

SEED CATALOGS IN FEBRUARY: MEMBER RECOMMENDATIONS

All of us have favorite seed catalogs.

What are some of yours?

Here are some drawn from notes, articles and talks with members.

Anna Kurz: If you start flowers and vegetables from seed, you can't go wrong with **Charles Hart Seed Company**, a 100-year-old, family owned and operated business, specializing in untreated and non-GE (genetically engineered) seed. Hart support independent, local nurseries by refusing to sell to big box and discount stores. (hartseed.com/ .)

Pat Fromm: A great time to peruse seed catalogs for spring planting. Thought some of you may find something of interest in this one.: **Siskiyou Seeds** (<http://siskiyouseeds.com>)

Pat Libutti thinks that the best seeds are those wrapped by Seeds for Change. The packets have zip-lock closings, the seeds themselves (<http://www.seedsofchange.com/> .)

Doug Raska: Pinetree Gardens: amazing array of herbs(<https://www.superseeds.com/> .)

Joe Papa I usually buy OP (open pollinated) seeds. My favorites are **Johnny's Selected Seeds** (<http://www.johnnyseeds.com>), **Tomato Growers** (www.tomatogrowers.com) and **Seed Saver's Exchange** (www.seedsavers.org/.)

Robyn Lowenthal: I like **Harris Seeds**. They offer a wide variety of seeds and give very detailed germinating/growing out information for home gardeners and commercial operations (www.harriseseeds.com/ .)

Robin Jackson: I love to read through the following catalogs: **Hudson Valley Seed Library** (hudsonvalleyseed.com/) and **Kitazawa** (source for Asian vegetable seeds, <http://www.kitazawaseed.com>).

HOW LONG DO SEEDS LAST?

Approximate Life Expectancy of Vegetable Seeds Stored Under Favorable Conditions.

Joe Papa

Vegetable	Years	Vegetable	Years
Asparagus	3	Leek	2
Bean	3	Lettuce	5
Beet	4	Muskmelon	5
Broccoli	3	Mustard	4
Brussels sprouts	4	New Zealand	
Cabbage	4	spinach	3
Carrot	3	Okra	2
Celeriac	3	Onion	1
Cauliflower	4	Parsley	1
Celery	3	Parsnip	1
Chard, Swiss	4	Pea	3
Chicory	4	Pepper	2
Chinese cabbage	3	Pumpkin	4
Collards	5	Radish	5
Corn, sweet	2	Rutabaga	4
Cucumber	5	Salsify	2
Eggplant	4	Spinach	3
Endive	5	Squash	4
Fennel	4	Tomato	4
Kale	4	Turnip	4
Kohlrabi	3	Watermelon	4

highmowingseeds.com/blog/seed-viability-chart/

OTHER SEED VIABILITY LINKS

[Comparision of Four Viability Charts: Fedco, Johnny's, Virginia Tech Ext., University of Iowa,](#)

*Check other charts for variability of lettuce viability

www.awaytogarden.com/estimating-viability-how-long-do-seeds-last/

Check *The Urban Herban's blog* (urbanherban.blogspot.com) for a linked version of this handout



Starting with the seed

Robyn Lowenthal

1. Read the information on the seed packet to see if any special treatment is necessary and to determine proper planting depth, spacing; and soil and air temperature.
2. Choose a container or tray for planting. Fill with appropriate, wetted planting medium. Seed starting mix, widely available; has a very fine texture that allows the tiny seedlings to penetrate the soil surface; and provides excellent drainage. It is good, but not necessary. Fertilizer is not needed: it will not aid germination. but will aid in root development later.
3. Sow the seeds according to the depth recommended on your seed packet. If seeds need light to germinate, sprinkle them on the soil surface and press them firmly into the soil. If seeds are larger and need darkness, make furrows in the soil surface, put the seeds in the furrows and fill in the furrows with more potting mix. Strive for a level soil surface since this helps with even watering. A rule of thumb about planting depth is to plant seeds to a depth approximating three to four times its diameter.
4. Moisten the soil surface with a spray bottle or something that provides a gentle mist. Believe it or not, a strong down of water can cause soil compaction.
5. Label the container with seed name, date of planting, and any other important information.
6. Cover with plastic to increase humidity.
7. Follow the seed packet information regarding the light requirements, i.e., light vs. darkness. When germinating seeds, "light" means ambient light. Prior to germination, there is no need to place seeds under grow lights since no photosynthesis occurs until there are roots and leaves. Placing seeds under lights increases the risk of the soil drying out too soon.
8. Check every day. If soil appears dry, water with a spray bottle. and place container under lights. When seeds are started indoors, artificial lighting is a must.
9. Lights should be placed very close to each plant, approximately 1-1/2 or 2". Proximity to the light

- ensures plants do not stretch lankily upward but rather stay healthy, and stocky.
10. When seedlings have two sets of real leaves, (do not count cotyledons – seed leaves), transplant into individual pots or cell packs.
 11. Continued growing under lights encourages photosynthesis, allowing seedling to grow strong and straight. If growing on a windowsill, be sure to rotate seedlings every few days, so they grow straight.

Seed Storage - Most annual and vegetable seeds will store well for two to three years, provided they are kept in a cool, dry place. Moisturizing frequently triggers germination, so, until you are ready to plant, keep your seeds dry. If seed are kept in an unopened, moisture-resistant package and not subjected to abnormal temperatures, most will keep perfectly well for several years. Some vegetables, such as beets, cucumbers and radishes, will even keep for as long as ten years.

If your seed packet is already opened, store the seed in a dry, airtight container in a cool place. It helps to store the seed as cool as possible (refrigeration helps) for reduced temperatures will lengthen storage life, and this is especially true for seed of woody plant

INFO TO PUT ON YOUR SEED PACKS

SEED NAME:
SOURCE:
YEAR
No. of SEEDS
GERMINATION
GMO status (non)
YOUR NAME

Garden Club of Teaneck
SEEDS

