

UWSA

Feed Library

**CAMPUS
SUSTAINABILITY**

Maureen Hanlon
April 2016

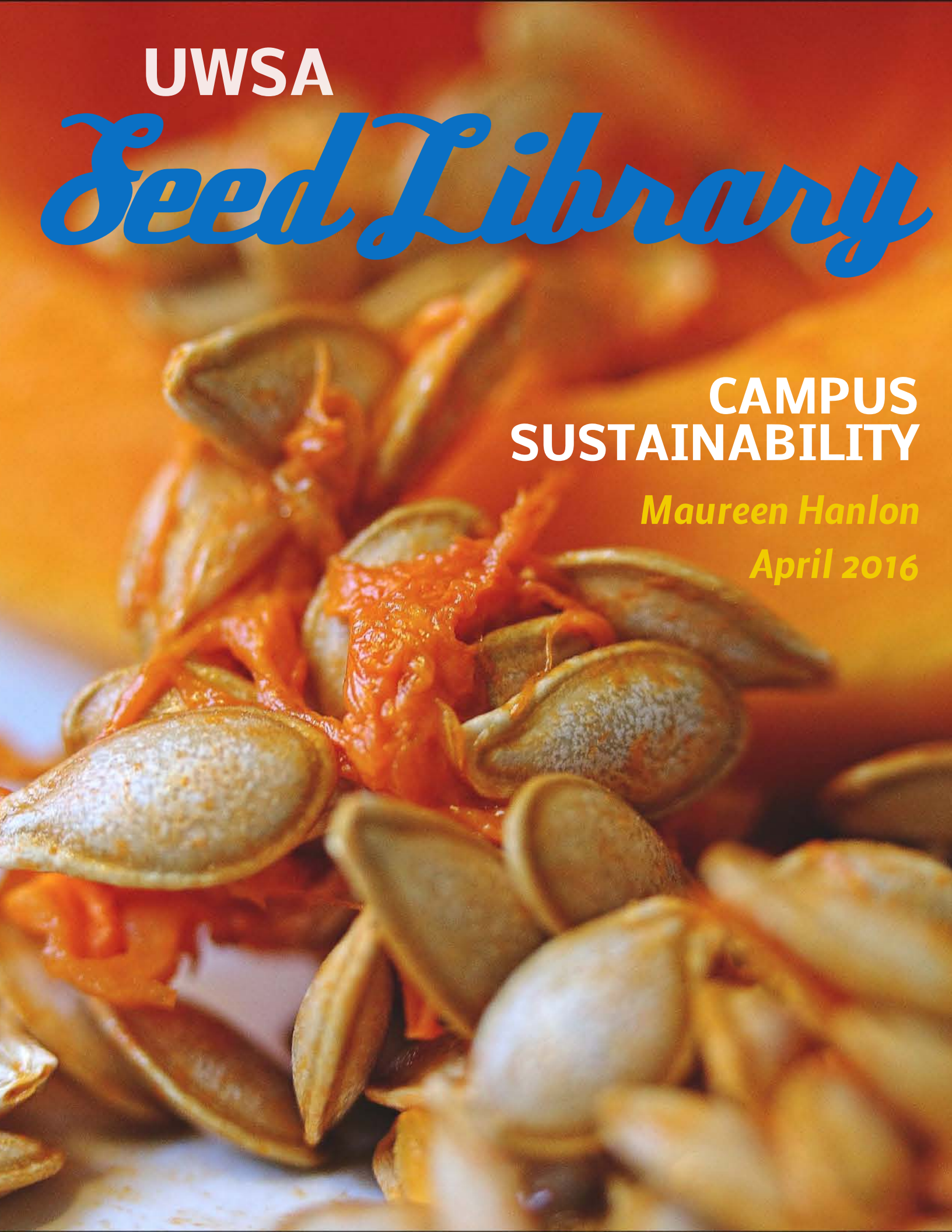


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A Word About "Us"

This booklet was compiled and written by me, seed library co-founder Maureen Hanlon. In using the word "we" throughout the booklet, I hope to acknowledge that decisions for and about the library were made not just by myself and co-founder Charlie Crow, but in consultation with the many volunteers and partners who have made this project possible. The UWSA Seed Library is not any one individual, but a group of "us" working together to make the project a reality.

The UWSA Seed Library: An Overview



Photo: The seed library makes an appearance at UWSA Grass Routes Festival. (Winnipeg Metro)

This booklet tells the story of the University of Winnipeg Students' Association Seed Library, and we hope it can serve as a resource to others looking to start a seed library of their own. In the introduction, we discuss the origins of the library and the reasons we decided seed saving was a worthwhile sustainability initiative for the university. The next section covers the first four months spent

establishing the seed library, including goal-setting, research, and events. This section also includes an overview of basic seed saving for those new to the practice. We move on to discuss project details: policies for lending and borrowing, our cataloguing system, and guidelines for library volunteers. We conclude with our upcoming plans and a vision for the seed library's long-term future.

What is a seed library?

A seed library functions much like a book library. Users can borrow seeds without charge and are asked to return seeds after they have grown their plants. Some seed libraries are very particular about the responsibilities of users, while some do not track their users at all. The UWSA Seed Library asks that users try to save twice the number of seeds they checked out, but there are no ramifications for not returning seeds. Additionally, seed libraries usually accept seed donations, again with varying levels of stringency. For more information about donations, see our policy summary on page 21.

Key Actors

Many entities played a part in bringing the UWSA Seed Library to life. The initial idea for the library was developed by two students, Maureen Hanlon and Charlie Crow. They were awarded an eco-grant of just under \$2000 for their project by GESA, the university's



GESA executive awards an eco-grant to kick start the seed library. (Photo courtesy of GESA)

Geography and Environmental Student's Association. The eco-grant is awarded yearly by GESA for campus sustainability initiatives and is funded entirely by the student group. In 2016, the eco-grant was awarded to both the UWSA Seed Library and a rooftop gardening initiative.

Hanlon was the coordinator of another student group, EcoPIA (Ecological People in Action), whose members quickly became active in establishing the library. EcoPIA is a UWSA-funded group committed to promoting environmental awareness on campus through student action. Other EcoPIA initiatives include a waste educator program to encourage composting and recycling

habits in the student body and the UWSA Bike Lab, which serves as a workspace and action group for cyclists at the university. Because of the EcoPIA's ties to the student union, the wider UWSA network was also available as a resource for supporting and promoting the library while it was established.

The university also offered a Campus Sustainability class, ENV-4615, during the semester that the seed library was established. The class was taught by Alan Diduck, an environmental studies professor interested in empowering students to effect change at the university and beyond. Diduck's class allowed students to adopt projects

Key Actors (cont.)

proposed by the Campus Sustainability Office and explore options for implementation on campus. By taking this class, Hanlon was able to get credit for her work on the library and workshop ideas as the project developed over the course of the semester. This was critical to goal-setting and organization in the early months of the library. In addition to the seed library, Diduck's class resulted in suggestions for interpretive signage for the Bike Lab's new solar panels, a proposal for a sustainability course requirement, and several other innovative projects.

There continue to be many active players in the seed library, including our library users, the Campus Sustainability office, and more. Please see our acknowledgments on page 32 for a more complete list of seed library supporters..



Professor Alan Diduck at campus *Living Lab* event. (Photo courtesy of Alana Lajoie-O'Malley)

Vision and Purpose

The UWSA Seed library was founded to make sharing seeds and seed saving knowledge easier for students, staff, and the wider downtown community. In a world where food is increasingly patented and genetically modified, restoring and maintaining a resilient seed keeping tradition is key to cultivating food sovereignty. This project contributes to the university's Sustainability Policy, including our goal to "equip students with the skills and knowledge...that will enable people to actively contribute to a more sustainable world." Saving seeds allows citizens to exercise control over the food system and builds a culture of sustainability. When seeds are made as accessible as books in a library, everyone has the opportunity to participate in the long, dynamic, and ongoing story that produced the seeds we hold in our hands.

"It's only by having as many gardeners as we can saving these seeds that we're going to be starting to reverse the rates of extinction." -Caroline Chartrand, Red River Seed Library founder



Photo: The Metanoia Farmers' Cooperative saves rare Gete Okosamin seeds from the Red River Seed Library. (Courtesy of the Metanoia Farmers' Cooperative)

Other University Seed Libraries

An early step in establishing the library was researching similar projects at other North American universities. We looked at five universities and compared donation policies, expectations for borrowers, storage logistics, public outreach, and organization. Here we review five key observations that influenced the early development of the library:

1. *Most libraries founded/supported by students also have some other body to support their efforts.* For instance, the Faculty of Agriculture at Dalhousie University helps to run their library, while the seed library at the University of Toronto is part of a larger, city-wide seed library network. Large, stable groups were key to carrying on the work of the libraries from one year to the next as students graduated. We have ended up working closely with the University of Winnipeg's Student

Association, who are able to provide guidance and long-term stability for the library and provided official sponsorship in our formal name.

2. *All the libraries use dry storage.* Our initial plan had called for refrigeration. While this would prolong the viability of our seeds, it made storage logistics that much harder. Libraries like the Kwantlen Seed Library at Kwantlen Polytechnic Institute indicate that high seed turnover is one of their primary goals, so longevity of seeds is less of a concern. We have stored our seeds in paper coin envelopes in a wooden sewing case for the time being. It's portable and draws attention!

3. *Restrictions on seed donations were few, but groups usually encouraged organic and open-pollinated seeds.* Several libraries had systems for rating ease of growth. We originally planned to distribute only seeds that could be direct seeded, but these policies and other research on seed saving techniques turned us in a new

direction. We did end up adopting a seed classification system, and we made distribution goals based on these. We now ask that donated seeds be open-pollinated and organic if possible, but we rely on users to regulate their own donations. For more information about our rating system, check out (link), and for more about donations and related policies, check (link).

4. *All libraries researched had a strong web presence.* For example, the University of San Francisco Seed Library has a sub-page on the school library's website, a blog, and a twitter account. We now have an online seed catalog, librarything.com/catalog/uwsaseedlibrary, and we are working to advertise the library on the UWSA website and the EcoPIA Facebook page.

5. *The Red River Seed Library focuses on preserving a small number of rare seed varieties each season, and they have high expectations for their seeds' growers.* One of our major inspirations for starting our library was the work of the Red River

Photo: Shelling beans (flickr.com/photos/deadhorse)

Other Seed Libraries (cont.)

Seed Library at Canadian Mennonite University. We wanted students and community members who lived downtown to be able to access heritage seeds without having to take a long bus or bike ride across the city. We've since found that the libraries also have slightly different aims; while the Red River Seed Library works incredibly hard to ensure true seeds are produced for select heritage varieties, the UWSA Seed Library is working to empower new seed savers, meaning we expect lower return rates and thus are dealing in less valuable seed. This means that both libraries can co-exist and thrive in our small city.

The best part of this early research was discovering all the grassroots seed libraries committed to making seeds accessible to their users. We are proud to be part of a wider seed saving movement, and we expect it will continue to grow and mature as more libraries are established.



Photo: The University of San Francisco seed library is housed in the main library. (flickr.com/photos/davidsilver)

Ask a Seed Saver



What is the difference between a seed bank and a seed library?

Many people are familiar with high-tech, multi-million dollar seed banks like the Svalbard Seed Vault in Norway. If institutions like this are protecting our seeds from extinction, then why do we need local seed saving initiatives in the first place? While seed banks certainly play an important role in protecting plant genetic material, they approach seed saving differently than seed libraries. Rather than relying on tightly controlled storage conditions free from human interference, seed libraries harness the power of people to ensure that seeds remain viable. Seed library supporters believe the best way for seeds to adapt to local conditions and survive for future generations is to grow them in home gardens and small farms. Seed libraries help maintain the 'life' of a seed while empowering growers to participate in the creation of vibrant food systems.



Photo: Svalbard Seed Vault (common.wikimedia.org)

Winnipeg Seedy Saturday

Seedy Saturdays are a growing tradition within the seed saving movement. On these late winter Saturdays, gardening groups across the country host large-scale, public seed swaps to promote seed saving and knowledge sharing. The UWSA Seed Library made its debut at Winnipeg Seedy Saturday on February 13, 2016. Charlie Crow and Maureen

Hanlon served as volunteers at the children's activity booth and brought brochures to reach out to local seed savers about the upcoming plans for the library. They were also able to collect a number of heritage seed varieties from the swap table, meet with organizers of the Red River Seed Library, and attend a seed saving workshop. We're excited to be able to distribute seeds at this event in the future!



UWSA Seed Library founders Charlie Crow and Maureen Hanlon show off their first seeds collected on Seedy Saturday. (Photo courtesy of Maureen Hanlon)

Photo: Horse chestnut seeds. (imageafter.com)



Seeds are our cultural
and natural heritage

SATURDAY
February 13
10AM-3PM

WINNIPEG SEEDY SATURDAY

CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY
500 SHAFTESBURY – NORTH CAMPUS

A gathering of gardeners and foodies celebrating local seeds, native plants, regional food, and the beginning of a new growing season.

Kids Activities throughout the day. Bring your seeds to swap with others.
Snacks and drinks on sale from Tall Grass Prairie Bakery

Featuring Dan Brisebois, seed saver, farmer, and author will help us
CELEBRATE SEEDS – Friday, February 12 at 7:30pm

A public conversation about seed saving
Tickets: \$7.50 student/low wage and \$15 full price

Visit www.winnipegseedysaturday.wordpress.com or find us
on Facebook.

Seed Saving: The Basics

Seed saving can be intimidating. Some plants produce true seed without any effort on the part of the gardener. (True seeds will grow a plant that roughly matches the parent plant/plants.) Other plants require several seasons of concentrated effort for any seed payoff. Here, we explain some basic seed saving techniques and take a closer look at the Seed Library's difficulty ratings.

Pollination

The first thing you should find out if you want to save a plant's seeds is the plant's method of pollination. This tells you how the pollen, containing the male gametes of the plant, makes its way to the female reproductive organs. Plants in our seed library are either self-pollinated, insect-pollinated, or wind-pollinated.

In self-pollinated plants, the male and female reproductive organs will usually pollinate themselves within the same flower. This means very little work for the seed saver because there is no danger of cross pollination; the seeds collected will produce a plant identical to the parent plant.

Insect-pollinated and wind-pollinated plants can cross-pollinate; that is, pollen from a plant other than the one you are growing can impregnate your own plant. This is undesirable, as you want to collect seeds that will grow a plant identical to the parent plant. If you are growing a wind-



Tomato plants are not insect-pollinated, but they self-pollinate when vibrated.



This tomato may look overripe for eating, but it is at the perfect stage for seed saving.

pollinated or insect-pollinated plant, it will be important to isolate the plant and ensure that it is pollinated with pollen from a plant of the same type as the parent plant.

Isolation

Plants that can cross-pollinate require isolation, or a method of keeping them separate from other plants you don't want crossing with yours. In rural areas, distance is adequate for isolation. However, in an urban setting, most plants require too great an isolation distance for this to be practical. Thus, urban seed savers use other methods of isolation. Insect pollinated plants can be isolated by bagging or taping their blossoms

and hand-pollinating. This also ensures that your plant will produce fruit. Wind pollinated plants must be caged in a fine mesh with a number of individuals you would like to cross pollinate.

Harvesting Fruit

Once you are sure your plant will produce true seed, you need to grow out your plant for seed saving. Some plants require you to grow the fruit for longer than you might for personal consumption; for instance, a zucchini should be very large and tough before you harvest it for seed. One challenge for the seed saver is choosing when to harvest fruits and when to let them grow for seed. String beans are a good example. As a

Photo: Carrots produce tall, white flowers when they go to seed. (Courtesy of Metanoia Farmers' Cooperative)

Background: publicdomainpictures.net Top Left: flickr.com/photos/folioroad Top Right: flickr.com/photos/avlxyz

Harvesting Fruit (cont.)

gardener, you want to pick tender, slim beans as soon as they are ready so your plant will continue to grow more beans; however, as a seed saver, you need to leave a few beans on the vine to mature, which might decrease your production. For this reason, we recommend our library users either choose one plant to save seeds from while reserving the rest for food production, or they can simply save seeds at the very end of the season.

Saving Seeds for Storage

When you have harvested and aged your fruit as necessary, it is time to save your seeds. Dry seed saving, as the name implies, means that you only need to dry out the seeds inside the fruit in order to store the seed for the next season. Some seeds that are dry require threshing (removing from

a pod or hull) or winnowing (removing chaff and other debris from seeds). We do not require library users to clean seeds to industry standards.

Wet seed saving is the process of saving seeds that come out of the fruit wet, like tomato or melon seeds. To save wet seeds, first remove the seeds and the pulp and loosen the mixture gently with your fingers. Pour this pulp and seed mixture into a bowl or jar with roughly the same amount of water. Allow the seeds to sit for 24-48 hours. The mixture may bubble or even mold slightly; this is desirable. This fermentation process mimics digestive processes that your seeds evolved to endure, and will make your germination rate much higher than if you just dried these seeds. By the end of the fermentation, the good seeds will have sunk to the bottom of your jar (see background photo). Simply pour off the pulp and bad seed and dry your clean, fermented seed for storage.

Photo: Fermenting tomato seeds. (flickr.com/photos/chiotsrun)

We understand that all this information can be overwhelming for the beginning seed saver. One of the benefits of a seed library is that it brings together veteran seed savers and those who are just starting to share seed saving knowledge. For those starting a seed library without much know-how, we recommend attending a seed saving workshop to learn from experienced seed savers first-hand. For our users, we have simplified the process by classifying all seeds as easy, moderate, or hard. Remember that this is simply a classification of seed saving difficulty and is not indicative of how easy it might be to grow out the plants themselves.

Easy

These seeds are either a) self-pollinated, eg. peas, or b) we feel cross pollination will not result in undesirable seeds, eg. basil.

Moderate

These seeds require some effort on the part of the seed saver to avoid cross pollination, but the seeds are ready for storage by fall of the season they were planted, eg. cucumbers.

Hard

These seeds require overwintering and may entail measures to prevent cross-pollination the following spring, eg. carrots.

Photo: UWSA Seed Library's portable storage. (Courtesy of Maureen Hanlon)

Attention Seed Savers!

EcoPIA (Ecological People in Action) is starting a seed library! Whether you saved seeds from your own plants or just have extras leftover from packets, come to our luncheon to share seeds and stories with other seed savers. We ask that all varieties be open pollinated.

UWSA Seed Library Luncheon

Who? This event is open to students, staff, and members of the community.

When? Saturday, March 5th, 2016 at 1:00

Where? The Hive

Questions? E-mail us at ecopia@theuwsa.ca.

Not a seed saver yet? The UWSA seed library will be hosting a number of events for aspiring seed savers in the coming year! Look out for us at the Gardening 101 workshops

"When you become responsible
for seeds, you're nurturing life."
-From *Rogue Primate*

Seed Library Luncheon

Though Seedy Saturday collection was successful in the quantity and variety of seeds we collected, the Seed Library also wanted to give students and downtown community seed savers an opportunity to meet and share stories. Thus was born the first spring Seed Savers' Luncheon!

On March 5th, six seed savers gathered to enjoy samosas and learn about the library. Charlie Crow gave a short presentation about the library's foundations, and then seed savers had an opportunity to chat about their seeds and their reasons for

attending. This was also the first day the library was open for business, and several seed savers both donated and borrowed seeds. We were lucky to be visited by the host of Rogue Primate, a CKUW (the University of Winnipeg radio station) show that tells stories about Winnipeggers working on sustainable innovations. The seed library was featured in a segment about urban seed savers and seed saving in a larger context. The entire show is available **here**.

We enjoyed the comradery and atmosphere of this campus seed swap event, and we hope that it will grow in popularity as the library becomes more visible on campus.



Top: Donors share snacks and seeds.

Bottom: Seed Library co-founder Charlie Crow talks about goals for the library.

(Both photos courtesy of Maureen Hanlon)

Grass Routes

Sustainability Festival
March 14 – 18, 2016
University of Winnipeg

Ideas.
Skills.
Art.

The Seed Library also made an appearance at Grass Routes, the University's sustainability awareness festival. EcoPIA hosted a series of garden workshops early in the week, and the seed library was open for lending alongside composting demonstrations and a campus garden initiative. The library also featured in the "Living Lab," a series of student presentations about up-and-coming campus sustainability projects.

Seed Spotlight: Frost Grapes

Type: Grape
Variety: Frost
Difficulty: Easy (Note: Wild grapes are insect-pollinated, with plants being only male or female. However, we have designated them as "easy" because there is only the one type of wild grape growing in Winnipeg. Growers should be aware that half the seeds checked out will be for male plants, ie., they will not produce grapes.)
Source: Collected from outdoors
Number Donated: 25

Comments from Donor:
My neighbors have these huge wild grape vines in their backyard, and this past year they finally came over our fence. We figured those ones are ours now! The skins are sour, but the insides are sweet. We saved a bunch of the seeds last year in hopes that we can grow some of our own.

Photo: Wild grapes. flickr.com/photos/cceflgp

Feed Giveaways

Our most recent event was three days of seed giveaways during the last week of classes. While donations were accepted (we got some nice French tarragon), the focus of this event was reaching out to people who may not have otherwise heard about the library. We currently have over 50 users and we're looking forward to continued growth in the coming year!



Photo: EcoPIA volunteer checks out seeds from the portable library. (Courtesy of the University of Winnipeg Students' Association)



Free Seeds Available!

Are you a gardener? Or would you like to give it a try? Get your seeds from the UWSA Seed Library next week in the HIVE!

What is the seed library?

The UWSA Seed Library is an EcoPIA initiative funded by an eco-grant from the Geography and Environmental Student's Association. The seed library works just like a regular library. **Users can donate or borrow seeds. We ask that all borrowers attempt to return twice the number of seeds taken out.** If you are new to seed saving, we suggest you start with easy-to-save varieties, including tomatoes, peppers, beans, and peas. Our librarians can help you make the best choices. All seeds come with instructions for planting, harvesting, and seed saving.

Where and when can I get seeds?

We are distributing seeds in person next week in the HIVE! **You can come by the HIVE during the free period (12:30-1:20) on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday (March 28th, 30th, and April 1st).** If you cannot make it during those times, e-mail us at ecopia@theuwsa.ca and we can figure out how to get you seeds. If you would like to check out our selection beforehand, visit our online catalog at librarything.com/catalog/uwsaseedlibrary.

Can I help?

Yes! Volunteers are welcome. **We need help cataloguing seeds, providing outreach at events, and even growing a demonstration seed saving garden!**

If you are interested in volunteering, e-mail us at ecopia@theuwsa.ca.

UWSA Seed Library

Facebook: UWSA EcoPIA
E-mail: ecopia@theuwsa.ca
Catalog: librarything.com/catalog/uwsaseedlibrary



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Summary of Policies

Donations

We ask that all seeds donated be open-pollinated and organic, if possible. We cannot accept hybrid or GMO seeds. We are primarily a vegetable library, but we accept donations of flowers, fruits, and other plants as long as they are not invasive. Donors are asked to give their name and contact information, the source of their seed, and the year that it was saved. We encourage donors to include any growing tips or interesting anecdotes that future growers might find helpful or amusing.

Borrowing

Anyone, including students, staff, and community members, may check out seeds from the UWSA Seed Library. There is no limit on the number of seeds taken out, although we

encourage borrowers to try easy seeds if they have never saved seeds before. Borrowers are asked to give their name and contact information. We ask users to try to save and return twice the number of seeds they check out, but we understand that for many growers, this may not happen; there are no repercussions for not returning seeds, and we hope that growers feel empowered to return the next year and try again.

Long-Term Storage

The UWSA Seed Library seeks to have continuous lending and return of seeds. That said, every type of seed has a timeline for discard to ensure we are not distributing seeds that are no longer viable. We prioritize distributing seeds that are in their last year of viability.

Photo: Seed packet from the UWSA Seed Library. (Courtesy of Maureen Hanlon)

Volunteerism

The UWSA Seed Library relies on the excellent work of our volunteers to keep it running. There is not yet any formal volunteer training, but we did offer spot training for our Grass Routes event and seed giveaways. Volunteers are able to help catalogue new seeds, participate in public outreach at events, and help in the garden. If you are interested in volunteering with the seed library, please contact us at ecopia@theuwsa.ca

"The University of Winnipeg is an ideal location for a seed library, with a dense urban population and public space for communities to gather and people to meet. We just need to provide the basis."

-EcoPIA Volunteer Nik Friesen-Hughes

Photo: EcoPIA volunteer Nik Friesen-Hughes folds up the portable library after a successful seed giveaway. (Courtesy of Maureen Hanlon)

Library Organization

The UWSA Seed Library has to track seeds donated, borrowed, and collected, as well as user activity. Figuring out how to do this effectively was one of the most challenging parts of establishing the library, and we are still smoothing out the wrinkles. We would like to thank University of Winnipeg librarian Michael Dudley for his assistance during this process.

Online Catalogue

Using LibraryThing ([here](#)), an online cataloguing platform, we were able to create a searchable database of available seeds. It is organized as if each seed variety were a book, with all envelopes of that seed constituting a copy of the book. We can now track who first donated the seeds, how many seeds we've distributed, and how many are available at any given time.

Visual Catalogue

Once we had obtained the bulk of the year's seeds, we created a visual catalogue to use for events. This has large, eye catching pictures and brief descriptions of each plant.

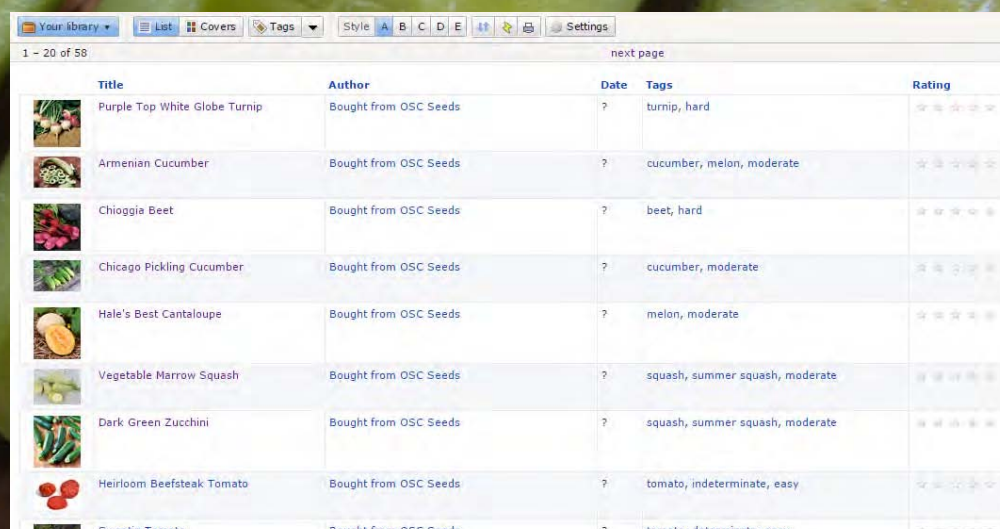
Seeds

The seeds are counted into envelopes, each containing the number of seeds that would typically be grown in a small garden. Each envelope is

labelled with the type of seed, variety, number of seeds, difficulty, and the year it was packaged. They are organized by type and variety in the library, which has a small diagram showing where each type is located.

Users

Users are issued a form that tracks both seeds donated and seeds returned. They also get a number that is listed in other databases that are public, like the online catalogue.



Title	Author	Date	Tags	Rating
Purple Top White Globe Turnip	Bought from OSC Seeds	?	turnip, hard	☆☆☆☆
Armenian Cucumber	Bought from OSC Seeds	?	cucumber, melon, moderate	☆☆☆☆
Chioggia Beet	Bought from OSC Seeds	?	beet, hard	☆☆☆☆
Chicago Pickling Cucumber	Bought from OSC Seeds	?	cucumber, moderate	☆☆☆☆
Hale's Best Cantaloupe	Bought from OSC Seeds	?	melon, moderate	☆☆☆☆
Vegetable Marrow Squash	Bought from OSC Seeds	?	squash, summer squash, moderate	☆☆☆☆
Dark Green Zucchini	Bought from OSC Seeds	?	squash, summer squash, moderate	☆☆☆☆
Heirloom Beefsteak Tomato	Bought from OSC Seeds	?	tomato, indeterminate, easy	☆☆☆☆
Sweetie Tomato	Bought from OSC Seeds	?	tomato, determinate, easy	☆☆☆☆

Above: The online catalogue is searchable and easy to navigate. Right: The visual catalog gives a full description of each variety. (Photo courtesy of Maureen Hanlon)

Australian Butternut Squash



Type: Winter Squash

Difficulty: Moderate

Description: A gorgeous peach-colored squash that has extra-thick, orange flesh that's perfect for pies and baking. The 15-lb. fruit keep for a long period. Very rare Australian heirloom. (rareseeds.com)

Notes from donor: These were grown in front of a spruce, and the tree roots, drought, and amount of compost we applied got to them.

Ask a Seed Saver

Do I need to know if a plant is an annual, biennial, or perennial to save seeds from it?

In short, yes. Most gardeners are aware of these distinctions because they indicate when your plant will die and need to be replaced. For seed savers, these terms will also tell you when you can expect your plant to go to seed. (This makes sense; most plants put a large amount of energy into producing seeds, causing the parent plant to die off.) Annuals go to seed at the end of the growing season, biennial plants go to seed the following season, and perennial plants might seed every year, every other year, or in a large reproduction event at the end of their life.

Biennials are classified as hard to save by the UWSA Seed Library because they need to be successfully overwintered in our cold climate, a hard task indeed!

Photo: Carrots are a biennial. Greens should be trimmed to two inches before winter storage. ([flickr.com/photos/jdickert/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/jdickert/))

Still to Come

Starts Giveaway

Because of Winnipeg's relatively short growing season, many seeds that are easy to save need to be grown indoors for a period of several weeks before they can be planted outdoors (tomatoes, peppers, etc.). We have worked to distribute seeds early, ensuring that library users can start them in time, but many people who use the library do not have the resources to start their own seeds. That said, we're excited to soon be working with the university's biology department for their

annual starts giveaway. We will be working in the Centennial greenhouse with biology students and professor Nancy Loadman to help care for the starts during the early spring, then distributing them free of charge shortly before the growing season. A portion of the seeds for starts will be coming from the library, and those starts will be given out with the same expectations as our seeds. This is an excellent opportunity for public outreach and partnership building.

Photo: Transplanting tomatoes. ([flickr.com/photos/nstop/](https://www.flickr.com/photos/nstop/))

Seed Savers' Garden

Part of our original library grant application included a demonstration garden for practicing different seed saving techniques. We are glad to say that this portion of the project is beginning to take shape. The UWSA has offered the library the use of the raised beds on the north side of McFeetors Hall, and we have been able to contract Urban Eatin' Landscapes to help with summer maintenance. Student volunteers will also assist with the garden over the summer as needed. Early ideas around the garden include a squash pollination workshop and a native plants plant-in. We are thankful for the many people who are helping to make this part of the project a reality!



Photo: An Urban Eatin' project of similar size at the Gordon King Church. (Courtesy of Urban Eatin' Workers' Cooperative)

Plans for Fall and Beyond

Of course, things will really pick up again for the library in the fall when seeds start coming back in and we have a garden to harvest and clean up for the winter. This will also be an excellent time to offer seed saving workshops with produce from the garden. Finally, we are hoping to host a Harvest Feast to celebrate the efforts of library users and enjoy the fruits of the summers' labor. And after that? If all goes according to plan, we start over again!



Photo: Autumn leaves. (commons.wikimedia.org)

Acknowledgments

The seed library would like to thank the following parties for their contributions to the UWSA Seed Library. It is only through collaboration with many committed individuals that we have been able to make this happen.

Charlie Crow

The University of Winnipeg Geography and Environmental Student's Association

Gaetan Salmon and other University of Winnipeg physical plant staff

Alana Lajoie-O'Malley and Alex Weib from the University of Winnipeg Sustainability Office

The University of Winnipeg Students' Association staff and executive, especially Karolya Vargscarr, Tom Brown, Priyanka Bains, Denae Penner, and Jesse Blackman.

Michael Dudley from the University of Winnipeg library

Professor Alan Diduck and the students of ENV-4614, Campus Sustainability

Natalie Dyck and the Urban Eatin' Landscapes Workers' Cooperative

Professor Nancy Loadman and other participants in the Biology Department starts giveaway

All of our excellent volunteers

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