

Lettuce Seed Saving

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**Hawai'i Public Seed Initiative
Seed Saving and Production Basics**



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Reasons for Self Seed Production

- Heirloom Varieties
- Cheaper?
- Sustainability/Independence
- Change Variety Makeup
- Opportunity

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Deciding on Plants to Keep

- Reason for Selection
- Eliminate Undesirables
 - diseased plants
 - off-types
- Move in a New Direction
- New Possibilities



Parent Selection



Plant Selection



How Many Plants to Keep?

- Seed Keeping Objectives and Goals
- Seed Needs
- Lettuce Type
- Environmental Growing Conditions
- Population Make-up



Objectives and Goals

- Sustainability
- Heirloom
- Want
- New
- Unique and personal

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Seed Needs

- Home garden
- Small Farm
- Baby lettuce production
- Distribution





How Many Flowers?



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How Many Seeds?



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Lettuce Types

- Head
- Leaf
- Bibb
- Boston
- Romaine or Cos



Growing Environment

- Dry and sunny – good
- Wet and cloudy – not good



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Control Environment

- Season
- Greenhouse
- Potted plants
- Other protective structures



Population Make-up

- Uniform
- Variable
- Don't Matter

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Managing Selected Lettuce Plants

- **Leave in place**
 - **2 to 4 extra months**
- **Transplant**
 - **dig and pot selected plants**
 - **keep soil on the dryer side to prevent rot**
 - **remove excessive leaves**



Isolation Distances

- Lettuce highly self-pollinated
- Few natural pollinators for lettuce
- Potted Plants
- Greenhouse



Seed Purity

- **Dependent on Starting Material**
- **Selection and Rouging Procedures**
- **Cleanliness**
- **Proper Labeling – Seed to Seed**
- **Seed Saving Goals and Objectives**



When Do I Harvest ?



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Lettuce Seed Cleaning

- Initial Separation
- First Screening
- Blowing and Winnowing



Packaging and Labeling

- **Clean Dry Containers**
 - Envelopes
 - Jars
- **Label**
 - **Specie, cultivar, date, location**
- **Use Pencil Markings**
 - **water proof**
 - **fade resistant**



Seed Storage

- Rule of 100
- Cool dry location
- Refrigerator
- Freezer

