

# 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



# 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



# Seed Needs

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

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# 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





# 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

