BEANS, PEAS AND BROAD BEANS

HARVEST, SAVE AND SOW YOUR SEEDS

Well-chosen seeds today for harvests tomorrow, and for the seasons to come.

THE CYCLE TO RESPECT

Healthy plants → Pods forming → Maturing in the sun → Pods ripening → Seeds forming → Drying seeds → Storing and labelling → Sowing again

CHOOSE THE RIGHT PLANTS

- Reproducible varieties or open-pollinated
- Healthy and vigorous plants
- Plants true to the variety
- Pods free from disease or mold
- If possible, several plants to preserve diversity

1 LET THE PODS FULLY MATURE

Do not harvest too early. Let the pods reach full maturity on the plant.

Over time, the pod will:

- → grow
- → turn yellow or brown
- → lose its moisture
- → become dry

Depending on the species and the weather, finish drying after harvest if needed.

To harvest a mature seed, you must accept to let the pod age on the plant.

2 SHELL THE PODS

Once the pods are completely dry, open them gently and take out the seeds.

Avoid crushing or damaging the seeds during this step.

3 SORT THE SEEDS

Keep preferably seeds that are:

- ✓ well formed
- ✓ normal size for the variety
- ✓ free from mold
- ✓ without insect holes
- ✓ without abnormal color or major damage

✗ Discard heavily damaged, soft or suspicious seeds.

4 CHECK THE DRYING

Before storage, the seeds must be completely dry.

If necessary, leave them for a few more days in a dry, well-ventilated place before putting them in their final container.

STORE THE SEEDS

Once completely dry, store them for the next season or keep them for several years under good conditions.
Place them in a paper envelope or a labeled sachet, then in a clean, dry box or jar.
Keep away from insects and moisture.

WHERE TO STORE?

In a place that is:
dry, cool, dark. and stable.

LABEL THE BATCH

Write at least:

- species
- variety
- year of harvest
- origin or place of growing

MONITOR INSECTS

Before storage, check the seeds and discard any that show:

- small holes
- suspicious marks
- visible insects
- serious deterioration

Regularly inspect your stock to spot any problem early.

HOW LONG?

Well dried and stored in good conditions, these seeds can keep their germination power for several years.

But like all seeds, their viability decreases gradually.

PRESERVE VARIETIES AND AVOID CROSS-POLLINATION

BEANS

Many common beans self-pollinate mainly, which limits cross-pollination between varieties.
The risk is not zero, especially with the presence of pollinating insects.
Some bean species cross more easily than others.

- → Identify plants intended for seeds
- → Avoid mixing several very close varieties
- → Keep seeds from plants that match the desired characteristics
- → To preserve a variety strictly, protect some flowers before they open.

PEAS

Peas are also mainly self-pollinated.
Natural cross-pollination is therefore generally limited, but still possible.

For a family seed reserve, good identification of varieties and some separation between crops already greatly reduce the risks.

BROAD BEANS: MORE VIGILANCE NEEDED

Broad beans are different.
Their flowers strongly attract bees and other pollinators, and cross-pollination between varieties can be much more frequent.

If several broad bean varieties are grown at the same time and the goal is to produce true-to-type seeds, it may be necessary to:

- → separate the different varieties
- → stagger their flowering periods when possible
- → protect some flowers or groups of flowers
- → identify seeds from uncontrolled pollination as open-pollinated.

IN CASE OF DOUBT, NOTE THE INFORMATION

A seed from open pollination is not a "bad" seed.
It can simply produce a slightly different generation.
Preserving a variety means keeping its seeds but also knowing how they were pollinated.

HOW LONG?

Well dried and stored in good conditions, these seeds can keep their germination power for several years.

But like all seeds, their viability decreases gradually.

2027 → 2028...

TEST BEFORE SOWING

When the batch starts to age, do a small germination test before relying on it for a new crop.

A pod can feed you today.
Its seeds can prepare tomorrow's harvest.

KEY POINTS

- Choose healthy and reproducible plants
- Let the pods fully mature
- Dry thoroughly
- Shell without damaging
- Sort and remove suspicious seeds
- Identify species, variety, year of harvest and origin
- Store in a dry, cool, dark place away from insects
- Test germination when the batch ages
- Pay more attention to cross-pollination in broad beans

THE CYCLE TO RESPECT

Choose → Let mature → Dry → Shell → Sort → Store → Sow again

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Its seeds can prepare tomorrow's harvest.