



THE PATH Guidelines for Seed Donations to The Path's Seed Temple

The purpose of the Seed Temple is to preserve, propagate and protect seed of heritage, heirloom or endangered crop species and varieties for future generations, and to share seed in the spirit of community service.

Although much of our focus is on the 'Three Sisters' (corn, beans and squash) and related traditional crops, we are looking for seed from all types of food crops as well as from plants that have medicinal, ceremonial, soil conservation, fiber, and craft uses.

Our desire is to acquire seed from donors like you, then with help from volunteer growers, to grow out the seed to increase the stock. This will allow us to better preserve and renew the seed and make it possible to distribute it to others.

The seed you provide will be handled with respect, stored properly, and grown in the best possible manner to maintain its purity and integrity.



Please follow the guidelines listed below for seed donations:

- ♥ Seed donated should be **open-pollinated (non-hybrid) and non-GMO**. We prefer organically grown seed; however conventionally grown seed is acceptable.
- ♥ **Heirloom / heritage or rare varieties** that are being displaced by more modern varieties, and are therefore at greater risk of being lost to culture. This includes seed you have been growing, or have acquired through elder relatives, traditional or indigenous people, seed banks, seed exchanges, etc.
- ♥ Seed gathered in the wild from **native species** is desirable although we ask that the seed be as clearly identified as possible with its botanical name and source location. Seed gathered in the wild should be collected from a wide area from a sufficient number of plants for genetic diversity.
- ♥ Please only send seed that is free of insect damage or mold and is of reasonably good quality and viability. If it is particularly old, tell us the age of the seed if you know, and how it has been stored.
- ♥ Although we are located in the Southwestern U.S., we are working with seed adapted for growing in temperate climates as well as in semi-arid and arid regions. However we are accepting seed varieties that have origins from **all geographic areas**, both inside and outside of North America.

How to send seed

Seed should be properly cleaned, that is, separated from other plant parts, soil, and other debris. Some seed that is more easily handled in tough pods, hulls, or dried fruit is acceptable in that form.

Please ship your seed donations to us in clean plastic or paper bags, well labeled inside and outside the bag. Put these into a box or very well padded bubble envelope so as to assure the postal service does not crush the seed in shipment. This is especially important for larger seed of corn, beans, squash, etc. Plastic containers such as clean prescription bottles, or sealed glass jars (very securely packed): with labels placed inside, are also acceptable. We will be putting the seed into glass containers once it arrives.

IMPORTANT - Seed that has been recently harvested needs to have been exposed to open air (avoid direct sun or heat) for at least two weeks before mailing. This time is a general guide and some seed may need more drying time. This will prevent excess moisture from allowing seed to become moldy in transit.

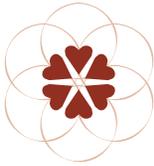
Other important considerations

For the sake of maintaining genetic diversity it is recommended that the seed have been harvested from an adequate number (population) of plants. This varies from species to species. For example, corn (maize) seed is best if harvested from at least 50 ears out of a plot of at least 200 to 300 plants. Squash seed should come out of a group of 25 – 30 plants. Seed for beans, tomatoes, and other self-pollinated crops may be taken from as few as 10 to 20 plants. If you know, describe the size of the growing plot or approximate number of plants from which the seed you are sending was harvested.

How much to send: We need an amount of seed from you that is adequate for us to store as a seed bank, and for our volunteers to grow for seed increase. Depending on the size of the seed, samples can vary from as little as $\frac{1}{4}$ oz (5-10 grams) for species with very small seeds, up to as much as one pound if available, for larger crop seeds. For growing, we would need a minimum of 300 seeds for corn, 40-50 seeds for squash, and 30-40 seeds for beans.

Proper isolation of the crop: Seed of crops that readily cross-pollinate (such as corn and squash) needs to have been grown where no GMO, hybrid, or other related varieties were being grown nearby (farms or gardens). This is not generally an issue for self-pollinated species, such as beans and tomatoes, however some isolation for these is always a good idea.

NOTE: Seed that doesn't meet one or more of these guidelines may still be acceptable, especially with rare or unique seed. Let us know what the issues are and we still may be able to work with your seed.



THE PATH

The Path is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization. The seed you donate may be propagated for distribution to individuals and groups for educational and humanitarian purposes. The seed from your donation or any seed grown from your sample will not be sold or otherwise used for monetary gain.

Please print and use the Seed Donation Intake Sheet ([click here to download](#)) for providing the information on the seed you are donating, to be sent along with your seed.

Please send seed donation packages to:

The Path Seed Temple Project

P.O. Box 1163

Estancia, NM 87016

If you have any questions about donating seed, contact: seedkeepers@followthegoldenpath.org