

## Perennial Seed Saving

As I became more and more interested in gardening, I learned to really enjoy seed saving from my perennial favorites. You can save seeds from perennials; and while they may not look exactly like the plant from which they came, I always find the process to be an adventurous endeavor; because I just never know what will happen.

Seed saving is simple. You wait for the for the seed heads to ripen and dry. They should have a tannish black color and be brittle to the touch. Then it is time to collect and harvest the seed heads and or pods. Place them in a dark, dry, cool location. After drying for a couple of weeks indoors, I store them in labeled paper bags until it is time to plant them in the spring.

I stick with easy germinators that do not require the stratification process which is technically simulating the conditions that a seed must experience before germination can occur. Easy germinators include plants such as Alyssum, Purple Coneflowers, Tickseed, Lambs Ears, Verbena, Veronica as well as the Shasta Daisy.

The obvious reward of saving seeds is saving money but I also find something uniquely satisfying about nurturing a plant from seed to seed and completing that circle of plant life. It makes me feel productive and self-sustaining in a world that sometimes has a lot of unknowns. Another reward is that you end up developing plants that are uniquely adapted to your own local growing conditions. Finally, people have collected seeds since the beginning of time, it's nice to be part of that legacy. Every seed variety has a story and a history; and give gardeners a deeper connection into the lives of our ancestors.

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