are sensitive to freezing temperatures, so wait to transplant outdoors until the soil is warm. Plant in full sun, 24-36" apart. As plants grow, provide support with a cage, stake, or trellis.

Save seeds by slicing tomato in half and removing seeds from center and put into a small jar. The seeds will likely be covered with a jelly-like material. Cover the jar of seed-pulp mixture with a paper towel or coffee filter secured with a rubber band and leave in a warm location, 60-70°F, for three days. Gently stir the mixture once a day. Don't be surprised if a white fungus appears on top of the mixture. After three days, fill the jar with warm water and allow the seeds to settle to the bottom of the jar. Gently pour out the water along with tomato pulp and any seeds that float. The viable seeds are heavy and will sink to the bottom of the jar. Repeat the process of filling the jar with warm water, allowing seeds to settle, and pouring out the water and debris until the discarded water is nearly clear. Spread seeds on a paper plate and allow to dry before storing in a cool, dry place.

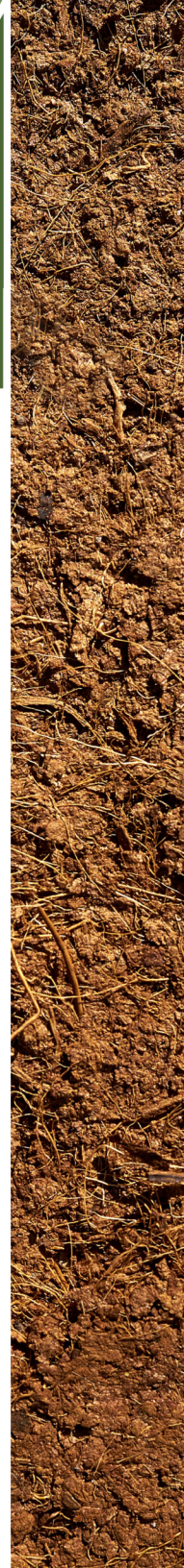


Green Globe Artichoke

This hardy variety of artichoke is productive even in climates as cool as zone 3. Plants grow 3-5' tall, and have 3-5 flower buds per plant in the first year. This variety works for boiling and steaming.

Instructions - Sow seeds indoors $\frac{1}{4}$ " deep. Plant outdoors after danger of frost has passed but the days are still cool. Plant 36" apart in full sun.

If you want to harvest the artichoke seeds for future sowing, the heads need to be allowed to flower and dry out before doing so. In late summer, once brown, dry and fluffy, remove the flower heads and store them in a paper bag until you are ready to harvest the seeds. To harvest the seeds, use your fingers to pull them out of the flower head. You may choose to wear gloves to avoid the thorns. Once collected, dry the artichoke seeds in a well-ventilated room and store them in a paper envelope somewhere cool and dry.



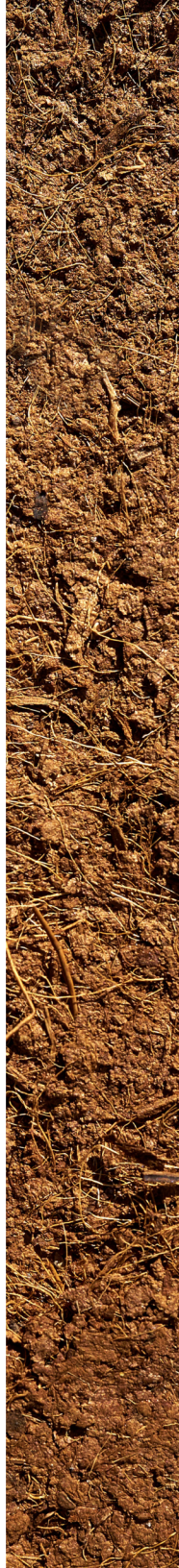


Red Milkweed

This milkweed bears bright pink-and-red, vanilla-scented flowers in June and July. Surprisingly adaptable, this 5-foot-tall perennial is the preferred food source for Monarch butterflies and can grow in wet to well-drained soil.

Instructions - Sow seeds indoors in flats 1/4" deep, moisten soil, cover with plastic, and refrigerate for 10 days. After that, provide light and 50-75°F. After 10-12 weeks, plant outdoors 12-24" apart. Full sun.

Pick pods as they turn brown, dry and mature. Pod will pop open and white floss will be visible when ready to harvest. Try to harvest before floss starts coming out of pod, as this makes it easier to collect seeds. Pry open the pod, and carefully separate the brown milkweed seeds from the white floss. Let them dry for a week or so in a cool, dry location. Store them in an envelope in the refrigerator until you are ready to plant in spring.





Zinnia Mix

This zinnia mix contains fast-growing plants that can reach 30-40" tall. Blossoms can reach 4-5" in diameter, making them excellent for cut bouquets. These zinnias are also great for attracting pollinators to your garden, especially butterflies.

Instructions - Sow seeds outdoors after last frost. Direct seed: 1/8" deep. Thin 10-12" apart. Plants prefer well-drained average soil. Full sun. Remove spent blossoms frequently to prolong blooming.

Allow flowers to dry completely on plant. Each flower will be dark brown and dry to the touch when it is ready to harvest. Trying to harvest a flower too early will result in immature seeds that won't germinate. Once the zinnia flowers are dry, cut or pull them off the plant. Place the harvested seed heads on a screen so that they dry thoroughly on all sides. Take a dry zinnia flower and hit it gently over a paper plate to release the seeds. The seeds are small and arrow-shaped. Store in cool, dark, dry area for next year.





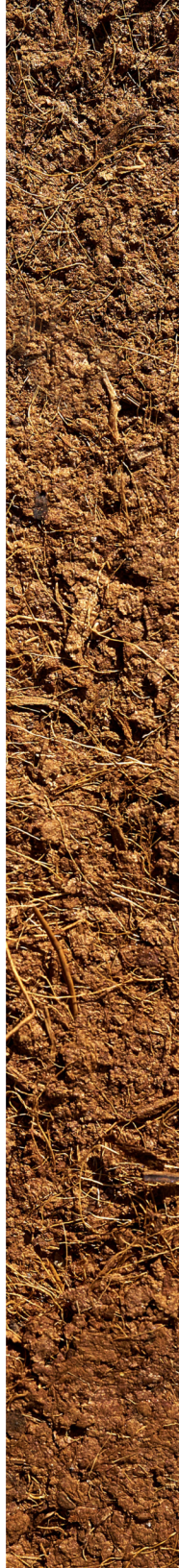
Helpful Resources

On the Web

- www.tbscottlibrary.org/seed-library
Visit the T.B. Scott Free Library's website for a list of recommended seed saving books and more.
- <https://hort.extension.wisc.edu/ask-a-gardening-question/>
Visit the UW Extension "Ask the Gardener" web page to submit your gardening questions to be answered by UW-Extension county-based educators, specialists, or Master Gardeners.
- www.seedsavers.org
Visit Seed Savers Exchange website to find more information about the variety of seeds we selected and others.

Local Contact:

- Art Lersch, Area Extension Director (Langlade, Lincoln, Price, Taylor Counties). Art is able to help get you answers for your gardening needs, including pest control, seed saving, fertilizer, etc. Contact via email, art.lersch@wisc.edu or phone, 715-539-1075
- T.B. Scott Free Library offers a variety of gardening and heirloom seed books.



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*Produce photos and seed information,
courtesy of **Seed Savers Exchange**,
www.seedsavers.org*