

The Safe Seed Pledge

The Safe Seed Pledge was created by the Council for Responsible Genetics in 1999 as a way for garden seed companies to assure customers that they are not purchasing GMO seeds. Since then, over 70 companies have taken the pledge.



*"Agriculture and seeds provide the basis upon which our lives depend. We must protect this foundation as a safe and genetically stable source for future generations. For the benefit of all farmers, gardeners and consumers who want an alternative, **we pledge that we do not knowingly buy or sell genetically engineered seeds or plants.**"*

The mechanical transfer of genetic material outside of natural reproductive methods and between genera, families or kingdoms poses great biological risks, as well as economic, political and cultural threats. We feel that genetically engineered varieties have been insufficiently tested prior to public release.

More research and testing is necessary to further assess the potential risks of genetically engineered seeds. Further, we wish to support agricultural progress that leads to healthier soils, genetically diverse agricultural ecosystems and ultimately healthy people and communities."



Lake Valley Seed

Lake Valley Seed is a full line garden seed company that specializes in supporting local independent retail stores. For more than 35 years we've been a trusted resource to passionate home and community gardeners for untreated (including no neonicotinoids), non-GMO, herb, vegetable, and flower seeds.



www.lakevalleyseed.com



Heirlooms and GMOs
and Hybrids. . .Oh My!

A Guide to Choosing
GARDEN SEEDS



What's the difference?

Do I need to grow heirloom plants if I want to save my seeds? Aren't hybrid seeds just another form of GMOs? While growing your own plants from seeds can be immensely satisfying, knowing which seeds to choose can be confusing. Here's what you need to know to feel confident selecting seeds to plant in your garden.

Hybrid

Hybrid varieties are created when humans "assist" nature by intentionally crossing the pollens of different varieties within the same species. While hybridization can occur naturally, the seed you see in stores labeled "hybrid" or F1 is deliberately produced to achieve a desired trait, like disease resistance or cold hardiness.

The drawback is that if you save and sow seed from a hybrid variety you will most likely get a plant with random traits from earlier generations—not the plant you were hoping for. That's because the genetics of the hybrid are not stable enough to allow the seeds to be self-sustaining.

Open Pollinated

Open pollination means plants have been pollinated by insects, bees, birds, wind, or other natural ways. Open pollinated plants are more genetically diverse, which allows plants to slowly adapt to local growing conditions. As long as pollen is not shared between different varieties within the same species (like zucchini and yellow crookneck squash), the seed will continue to reproduce new generations of the same plant.

You can save seeds to plant next season from any open pollinated plant. They do not have to be from heirloom varieties.

Heirloom

"Heirloom" is simply a descriptive term that implies a history of 50 years or more. Heirlooms are open pollinated varieties that have been passed from generation to generation and often have a cultural significance. They are usually the result of natural adaptation to their particular bioregions. While all heirloom seeds are open pollinated, not all open pollinated seeds are heirloom.



GMO

What's known in the marketplace as GMO (genetically modified organism) seeds are actually genetically engineered seeds. They are developed in a laboratory, where genes from the DNA of one species are extracted and artificially forced into the genes of another species with which they normally would be incapable of exchanging genes or interbreeding.

You will find GMO seeds in commodity crops, such as field corn, soy, rapeseed (source of canola oil), and sugar beets. There are currently no genetically modified garden seeds available for sale to the general public.

Organic

Seeds labeled as organic must be grown and processed in accordance with the USDA's National Organic Program (NOP), which prohibits the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, genetically engineered seeds and materials, sewage sludge (biosolids), and fresh manure. Organic growers and the seeds they produce must be certified as organic by a USDA accredited inspection agency.



Hybrid and GMO seeds are not the same.

Hybrid seeds come from pollen exchange within the same species, directed by human hands.

GMO seeds are genetically engineered by modifying genes from unrelated species in a laboratory.