

Seed Saving Chart

Vegetable	Cycle	Pollination	Pollinator	Isolation Distance	Seed Longevity	Saving Ease	Notes
Bean	A	Self		100'	2-3 yrs	easy	Lose vigor rapidly.
Soybean	A	Self		100'	2-3 yrs	easy	
Beet/Chard	B	Cross	Wind	½ mi	3-5 yrs	*	Beets cross with chards.
Broccoli/Kale/Cauliflower	B	Cross	Insects	½ mi	3-5 yrs		Crossing among brassica species is complex. Consult a good reference book.
Carrot	B	Cross	Insects	1500'	2-3 yr	*	Crosses with wild species, like Queen Anne's Lace.
Celery	B	Cross	Insects	1500'	2-3 yrs	*	
Corn	A	Cross	Wind	½ mi	2-3 yrs		Adequate pollination essential.
Cucumber	A	Cross	Insects	1500'	5-10 yrs		Harvest at yellow blimp stage.
Eggplant	A	Self		150'	2-3 yrs	easy*	
Leek	B	Cross	Insects	1500'	2 yrs	*	
Onions	B	Cross	Insects	1500'	1 yr	*	
Lettuce	A	Self		50'	2-3 yrs	easy	
Melon	A	Cross	Insects	½ mi	3-5 yrs		Muskmelons will not cross with watermelons.
Mustard	A	Cross	Insects	½ mi	3-5 yrs		Crosses with wild species.
Pea	A	Self		50;	2-3 yrs	easy	Do not save from diseased plants.
Pepper	A	Both	Insects	500'	2-3 yrs		Some varieties cross more readily than others.
Radish	A	Cross	Insects	1500'	3-5 yrs		
Spinach	A	Cross	Wind	½ mi	2-3 yrs	*	
Squash/Pumpkin	A	Cross	Insects	1500'	2-5 yrs		Moschata 2-3 yrs, pepo & maxima 3-5 yrs. These three species generally do not cross.
Tomato	A	Self		25-100'	5-10 yrs	easy	Potato-leaf types need the greater isolation distance.

Cycle: *A* = annual, *B* = biennial **Pollination:** *Self* = self-pollinated, *Cross* = cross-pollinated by another plant.

Isolation Distance: recommended distance by which different varieties must be separated to prevent unwanted cross-pollination. **Seed Longevity:** Averages, not guarantees. Seed longevity depends on the condition under which the crop was grown and how the seeds have been stored.

*Easy Seeds to Save

All vegetables that are self-pollinated are easy to save. Vegetables that are marked with an asterisk (*) are also easy, but since they cross, you'll have to learn a little to make sure that you get plants like the ones you started with.

A Note on Seed Health: Seeds from cross-pollinating plants that are isolated in small colonies can become inbred after a time, so it is recommended that they be planted in large enough colonies to avoid inbreeding, at least every few generations. Recommended minimum populations to maintain vigor and avoid inbreeding depression (# of plants per colony): 25 cucumbers, squash, melons; 50-100 radishes, brassicas, mustards; 200 sweet corn.

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Thanks for saving seeds!