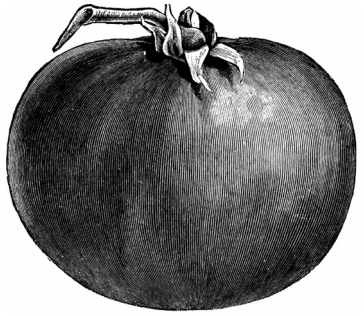
Easiest-to-Save Seeds

The plants in these families are mostly self-pollinating. The flowers have male and female parts, so pollination occurs within the individual plant, not as a cross between plants. Seeds are reliably the same as the parent plant.

Asteraceae or **Compositae** ***Aster, Daisy****, or* ***Sunflower Family****: artichoke, cardoon, endive, Jerusalem artichoke, lettuce, salsify, shungiku, sunflower.*
For Jerusalem artichokes, the tuber is planted. For others in this family, allow the plants to flower, collect dry seeds.

Fabaceae or **Leguminosae** ***Pea, Bean, Legume*** *or* ***Pulse Family****: bean, lentil, pea, peanut, soybean.*
Allow beans and peas to dry in their pods on plants before collecting and storing. Peanuts are generally not grown in coastal California.

Solanaceae ***Nightshade Family****: cape gooseberry, eggplant, ground cherry, pepper, potato, tomatillo, tomato.*
Allow fruits to fully ripen. Seed must be separated from pulp. Letting tomato pulp ferment in water for a few days is helpful. Seed should be rinsed and dried thoroughly before being stored. Potatoes are grown from tubers not seeds.



Easy-to-Save Seeds

These plants are self-sterile, cross-pollinating, or **outbreeding**. They will cross with other plants of their species. To save seeds from these plants you must

- allow only one variety in each species to flower at a time
- let multiple plants of one variety flower to ensure pollination

In our dense urban environments, some crossing can occur with our neighbors' plants, but these plants will not cross over great distances. Many are rarely allowed to flower anyway.

Amaryllidaceae or **Alliaceae** ***Lily*** *or* ***Onion Family****: chives, garlic, leeks, onions.*
They are biennial, which means they won't flower until the second year, after winter. Let the seeds dry on the plant. Collect. With bulbing varieties, replant bulb when it sprouts.

Chenopodiaceae or **Amaranthaceae** ***Goosefoot*** *or* ***Amaranth Family****: amaranth, beet, chard, lamb's quarters, orach, quinoa, spinach.*
Beet and **Chard** are the same species, so only let one variety flower at the same time.
Spinach is **dioecious** meaning each plant is either male or female, so let many plants flower at once for pollination. Let the seeds dry on the plant. Collect.

Umbelliferae or Apiaceae ***Parsley Family****: carrot, celery, caraway, chervil, cilantro (coriander), dill, fennel, parsley, parsnip.*
Carrot unfortunately will cross with Queen Anne's Lace, so don't save carrot seeds if Queen Anne's Lace grows nearby. Many of this family are biennials, so flowering may not occur until the second year. Let the seeds dry on the plant. Collect.

Advanced Seeds

Most of these vegetables are outbreeding and pollinated by wind or insects. They are commonly found flowering in local neighborhoods, making isolation very difficult. Seeds that require hand pollination, tenting, and other methods to ensure varietal purity are labeled "advanced." **These families will readily cross with unseen nearby plants and may create odd and possibly inedible varieties in one generation**.

Brassicaceae ***Mustard Family****: Asian greens, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, collards, kale, kohlrabi, mustard, turnip.*
Exceptions that are easy: Arugula, rutabaga

Cucurbitaceae ***Gourd Family****: cucumbers, gourds, luffa, melons, pumpkin, summer squash (ex. zucchini), winter squash (ex. acorn)*
Exceptions that are easy: Plant uncommon cucurbits like gourds, mixta squash, luffa. Hand pollinate to ensure purity with this family.

Poaceae ***Grass Family****: barley, corn, kamut, millet, oats, sorghum, wheat.*
Corn readily crosses with different, unseen varieties. It is unlikely that saved seeds will be like their parents.
Exceptions that are easy: Sorghum is easy to save because it does not cross. All other crops in this family are so uncommon in backyards that they are easy to save.