

# **The Duluth Public Seed Lending Library Frequently Asked Questions**

## **How does the Seed Library operate?**

The Seed Library operates out of the top floor of the downtown Duluth Public Library. The library is self-serve, and members can visit the library to sign up and borrow/return seeds anytime the downtown library is open. Seeds are in a designated cabinet, along with educational handouts. There will be various seed saving talks and programs throughout the year as well.

Before using the seed library, please fill out a Seed Library Membership Form (available next to the Seed Library) and put it in the adjacent basket. You do not have to have a Duluth Public Library card to use the library.

As a seed library member, you may borrow up to four packets containing seeds of heirloom, open-pollinated seeds per year.

We hope that you will grow the seeds in your gardens, and at the end of the growing season save a portion of seed from your harvest to return back to the Seed Library. You may also donate seeds you saved or commercially grown seeds from other open-pollinated/non-hybrid plant varieties.

No fine or penalty will result from not returning seeds (although we hope that you do!). After the seeds are returned, they will be collected and inventoried by Duluth Public Library staff and volunteers.

While this policy may lead to a marginal annual loss of seeds each year, the focus of the Seed Lending Library is not to maintain a steady seed stock, but rather to encourage gardening and the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables. Realize that the returned seeds have been grown by amateurs, and that there is no guarantee of 100% germination or of absolute varietal purity. The seed has been produced in good faith and spirit by friends and neighbors interested in connecting their community to food and seeds.

## **Who are the partners behind the Seed Library?**

The Duluth Seed Library was conceived by the Duluth Public Library and Institute for a Sustainable Future, and includes organizational and volunteer support from the Duluth Community Garden Program, the St. Louis County Master Gardeners and other volunteer community members. The Seed Library received a grant for the 2014/2015 growing season from the University of Minnesota's Regional Sustainable Development Partnership.

## **What seeds will be available?**

During its first growing season in 2014, the Seed Library offered commercially grown seed for varieties of tomatoes, peppers, beans (the 2014 Duluth One Community, One Vegetable of the year), and peas. These four initial seeds types were chosen based on their ease of seed saving for beginners. Varieties of heirloom, open-pollinated seeds best suited for our Northern growing season were selected. Additional seed types and varieties will be added in future growing seasons.