BEE-FRIENDLY FLOWERS

HARVEST, SAVE AND REPLANT THEIR SEEDS

Feed pollinators today, prepare a vibrant garden for tomorrow.

1 CHOOSE

Choose reproducible varieties and healthy plants.

2 LET THEM FLOWER

Enjoy the blooms and let the pollinators do their work.

3 LET THEM SEED

The flowers fade and seed heads develop naturally.

4 HARVEST

Before natural dispersal, harvest on a dry day.

5 DRY

In a dry, airy place, away from moisture.

6 EXTRACT

Rub, shake or open the seed heads to release the seeds.

7 CLEAN & SORT

Remove debris, dry husks and damaged seeds.

8 STORE

Keep in a dry, cool, dark and stable place.

9 REPLANT

At the right time, sow again for new flowers and new seeds.

CHOOSE THE RIGHT FLOWERS

- Reproducible varieties or open-pollinated.
- Healthy and vigorous plants.
- Well adapted to your climate and soil.
- Useful to pollinators.
- Grow several plants when possible to preserve diversity.

Examples of bee-friendly flowers:

Poppy · Calendula · Cornflower · Cosmos · Borage · Phacelia · Mallow · Daisy

LET POLLINATORS DO THEIR WORK

Many flowers depend on insects to produce seeds.
Let the flowers be naturally visited.

FLOWER → POLLINATION → SEED FORMATION → DRYING → DISPERSION

To harvest seeds, intervene just before the plant releases them by itself.

A flower nourishes pollinators today.
Its seeds can prepare their food for tomorrow.

KNOW THE RIGHT TIME TO HARVEST

Harvest when :

- ✓ the flowers are faded;
- ✓ the seed heads start to brown or dry;
- ✓ the seeds are well developed;
- ✓ they come loose easily but are not yet dispersed.

Too early = immature seeds
Too late = seeds lost

BEE-FRIENDLY FLOWERS — KEY POINTS

- Choose reproducible varieties and healthy plants.
- Let pollinators do their work during flowering.
- Observe the right time to harvest before dispersal.
- Harvest seed heads or flower stalks on a dry day.
- Dry completely before storing.
- Extract the seeds gently.
- Clean and sort: remove debris and damaged seeds.
- Identify: species, variety, year and origin.
- Store in a dry, cool, dark and stable place.
- Test germination when the seeds get older.

HARVEST ACCORDING TO FLOWER TYPE

CAPSULE FLOWERS (e.g. poppy)

Cut the dry, brown capsules before they open and release the seeds.

Shake gently over a container.

COMPOSITE FLOWERS (e.g. calendula, cosmos, cornflower, daisy)

Let the flower heads dry on the plant, then harvest when the seeds are mature.

Rub gently over a container to release the seeds.

BORAGE, PHACELIA AND MALLOW

Seeds mature progressively. Harvest in several rounds as they ripen.

Some seeds are very small and can be lost easily.

HARVEST

On a dry day, cut capsules, flower heads or stalks. Place in a paper bag, container or on a clean cloth to avoid losing small seeds.

DRY

Let dry completely in a dry, airy place, away from moisture. Do not store while seeds are still damp. They must be fully dry to store well.

EXTRACT, SORT AND CLEAN

Rub → shake → collect → sort.

Remove:

- stem pieces
- dry husks
- malformed seeds
- seeds with mold or damage

Use a fine sieve or a gentle winnowing for tiny seeds.

IDENTIFY THE LOTS

Write down at least:

- species and variety
- year of harvest
- place of origin
- pollination (if known)
- any useful notes

Cosmos
Variety: open-pollinated
Harvest: 2026
Origin: Brittany
Pollination: free

WHERE TO STORE ?

Use a paper envelope, labelled bag or a small suitable container.

Keep in a dry, cool, dark and stable place.

TEST BEFORE REPLANTING

When the lot gets older, do a small germination test before relying on it.

SUCCESSFUL SEED STORAGE

Avoid heat · Avoid humidity · Avoid direct light · Avoid big temperature changes · Renew your seeds regularly

THE CYCLE TO RESPECT

Choose → Let flower → Let seed → Harvest → Dry → Extract → Clean & sort → Store → Replant

Saving flower seeds means keeping the colors of the garden and the food for pollinators of tomorrow.

GERMINATION TEST (EXAMPLE)

1. Place 10 to 20 seeds on a damp paper towel.
2. Put in a closed bag or a lidded dish (take care).
3. Keep warm and darken for 7 to 14 days.
4. Count the number of germinated seeds and estimate the rate.

7–14 days

GOOD TO KNOW

Bee-friendly flowers feed bees, bumblebees, butterflies and many other insects essential to the life and beauty of our gardens.