

*Supporting the Rhythms of the Seasons*

## 2017 CATALOGUE INTRODUCTION

**D**ear Gardeners and Seed Savers,

The following poem hangs by my desk so I am reminded daily, in these troubling times, of the imperative to remember that “though all things differ, all agree.”

**Windsor Forest** — Alexander Pope, 1713

Here hills and vales, the woodland and the plain,  
Here earth and water seem to strive again,  
Not chaos-like together crush'd and bruis'd,  
But, as the world, harmoniously confus'd:  
Where order in variety we see,  
And where, though all things differ, all agree.

Welcome to the 2017 edition of the Solstice Seed Catalogue. After nine good years of devotion to promoting seed saving through this catalogue, it is time to move on to other pursuits. So this will be my last catalogue. Seed saving will, however, continue actively, it will simply go in a slightly different direction. I will continue to offer seed through the Seed Savers Exchange, I'll attend seed swaps, give workshops, perhaps write. It has been my fervent hope from the beginning to inspire you all to save seeds in your gardens, to help continue the unbroken chain of preservation that we have been a part of since the beginning of domestic agriculture, and that has given us the wealth of vegetable and grain varieties we still enjoy today. We are the stewards of this treasure and we owe it to both past and future generations to continue the work.

Engaging in this work is more important now than ever. During the last year we've seen passage of the DARK Act, legislation which supercedes Vermont's GMO labeling law and which—by making it cumbersome to get at the facts—prevents citizens from knowing which of the foods they purchase contain genetically engineered ingredients. I continue to encourage everyone to avoid foods containing GMO ingredients by purchasing locally, organically raised vegetables and meats, by supporting processed foods from manufacturers that have joined the non-GMO verified project, and by reading food ingredient labels carefully.

Of course best of all is growing your own. As long-time supporters of this catalogue will remember, all seeds offered here have been grown using organic methods right in my own garden. All varieties are open-pollinated, which means you can save your own seed from any variety and the offspring will come true to type. All have been selected for their ability to thrive in the Northeast. Many are rare, or not available commercially, or have interesting histories. All are exceptional in flavor, disease resistance, cold hardiness, and productivity.

The selection this year is slightly different from 2016. As has been my practice, I've let the seeds govern what's available. That is to say that I will not simply include the most popular varieties, but will offer those that are most in need of growing out for fresh seed, have caught my interest, or are the result of successful trials. This means that even in this last catalogue there are a few tempting new varieties.

---

SEEDS IN OUR “LINE UP”, FROM LEFT TO CENTER:

AMARANTH	LETTUCE	CRESS	ONION	TOMATO	SPINACH	BEEF	PEA	BEAN	BEAN
<i>Hopi</i>	<i>Rougette</i>	<i>Shallot</i>	<i>Japanese</i>	<i>Jaune de</i>	<i>Winterspinat</i>	<i>Golden</i>	<i>Green</i>	<i>Marfax</i>	<i>True Red</i>
<i>Red Dye</i>	<i>du Midi</i>		<i>Bunching</i>	<i>Chardonne</i>	<i>Haldenstein</i>		<i>Arrow</i>		<i>Cranberry</i>

For a couple of years now I've been experimenting with dryland rice varieties. Dryland rice makes sense in a garden lacking the abundant supply of fresh water required for a paddy. The variety I've had outstanding results from is called Loto and originates in the Emilia-Romagna region of Italy. I first saw it growing in the Maggia Delta of the Ticino, the Italian language region of Switzerland, where it enjoys the distinction of being the northern-most rice cultivated in Europe. My starter seed came from the USDA, which sends about 5 grams of seed to fill requests. These approximately 100 seeds have increased, in this second year of growing, to 2 pounds of grain from 36 plants! In short, this is a highly productive, early-ripening cultivar, free of disease and undemanding in its cultivation. It grew in a moderately fertile ordinary garden bed and received no additional irrigation once it was established. I'm delighted to be including it this year and hope many of you will be interested in joining the effort to further the cultivation of rice in the Northeast.

The three Russian tomato varieties I wrote about last year continued to delight with extended crops of flavorful fruits. All three, Lyana, Ola Polka, and Skorokhod, are offered this year. These determinate varieties were excellent candidates for my experiment in succession planting in the greenhouse. Plants were started two weeks later than main crop tomatoes, and all produced fruit deep into the fall while remaining low enough to allow for easy covering for protection when cold weather set in.

On the seed saving front I continue to work on expanding my knowledge of how to save seed of the most challenging crops. This year's "homework" involves growing Brussels Sprouts to seed. As many of you know, the hardest part of coaxing seed from biennials is that the plants need to be overwintered in a protected environment. Add to this the fact that brassicas require a particularly large population of parent plants to ensure the full genetic complement is passed on to the succeeding generation. My chosen variety is the relatively short Catskill. Plants started in mid-July reached the desired adolescent stage and were planted out in mid-August. On December 2nd, as late in the season as possible, 40 of the best specimens were trimmed of lower leaves and moved to the greenhouse. There they will remain, covered, till the ground warms sufficiently in spring for them to be planted back out for flowering and seed production.

Another project, and one that raises some anxiety for me, is the effort to preserve my favorite chard variety, Schnittman-gold Gelb. I originally brought seeds of this variety back from Switzerland, where it is used in one of the most traditional dishes in the region my family comes from. It is tender of flavor but exceedingly cold hardy, and now it is beginning to wander off type. The leaves were originally smooth and very pale yellow-green, stems were pale green-white and very slender. I'm seeing darker green or more savoyed leaves, and wider, whiter stems. In an effort to preserve the original phenotype I started over 100 plants from my oldest seed and have moved the best examples into the greenhouse for overwintering. We'll see, this may take a couple of years.

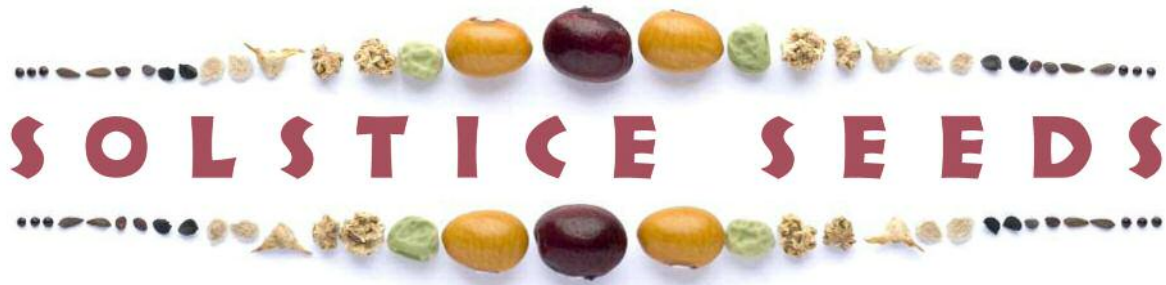
My enchantment with heritage grains continues and has helped suggest my new path. Over last winter I spent many happy hours absorbed in spelunking around the USDA's Small Grain Collection in search of heritage winter wheats suitable for cultivation in the Northeast. Cross-referencing with the marvelous 1880s book by Vilmorin titled *Les meilleurs blés* (The best wheats), which gave exhaustive descriptions of outstanding wheats grown in France toward the end of the 19th century, I was able to request seed of many promising varieties from the USDA. All were planted this fall, and the challenge now is to be patient and keep birds and squirrels out of the field till the results can be harvested in 2017.

Over the last couple of years my correspondence with other grain growers worldwide has surged. Fellow gardeners have had a similar experience and the time has clearly come to create a platform where all those who are committed to reviving heritage and ancient grain varieties can network with each other. To that end a good friend and I have been developing a website dedicated to heritage grains and an associated "virtual seed bank" where farmers and gardeners can share seed, collaborate on trials, discuss projects, and learn from each other's experience. Part of our mission is to identify worthy varieties and find avenues to return them to cultivation. Once again I exhort you to stay tuned, and please let me know if you are interested in being notified once we are ready to go public.

The question now, not only in my own mind, but in that of millions around the world, is where to go next. There will be no easy answer, but my hope is that we will, as a society, be able to look squarely at the global issues that face us and address them by going to the root of the problem rather than continuing to bat at the symptoms, by stepping up, each in our individual lives, and by making the changes that will matter.

Seed saving is not glamorous or flashy work. But it is profoundly fundamental, deeply satisfying, relevant, and helps build change from the bottom up. My heartfelt thanks go out to all of you who have supported this catalogue and have engaged in this work over the years. With wishes for peace and bounty in the new year and fulfillment in all your pursuits.

*Sylvia*



## 2017 SEED CATALOGUE

Sylvia Davatz • 106 Gilson Road • Hartland VT 05048 • 802-436-3262 • sdav@valley.net

### AMARANTH *Amaranthus spp.*

500 seeds per packet

**Hopi Red Dye.** *50 days to edible leaves, 120 days to seed.* One of the most ancient of grains. A vegetable and seed amaranth of striking beauty. The entire plant is deep burgundy red. Young leaves are delicious in salads or quesadillas. Flower bracts were used by Hopi Indians as a ceremonial food dye. The leaves have 3 times more vitamin C, 10 times more carotene, 15 times more iron and 40 times more calcium than tomatoes, and 3 times more vitamin C, calcium, and niacin than spinach leaves. Plants reach 6 feet and require ample space to develop fully.

**Opopeo.** *108 days to seed.* A fast-growing variety from Opopeo, Mexico, this gorgeous leaf and grain amaranth can grow to 9 feet and branch heavily. Leaves are greenish red on top, burgundy red on their undersides, stems are bright red. Plant thickly, then thin for eating. Absolutely delicious, creamy flavor sautéed with olive oil and garlic. None of the bitterness of spinach. Seed heads are huge and bright red, but produce white seed, which is then easy to distinguish from chaff during threshing. Succession plant later in the season exclusively for eating.

**Orange Giant.** *100 days to seed.* A seed amaranth with orange-ribbed green leaves and huge burnt-orange seed heads. Loads of light beige, easily threshed seed on plants that reach 7 feet. Amaranth has 16 to 18% protein. The seed can be popped, added to hot breakfast cereal, or baked into bread.

### BEAN/BUSH/DRY *Phaseolus vulgaris*

30 seeds per packet

**Black Coco.** *85 days.* An heirloom that is essentially a multi-purpose bean—edible in the green or shell stage—but exceptional as a dry bean. The plump, round, glossy black beans, held in 6-inch pods, cook quickly and are delicious in soups as well as bean salads, where their rich flavor is well expressed. Height is about 18 inches, the pods resist shattering on the plants but are easy to thresh.

**Black Manitoba.** Well-adapted to cultivation in a cool, damp season, this bean is technically a half-runner, with vines up to 3 feet. Given proper support, this is a very prolific variety. The seeds are small and jet-black, looking exactly like Black Turtle and numbering up to 8 in very easy-to-thresh pods. My seed comes from a Mennonite seed saver in Michigan..

**Black Turtle.** *85–105 days.* One of the most popular of soup beans. Small, shiny, flavorful black beans. Plants are somewhat heat and drought resistant, untroubled by insects or disease. They appreciate some support but will need it less if given adequate spacing. Classic for black bean soup, outstanding in black bean hummus or bean cakes.

**Cannellino Lucchese.** *85–90 days.* A variety of cannellini bean, the classic white Italian kidney bean used in so many traditional Tuscan dishes. This one comes from the area around Lucca, renowned for its fine olive oil, where it is typically used in farro soup. My seed comes originally from an Italian seed saver.

**Coco Blanc.** An early-ripening dry bean with plump white seeds. Essentially a white version of Black Coco. The tender, stringless pods can be harvested and cooked at a very early stage. The beans are rich in protein and delicious at the shell stage, or stored dried and then added to salads or used as a vegetable.

**Drabo.** *85 days.* An heirloom from Switzerland, this high-quality, plump, white soup bean is about the same size as cannellini, but slightly rounder. Flavorful, productive, and cooks quickly.

**Hutterite Soup.** *85 days.* Brought to America by the Anabaptist Hutterites who came from Austria and settled in Canada in the 1750s, this outstanding, creamy-textured soup bean is small, almost round and pale greenish-yellow in color with a dark ring around the eye. The plants show some runners, there are 5 to 6 beans per pod.

**Kievits.** *89 days.* Roundish beige pinto bean with maroon streaking. This Dutch variety is named for a meadow bird whose markings call to mind the patterns on the bean. Consuming pinto beans has been shown to lower cholesterol and reduce biomarkers for heart disease risk. In Holland this variety is widely used in canning and as an addition to winter soups.

**Littleton.** Another half-runner which will require support for the 4-foot vines. The name refers to Littleton, New Hampshire, the bean was called “an old New Hampshire heirloom” by renowned plant breeder Elwyn Meader. The pods have the streaking of a horticultural bean, but the seeds are unusually large. Beige background with wine-colored mottling, some of the beans are almost solid red. A very productive variety.

**Marfax.** *80–85 days.* A versatile, small, almost round, caramel-colored heirloom from Maine, resembling Swedish Brown, but earlier and higher yielding. Well adapted to our cool climate, this richly flavored bean holds its shape well during baking.

**Montcalm Dark Red Kidney.** *105 days.* An early strain of Red Kidney, these brilliant, deep raspberry-colored beans make excellent chili, bake well, and are perfect in soups. The sturdy pods with 6 to 7 beans each are borne on upright plants that are mold-resistant in damp weather. Also good as a green shell bean.

**Schwarzwälder Ausmachbohne.** A beautiful dry bean from the Black Forest region of Germany. Its strong, rather leggy, 20-inch plants are happiest given lots of room. The dry beans are sulphur yellow with faint veining, fairly large, and cook very quickly to a tan color. The subtle flavor is a perfect vehicle for combining with lots of onion, garlic, tomatoes, sage, and hot pepper.

**Volga German Siberian.** *108 days.* Moderately productive bush bean with runners up to 3 feet. Rounded pinkish-tan seed with red streaks in streaked pods. Large, rather leggy plants. Catherine the Great invited German Mennonites to settle and farm in the Volga region of Russia. When Communism took over, many of the farmers were deported to Siberia. This is the bean they took with them.

## BEAN/BUSH/SNAP *Phaseolus vulgaris*

30 seeds per packet

**Astrelle.** *50 days.* A French filet bean with excellent beany flavor and high yield on compact plants. Unlike many filet beans, it will produce continuously right until frost except in very hot summers. Best picked at about 3 inches, but it will remain tender long after that.

**Comtesse de Chambord.** *50 days.* An extremely rare, diminutive filet bean from the 19th century, originally known as Hungarian Dwarf rice bean. The pods are very slender and only 4 inches long, growing on plants no more than 12 inches tall. A steady producer throughout the season of tender, sweet snap beans. The tiny white seeds, barely larger than grains of rice, can also be used dried. An excellent variety for the small garden or for container growing.

**Flambeau.** *85 days to shell stage.* A rare French flageolet bean for eating at the shell stage, when the seeds have begun to fill out in the pods but haven't become starchy yet. Pale green or white sweet, tender seeds in 5-inch pods on 18-inch plants. Great for eating fresh, steaming and freezing, or using as a dry bean. Very productive. Flageolet beans were introduced in France in the late 1870s.

**Maxibel.** *50 days.* An outstanding filet bean. Very slender, perfectly straight 7 to 8-inch medium green pods borne heavily on sturdy plants. Early and productive for the entire season, superb flavor. Seeds are narrow, tan in the background with dark, purple/brown splotches.

**BEAN/BUSH/WAX** *Phaseolus vulgaris*

**30 seeds per packet**

**Beurre de Rocquencourt.** *60 days.* Named for the French town of Rocquencourt near Versailles, this productive and beautiful bean lives up to its name with a rich, buttery flavor and delicate, pale yellow color. Pods are 7 inches long, slender, and perfectly straight. Does well where nights are cool and benefits from regular picking.

**Pencil Pod Black Seeded Wax.** *50–60 days.* Introduced around 1900, this bean was developed from a cross of Improved Black Wax x Black Eyed Wax. Rust and mosaic resistant, the bushy plants bear a heavy crop of stringless, 6-inch beans with excellent flavor.

**BEAN/POLE/DRY** *Phaseolus vulgaris*

**30 seeds per packet**

**Chester.** *90–100 days.* Also known as Flagg Bean, this sturdy pole bean is reported to have come from the Iroquois people. A strong climber with large pods and seeds shaped like small lima beans. Coloring is either a white background with gray speckles and streaking or the reverse. Gail Flagg of Fort Kent, Maine, claims the bean had been grown for a long time in Chester, Vermont.

**Dolloff.** *110 days.* A beautiful, unusual bean shaped more like a lima bean, flattened, with a light buff background and pale pinkish-burgundy markings. The 8-foot vines produce lavishly, the beans have outstanding flavor and can be used either in the shell stage or dried. Originally from Hattie Gray of West Burke, Vermont, in 1985. She and her mother got it from Ray Dolloff of Burke Hollow, Vermont, around 1920. Pods are 6 inches long and contain an average of 6 to 7 seeds. A 12-foot row yielded 5 pounds of beans.

**Mayflower Bean.** *80–90 days.* This bean is said to have come to America with the Pilgrims in 1620. It is what's called a cutshort, that is to say the beans have blunt ends as if they were crowded in the slightly curved pod. The small beige beans are stippled with tiny maroon spots that converge on one end of the seed. Beautiful, flavorful, and very productive, often with 6 pods on each node.

**Munsee Wampum.** A late-maturing, prodigiously high-yielding bean, with up to 6 pods per stem. My seed comes from Will Weaver, noted food historian. It was collected by his grandfather in the 1930s. Some confusion surrounds the spelling of the name. There's a town in central Pennsylvania called Muncy, at the same time "Minsi" is one of three linguistic groups of the Lenape/Delaware Indians. Vines are very tall, leaves are large, pods are slender, containing 6 to 7 small, squarish slightly flattened seeds with a tan background and dark brown streaking.

**True Red Cranberry.** *95 days.* Bean collector John Withee saw mention of this variety in a 1700s gardening encyclopedia, and finally found it, after an 11-year search, in Steep Falls, Maine. It may well be a Native American variety. The exact size, shape, and color of a cranberry, this dazzlingly beautiful glossy, garnet-colored heirloom grows on 6 to 7-foot moderately productive vines. Each pod holds 5 seeds. Richly flavored, it makes excellent baked beans and an outrageously delicious (speckled!) hummus.

**Vermont Cassoulet.** *100 days.* The original name of this bean is Tarbais Alaric, however this is a protected name and by rights it can only be used if the bean has been grown in a designated area in southwestern France. Still, it is the classic bean used in cassoulet, that fabulous French dish which should take at least three days to make! Vigorous vines, white flowers, long, flat pods, white, flattened medium-large, late-ripening seeds are rounder than limas.

**BEAN/POLE/SNAP** *Phaseolus vulgaris*

**30 seeds per packet**

**Herrenböhnli.** *72 days.* Very delicate, 5-foot vines produce diminutive 2½-inch pods with a very sweet, tender flavor. At maturity the pods fill with almost perfectly round, pinkish-beige seeds with a faint darkening around the hilum. Surprisingly productive. Supposedly also good as a soup bean. The name means "gentlemen's little bean."

**Hilda.** A Romano-type snap bean with fantastically huge, flat, stringless, meaty pods on vines up to 8 feet. Seeds are flattened and pure white. Pods measure 1 inch by 10 inches and contain 8 to 9 seeds each. Exceptional flavor, mid-season, productive, especially tender. Freezes well. A favorite in Europe.

**Stangenbohne Ilanz.** *58 days.* A Swiss heirloom—"Stangenbohne" means pole bean—obtained through ProSpecieRara. This vigorous pole bean puts out 9-foot vines with large leaves and very long pods, some containing as many as 11 pure white seeds, slightly smaller and straighter than kidneys. The pods are tender and flavorful in the snap stage, and the seeds make an excellent dry bean. Grown in the Swiss town of Ilanz since before 1900.

**BEET/GARDEN** *Beta vulgaris***120 seeds per packet**

*Beet and chard seeds are actually clusters of seeds. You will get between 2 and 3 seedlings from each seed, so keep that in mind when sowing.*

**Feuer Kugel.** 65–75 days. A rare Swiss heirloom whose name means “fire globe”, this smooth-skinned beet remains sweet and tender to a large size. It is flavorful raw or cooked and stores exceptionally well.

**Flat of Egypt.** 50 days. One of the earliest of beets. The shape is round with a flattened bottom and a very slender taproot. The flesh is uniformly deep, dark red, the skin is smooth, the flavor exceptional. Described in Vilmorin’s *The Vegetable Garden* in 1885.

**Golden.** 55–60 days. Also known as Golden Beet and Burpee’s Golden, this variety was introduced before 1828. A dual-purpose beet, its leaves are sweet and flavorful, its globe-shaped orange roots are tender and mild even when large, and turn golden yellow during cooking. Ideally suited for salads since they do not bleed. Stores well.

**CELERIAC** *Apium graveolens***500 seeds per packet**

*Celeriac is not at all difficult to grow, but thrives in rich, loose soil with an abundance of organic matter. It requires steady moisture throughout its long growing season. Start sets indoors 12 weeks before the last frost and plant out with ample spacing—8 to 12 inches between plants. Mulch between plants, keep well watered, and be patient!*

**Brilliant.** 110 days. A round, smooth European strain with white flesh and a sweet, nutty flavor. Outstanding both raw and cooked, in salads, soups, stews, or in a mixture of roasted root vegetables. Celeriac is an old European favorite just beginning to be fully appreciated in the U.S. Its unusual flavor adds a new dimension to the palette of our New England selection of winter vegetables. Roots reach 4 inches in diameter if given lots of room.

**Monstropolgi.** 100 days. Firm, large, round roots with few side shoots and great flavor. This is a rare variety, its outstanding characteristic is that the small roots are concentrated at the base, meaning there is very little waste during trimming. Celeriac stores very well in the root cellar.

**CELERY** *Apium graveolens***500 seeds per packet**

*Homegrown celery is nothing like what you find in the supermarket. The plants are large and full, stems are somewhat thinner than commercial varieties, and the flavor is intense. It is best used as an accent and an aromatic, but is well worth growing.*

**Gigante Dorato.** An Italian variety, the name of which means “golden giant.” Pale yellow-green stems and leaves lend an intense celery flavor to *mirepoix*, that lovely French aromatic base of soups, sauces, and stews that consists of minced onion, carrot, and celery stewed in butter. Perfect for adding to stock.

**Red.** Sturdy, bushy 18-inch plants, slender stalks with a deep red/green color. The flavor is concentrated and spicy. This is a very cold-hardy variety, with many plants surviving winter with minimal cover. Use in soups, stews, potato salad, or a beet/apple/walnut salad.

**CHICORY** *Chicorium intybus***150 seeds per packet**

**Radicchio Castelfranco Libra.** 85–95 days. An improved strain of the Italian heirloom Castelfranco, this stunning radicchio has creamy yellow-green leaves splashed with red streaks. Round heads do not need cutting back to produce well. Radicchios have been relatively recently “domesticated”, so there is still a fair amount of variability in the plants. Start sets end of June for fall harvest. Extremely cold hardy. Plants of this variety survived the winter right in the garden with only row cover for protection.

**CORN/FLINT** *Zea mays***100 seeds per packet**

*Corn is a wind-pollinated crop and requires about 2 to 3 miles of isolation to ensure pure seed. Make sure you are sufficiently distant from either neighbors who are growing corn or from fields of GMO corn. If you are growing just for food, one packet of seed will be sufficient, but if you would like to save your own seed you should start with a minimum of 200 plants.*

**Dakota White.** *85 days.* An old Oscar Will variety that is fast growing, handles drought well and is high producing for its size and nutrient requirements. Corns of this type were traditionally used for a late summer pasture. When pasture lands had dried up, you would turn the livestock in to “hog off” the crop. The 5-foot plants routinely produce two 6-inch ears with 8 rows of ivory white kernels per cob.

**Floriani Red Flint.** *100–110 days.* This is a gorgeous flint corn, growing to a stately 10 to 12 feet in height. Kernels are deep maroon in color, each with a pointed tip. The variety is an Italian family heirloom from the Valsugana valley east of Trent in Lombardy. The coarsely ground meal, speckled with red from the seed coat, makes the best polenta you will ever taste. Slightly sweeter than the Roter Tessinermais.

**Roter Tessinermais.** *123 days.* Between 1930 and 1940 there were many varieties of red corn in Ticino, the Italian-language canton in southern Switzerland. The name means simply “red corn from Ticino. This variety has large ears, often two per robust 8-foot plant with little susceptibility to wind. The kernels are rounded, a deep brick color, arranged in 12 to 14 rows per ear. Well suited to planting at high elevations. Some yellow off-types will appear, but be sure to select for only red seed. Outstanding flavor—a bit nuttier than Floriani—either as polenta or baked into cornbread. My seed came from ProSpecieRara, the Swiss seed saving organization, which is why the name is given in German rather than Italian.

**CORN/POPCORN** *Zea mays***100 seeds per packet**

**Vermont Red Kernel.** *102 days.* Very dark burgundy kernels on diminutive ears 4 to 5 inches long. Kernels are slender and pointed, looking much like what’s often called strawberry corn. Pops to a pure white, delicious, buttery-flavored popcorn. Approximately 5 feet in height. There are frequently 2 ears per plant.

**CORN/SWEET** *Zea mays***100 seeds per packet**

**Dorinny.** *75 days.* An outstanding, early, open-pollinated Canadian heirloom with deep, rich, full-bodied corn flavor. Dorinny is a cross between renowned Golden Bantam x Pickanniny, and was awarded the Market Gardener’s Award of Merit in 1936 because of its delicious taste. It is a reliably cold-soil tolerant variety, planted here in the third week in May and maturing to the eating stage in 70 days. Plants are 4 to 5 feet tall and yield up to two 6 to 7-inch, 8-rowed cobs each. While best picked at peak freshness, Dorinny has a good picking window for tenderness and sweetness. Because it is a bit starchier than modern super-sweet varieties it makes absolutely divine fresh corn polenta. Check out Ottolenghi’s recipe!

**CRESS** *Lepidium sativum***400 seeds per packet**

**Shallot Cress Mahontongo.** *45 days.* An old Pennsylvania German heirloom with spoon-shaped leaves that grow in a rosette and have a flavor resembling garlic chives. This hardy biennial can provide a welcome and refreshing tonic in the form of spicy early spring greens if plants are allowed to go to seed and self-sow.

**Upland Special.** *45 days.* A compact, extremely hardy, dark green cress with very spicy flavor similar to arugula. Outstanding in a mix of greens. This variety is best planted in the fall for tender plants in spring and will also self-sow if allowed to go to seed. A selection of Peters Seed and Research.

**CUCUMBER** *Cucumis sativus***30 seeds per packet**

**Athens.** *55 days.* About 9 inches long, this uniformly slender slicer has smooth, deep dark green skin, dense, firm, crisp flesh, and a small seed cavity. Very productive over a long season on vines that want support. A fine cucumber both for market and the home garden.

**EGGPLANT** *Solanum melongena***50 seeds per packet**

*Growing eggplant in our region is famously a challenge. Start sets about 8 weeks before last frost, keeping seed evenly warm at about 70° for best germination. Protect seedlings from any stresses which will compromise future fruiting. Set out only after soil has warmed to 60° and cover with row cover if necessary to keep out nighttime chills until the plants are well established, or for the entire growing season if you wish.*

**Diamond.** *80 days.* A Ukrainian variety brought back to the States in 1993 by Seed Savers Exchange co-founder Kent Whealy. Developed by the Donetskaya Vegetable Experiment Station, it is also known as Almaz. The fruits are glossy, elongated, tapered, dark purple with pale green flesh that is free of bitterness. The 2-foot sturdy, upright plants set 2 by 7-inch fruits, approximately 12 ounces each, in clusters of 4 to 6. Of all the eggplants I've trialed over the years, this is the best performing, with no help from rowcover or black plastic mulch. So if you are inclined to using those aids you should get even better results.

**ENDIVE/ESCAROLE** *Chicorium endivia***150 seeds per packet**

**Bionda a Cuore Pieno.** *60–65 days.* Known here as Blond Full Heart, this is a superb escarole. Plant either early in the spring for salads or steamed greens, or later in the season for fall harvests. Dense heads reach 12 to 14 inches across and hold extremely well in the garden, making it a great candidate for fall CSAs or markets as well as for home gardeners craving greens into the fall. Leaves are slightly crumpled, medium green on the outside and lemony light at the heart. Extremely hardy, thrives either under rowcover into December or in the greenhouse all winter. Turns sweeter after frost. Divine sautéed with pasta or *all'arrabiata*, with pancetta and hot pepper flakes.

**Frisée Très Fine Maraîchère.** *60 days.* A 19th century French heirloom endive producing small, compact heads with frizzled leaves, white at the core and fading through golden yellow to green at the outer edges. A beautiful and mildly bitter addition to any salad mix. Although not extremely cold hardy, the heads hold very well in the garden, making for a long harvest season.

**KALE** *Brassica oleracea***250 seeds per packet**

**Red Russian.** *65 days.* aka Russian Red or Ragged Jack. One of the hardiest of kales. Capable of overwintering in the garden. Oak-like leaves are fringed in red, the color deepening with advancing cold. Outstanding tender flavor.

**LEEK** *Allium ampeloprasum***200 seeds per packet**

**Bleu de Solaise.** *110 days.* An exceptionally hardy variety. Very uniform, thick white shanks are topped with deep green leaves that gain a purple tinge as the weather cools. Capable of overwintering outside.

**Jaune du Poitou.** An heirloom from the Poitou region of western France. A long, slender, pale yellow-green leek of great tenderness and delicacy of flavor. Not specifically a winter variety, but I have had plants survive until spring without protection. Described by Vilmorin in 1885.

**LETTUCE/HEAD** *Lactuca sativa***250 seeds per packet**

**Arctic King.** *60 days.* A small, extremely hardy, compact bibb lettuce for early spring or late fall harvest. Light green, crinkled leaves and firm heads. Very similar to North Pole but a bit later. Survived many nights in the teens before finally succumbing to a covering of snow.



**LETTUCE/HEAD** *(continued)***250 seeds per packet**

**Erstling.** An old German variety which can be planted in the fall for a head start on the spring. Heads are small and compact, with brilliant red edges on the tender leaves and a hint of light green in the very center. Very hardy. Seed is originally from Switzerland.

**Lattich in der Erde.** The name means “lettuce in the earth.” This medium-green variety came originally from the genebank in Gatersleben, Germany. Wavy, meaty, slightly seersuckered leaves form relatively compact heads. Good heat resistance but also extremely cold-hardy, so this is an excellent choice for season-long growing.

**North Pole.** 50–55 days. As the name suggests, an extremely cold-hardy butterhead with compact, light green, slightly crinkled leaves. Best for early spring or late fall. Very similar to Arctic King but a bit earlier. A real beauty.

**Reine des Glaces.** 62 days. A gorgeous crisphead lettuce also known as Ice Queen. A small, slow-bolting French variety for summer, with bright green, spiky, deeply cut leaves and a convoluted habit. Holds up well in the heat. Cut heads back and let new leaves grow from the base for leaf lettuce.

**Rotkopf.** 45 days. A Swiss butterhead with light green leaves at the base darkening to deep burgundy at the edges. Heads are large and full and the flavor is tender and excellent. The name, appropriately, means “redhead.”

**Rouquette du Midi.** A small crisp butterhead of French origin—also known as Rouquette de Montpellier—with glossy bronze-red leaves, best sown in late summer for fall salads or in very early spring, since it does not appreciate hot weather.

**LETTUCE/LEAF** *Lactuca sativa***250 seeds per packet**

**Drunken Woman Fringed Headed.** 55 days. Bright green, crisp leaves terminate in ruffled, almost frizzy edges with a narrow band of burgundy. This is a very showy, semi-heading variety with leaves that look like someone went after them with pinking shears. Slow to bolt and with a refreshing tender, sweet flavor..

**Merlot.** 45–50 days. A diminutive, frilly lettuce with some of the darkest maroon leaves around. Only at the very base is there a hint of light green. Loose-leaved in habit, excellent for cut-and-come-again culture or in a mesclun mix, with glossy, mild-flavored leaves and a reluctance to bolt.

**Radichetta.** 56 days. Although this variety originally comes from Italy it was recently renamed “Cressonnette du Maroc” in France. A gorgeous, generously proportioned, medium-green oak leaf, succulent in flavor and both heat tolerant and cold hardy.

**Rubin.** 55 days. The name of this beautiful, upright, loose, frilly-edged, deep burgundy lettuce means “ruby.” Very cold hardy and the leaf color deepens as temperatures drop. Pale yellow-green at the very center.

**Tango.** 45 days. Large heads of very curly, deep green, vitamin-rich leaves. Extremely cold-hardy variety, showy and easy to mistake for an endive, but with a tender, delicate, buttery flavor.

**LETTUCE/ROMAINE** *Lactuca sativa***250 seeds per packet**

**Kaiser Selbstschuss.** The slightly open form of this romaine suggests a very old variety. Seed came through ProSpecieRara, but originated from the genebank in Gatersleben, Germany. The smooth leaves are light green, upright, and relatively slender. This is an outstanding lettuce for fresh eating or steaming.

**Rouge d’Hiver.** 60 days. An exceptionally cold-hardy French heirloom from the 1800s. Upright, with full, broad leaves that turn increasingly deep burgundy as the weather cools. Crisp texture and mellow flavor. Outstanding for fall harvest, but will also do well in the heat if kept watered.

**MELON/MUSKMELON** *Cucumis melo*

**30 seeds per packet**

**Eden's Gem.** *70–90 days.* a.k.a. Eden Gem, Rocky Ford Eden Gem. A petite, green-fleshed, netted melon weighing in at about one pound each, developed in 1905 at Rocky Ford, Colorado. Sweet and spicy flavor. Very productive and well-suited to the small garden.

**Iroquois.** *70–85 days.* Developed at Cornell by a Dr. Munger and introduced in 1944, this variety is particularly suited to growing in the Northeast. The rind is heavily netted and faintly ribbed, the deep orange flesh is fragrant and juicy and won hands-down in a taste test comparing it to other locally-grown melons. Slightly oval fruits measure 7 by 6 inches and weigh up to 5 pounds.

**MELON/WINTER MELON** *Cucumis melo*

**30 seeds per packet**

**Valencia Winter.** *120 days.* A mild, sweet, juicy honeydew with pale green flesh and very dark green, slightly ribbed rind. First listed in American catalogues in the 1830s, but may go back further than that. Harvested in mid-October and stored at room temperature, it keeps extraordinarily well, easily into January, so it offers one response to the perennial localvore question “but what will I do for fresh fruit in winter?”!

**ONION/BUNCHING** *Allium fistulosum*

**120 seeds per packet**

**Japanese Bunching.** Scallions, or green onions, generally are slow growers, but this variety is robust and off to a quick and strong start. Seeds can be started indoors and transplanted out after danger of frost. Essentially a perennial, so plant a patch in one corner of the garden where it will be undisturbed and allow the plants to produce seed year after year. Then plant a second bed for fresh eating.

**ONION/COMMON/RED** *Allium cepa*

**120 seeds per packet**

**Red Bottle.** An Amish heirloom. Beautiful, elongated, torpedo-shaped bulbs with a unique mild yet spicy flavor. Pale pink skin, pale pink flesh. A good keeper, adaptable to a wide variety of conditions. This is a very hardy variety, overwintering easily in the garden. If flower stalks are cut back in the second year the bulbs will multiply, forming a cluster of new onions around the original bulb.

**Southport Red Globe.** *100–120 days.* A now rare heirloom from 1873, developed along the Mill River in Southport, Connecticut. This is one of the most beautiful of all the red onions I've trialed. Large globe-shaped roots average from 7 to 9 ounces, but can reach 15 ounces. Intensely red-purple, glossy skin, firm flesh with deep color throughout and pungent flavor. Exceptional keeping qualities, storing up to 11 months. A long day variety.

**ONION/COMMON/YELLOW** *Allium cepa*

**120 seeds per packet**

**Wiener Gelbe.** *180 days.* This excellent yellow storage onion hails from Austria, suffers no pests, and produces medium-size 4-ounce globes. The name means “yellow of Vienna.” A long day onion.

**Yellow of Parma.** *110–120 days.* A rare and hard-to-find Italian storage onion, uniformly round, solid, golden yellow globes average 7 ounces each. A long day variety storing up to 10 months.

**ORACH** *Atriplex hortensis*

**50 seeds per packet**

**Gelbe Lacherez.** *45 days.* Very bright, luminous, limey-yellow/green heart-shaped leaves on plants that reach 5 feet tall and branch heavily. Tender and delicious, the leaves add a beautiful note to salads when young. or can be steamed when more mature. ProSpecieRara received this variety in 1995 from R.-M. Lacherez, who in turn had received it in 1993 from the area near Allier, France.

**ORACH** *(continued)***50 seeds per packet**

**Red Orach.** *45 days.* a.k.a. Mountain Spinach, this relative of lamb's quarters has been in cultivation for over 1000 years. Heavily branched plants can reach 6 feet. The deep ruby leaves are a dusty green on the underside and are delicious added to salads when young or steamed when older. Orach contains three times the vitamin C of spinach. Plant closely in rows, then eat the thinnings. A great warm-weather spinach substitute. Allow a few plants to bolt and you will have volunteers the following season.

**PARSLEY** *Petroselinum crispum***100 seeds per packet**

**Comune.** Seeds of this variety originally came from a street market in northern Italy. The name simply means "common," but is spelled with only one "m" in Italian. The leaves are a very deep green, flat, relatively delicate, pungent, and abundant. Hardy and productive, my seed is from plants that wintered over in the garden under snow cover but otherwise without protection. An excellent selection for the hoop- or greenhouse for parsley all winter.

**PARSNIP** *Pastinaca sativa***300 seeds per packet**

*Parsnip seeds are slow to germinate. You can speed germination by soaking the seeds overnight before planting. Keep seeds well watered until they emerge. Homegrown seed will remain viable for at least 3 years if properly stored in a cool, dark location. Another option that proved very successful was to sow seeds in prepared beds just before the ground freezes. Seeds will germinate as soon as conditions are favorable and get a significant head start on the season.*

**Guernsey.** *95–120 days.* My original seed came from Meredith Kennard, director of the Hancock Shaker Village Historic Garden in Hancock, Massachusetts. The variety was introduced into England in 1826 from the Channel island of Guernsey. A very sweet parsnip, fine-fleshed, producing evenly tapered roots up to 14 inches in length, with few side roots and outstanding keeping qualities.

**PEA/GARDEN** *Pisum sativum***30 seeds per packet**

*Pursuant to my pea trials of a couple of years ago, I have several new, interesting pea varieties to offer through the catalogue. For me, who grew up on Bird's Eye frozen peas, it has been a delightful voyage of discovery into the range of shapes, sizes, colors, growth habits, and flavors represented in these different varieties. Nothing humble about the garden pea!*

**Bolero.** *68 days.* A very productive pea with good, sweet flavor. Vines are a manageable 28 inches, but definitely benefit from trellising. There are up to 3 pods per node, and 6 to 8 seeds per pod.

**Champion of England.** *75 days.* A very fine variety originally introduced in England in 1843 by William Fairbeard, and in this country in 1846. Grown right here at the Billings Farm in Woodstock in the late 19th century. Vines 5 feet tall, white flowers, pods 3 to 4 inches, 1 per node, filled with 6 to 10 relatively large, light green, sweet, tender peas.

**Citadel.** *80 days.* A real improvement in petit pois, tiny peas even at maturity, sweet at any stage, exceptional yields. Vines are 32" tall, white flowers, 2–3 pods per node, 6–8 seeds per pod. Seeds are tiny, bright green, wrinkled.

**Iona Petit Pois.** *68 days.* A true petit pois with outstanding, sweet flavor. A heavy yielder for a petit pois, Iona sets 2 to 3 straight, 3-inch pods per node, vines are 28 inches tall. Well worth growing for the diminutive, tender peas no self-respecting French garden would be caught without.

**Lincoln.** *70 days.* An heirloom from before 1908. This variety has been popular in New England for generations. The 3-inch pods contain 8 to 9 relatively small, very sweet peas ripening throughout July on 3-foot vines.

**Malecite Bush.** *80 days.* The Malecite (or Maliseet) tribe are from New Brunswick, Canada, and the Houlton region of Aroostook County, Maine. Seed came originally from a Malecite Indian woman from St. John's Valley and is currently being preserved by the Heirloom Seed Project of the Medomak Valley High School in Waldoboro, Maine. The seeds are large in plump pods, flavor is excellent. The 20-inch vines appreciate support.

**PEA/GARDEN** *(continued)***30 seeds per packet**

**Manitoba.** *80 days.* A very unusual plant. Vines are 36 inches, appreciate support, and are filled with great masses of very frilly, tangled, tendrils that are excellent in salads. White flowers are followed by pods containing 4–8 large peas each. This is a moderately productive variety with fine flavor.

**Show Perfection.** *88 days.* This pea was introduced by Sutton Seeds in England in 1957, a cross between Sutton's Achievement and Evergreen. Very productive over an extended season on 6-foot vines. Excellent sweet flavor.

**Spanish Skyscraper.** *91 days.* Give these 7-foot vines lots of support, for they will be loaded with light green pods containing sweet peas that ripen and produce for as long as a month if kept picked. This is supposedly a very old variety but has been bred by Canadian Ken Allan for many years to increase productivity.

**Two Hundredfold.** *50 days.* A very early pea on 3-foot vines. White flowers, 2 pods per node averaging 8 peas each. Foliage is dark green, pods are long, round, and slightly curved with very large, sweet, juicy peas. Ripens all at once.

**PEA/POD** *Pisum sativum***30 seeds per packet**

**Amish Snap.** *60–70 days.* An heirloom from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, this delicious snap pea will continue to produce over a 6-week period if kept picked. Vines are 6 feet tall, crisp pods are a delicate green and filled with 4 to 7 peas each.

**Arbogast Sugar.** *60 days.* Introduced before 1884, and most likely identical with Tall Sugar Pea, offered by David Landreth of Pennsylvania, this snap pea is tender and crisp when young. The vines grow to 6 feet, blossoms are purple, and the wrinkled seeds are speckled brown.

**Cascadia.** *65 days.* These sweet, succulent snap peas grow on 48-inch vines. The plentiful, fiberless pods measure 3½ inches. Plants are resistant to powdery mildew and pea enation virus. Developed by Dr. Jim Baggett of Oregon State University.

**Golden Sweet.** *65 days.* Gorgeous bicolor purple flowers give way to lemon yellow, translucent, flat pods on 6 to 8-foot vines. Best enjoyed when young, but the peas can also be used in soups if allowed to mature and dry on the vine. This is the only edible-podded pea with a yellow pod in the Seed Savers Exchange collection of over 1,200 pea varieties. Highly productive.

**Kefe Beinwil.** *60 days.* "Kefe" means snow pea. A Swiss heirloom grown for generations in the village of Beinwil, Aargau. This pea must be planted as early as possible for good results. The vines are 4½ feet high and bear diminutive pods of very delicate flavor from beautiful burgundy and pink blossoms. Moderately productive.

**Kiefel Vermeer.** *70 days.* A snow pea very similar to Schweizer Riesen, but growing on shorter, 3-foot vines. Pods are also 1 inch wide by 5 inches long, each containing 8 seeds. Purple flowers. Wonderfully tender and flavorful. From the Swiss seed saving organization ProSpecieRara.

**Schweizer Riesen.** *65 days.* "Swiss Giant". Huge, 1 by 5-inch, pale green, crunchy, juicy snow peas that curl as they grow and remain sweet and tender even as they mature. A fabulous variety, very productive over a long period. Vines are 5 feet tall.

**Shirk Family.** *80 days.* A small-podded snow pea, extremely prolific, growing on 4-foot vines. This pea comes from a Mennonite community in Michigan, where it was handed down in one family for many years. It should be harvested young, but any pods that don't get picked can be left both for next year's seed and for use as a soup pea.

**PEA/SOUP** *Pisum sativum***30 seeds per packet**

**Góroh.** *90 days.* An old variety from the Kaluzhskaya region of Russia. Very cold hardy, with 5-foot vines bearing smooth, round, beige peas, slightly smaller than Amplissimo. Simply let the pods dry on the vines, pick and thresh.

**PEPPER/HOT** *Capsicum annuum***30 seeds per packet**

**Flame Tongue.** This well-named variety was developed by seed saver Rod Trotter in Oregon. The tapered, slightly crimped and torqued fruits measure ½ by 1 inch and ripen to a brilliant red. Very hot. Plants grow to about 20 inches and are covered with fruits. Just a pinch of the dried peppers adds welcome heat to an array of dishes.

**Thai Hot.** Small, upright peppers borne on diminutive plants pack great, complex flavor in addition to considerable heat. Use in the green stage or allow them to ripen to a dark red for drying. Simply spread them out on a perforated drying rack in the sun or in a dry, well-ventilated spot. Remove seeds and ribs to lower heat intensity.

**PEPPER/SWEET** *Capsicum annuum***30 seeds per packet**

**Boldog Hungarian Spice.** A ¾-inch by 6-inch long, somewhat blocky but slender paprika pepper with intoxicating aroma and a touch of heat once dried and ground. The plants are robust and about 2 to 3 feet tall, bearing heavily close to the stems. Peppers start dark green, then ripen to a rich reddish-brown. The relatively thin flesh dries easily. Simply cut peppers in half lengthwise, scrape out the seeds, then arrange pepper halves on racks in the sun till dry. Take the racks in at night to prevent peppers from getting damp.

**Feherozon.** *90 days.* Conical, 3 by 5-inch fruits. Sweet, juicy, thick-walled fruits crowd the plants and ripen from pale yellow to deep orange. Pick at this stage and allow to finish ripening indoors to deep red. Keeps well at fully ripe stage. Protected plants produced till mid-November. An exceptional variety. Cut the ripe peppers in half, remove stems and seeds, grill them, peel them, and freeze for enjoying all winter.

**Sheepnose.** *75 days.* An Ohio heirloom from the family of Nick Rini. A pimento pepper, with flattened, lobed, cheese-shaped fruits, 3 inches wide, with very thick, meaty walls and sweet flavor. A prolific variety in Vermont, even without black plastic or rowcover. Fruits hold very well on the plant and after picking, staying fresh in the fridge for up to 10 days.

**RADISH** *Raphanus sativus***110 seeds per packet**

**French Breakfast.** *20–30 days.* A buttery-tender French heirloom radish from the 1880s, oblong in form, scarlet red at the top and white at the blunt tip. Succession sow all season for continuous harvest.

**RHUBARB** *Rheum rhabarbarum***50 seeds per packet**

*Rhubarb is very easy to start from seed. Wet the seeds thoroughly, then keep them moist for several days until they germinate. Pot up the sprouted ones in individual cells. Transplant to the garden when the starts have at least 4 true leaves. Start as many plants as you have space for; then choose the strongest ones that best represent the typical traits of the variety. To save seed, allow only one variety to bloom in a given year to prevent unwanted crossing.*

**Early Champagne.** This is a pre-1860s English variety, with fanciful, very ruffled leaves and slender, pale green stems the color of unripe gooseberries, originally used for sparkling rhubarb wine. Very productive over a long season, going dormant later than other varieties.

**Glaskin's Perpetual.** An English heirloom from the 1920s with wide stems that vary somewhat in color from greenish-red to pink. An early and long-season producer with excellent flavor for a wide range of applications.

**RUTABAGA** *Brassica napobrassica***250 seeds per packet**

**American Purple Top.** *80–120 days.* A highly undervalued winter vegetable. Much sweeter and less sharp than turnips, rutabagas are versatile and packed with nutrition. This variety is nearly globe shaped, 4 to 6 inches in diameter or larger, with firm, fine-grained, sweet light-yellow flesh and a small taproot. Rutabagas store exceedingly well in the root cellar.

## RUTABAGA *(continued)*

250 seeds per packet

**Fortin's Family.** *100–120 days.* An heirloom from Québec, this is a variety of outstandingly sweet and full flavor. It appears to have some insect and disease resistance and is an excellent winter keeper. Direct sow early in the season and space generously to give the plants time to size up well.

**Laurentian.** *90–120 days.* A Canadian variety that also goes by Laurentian Purple Top, Laurentian Golden, Laurentian Swede or Perfect Model, but is an improved American Purple Top. The creamy-yellow, 4 to 6-inch globe roots have outstandingly sweet flavor, deep purplish red tops, no side shoots, and store exceptionally well. Roast or steam, purée, then combine with mashed potatoes. Yum.

## SALSIFY *Tragopogon porrifolius*

50 seeds per packet

**Lüthy.** Salsify is closely related to scorzonera, but is a separate species. The root is tapered and resembles a parsnip in shape and color. The flavor is creamy smooth, often compared to that of oysters. This Swiss heirloom, originating in Clairvaux-les-Lacs in the French Jura, has spectacularly beautiful blue/purple flowers which appear in the second year. Peel the roots, drop them into acidulated water, then steam, roast, bake them with a cream sauce, or purée them for a delicate treat. Salsify is extremely hardy and will overwinter without protection.

## SCORZONERA *Scorzonera hispanica*

50 seeds per packet

**Hoffmann's Schwarze Pfahl.** *140 days.* An old vegetable variety much loved in Europe for its buttery, almost oyster-like flavor, scorzonera is even less likely to be known here than its near cousin salsify. But this long, cylindrical, slender root with rough dark brown (almost black, hence its other name Black Salsify) skin and creamy flesh should be more widely grown. It is subtle and luxurious simply steamed in butter, or—to gild the lily—in a cream sauce. This variety came from the Amana colonies of the Midwest, but originated in Germany where it was a popular market variety for its uniform shape and good performance. The roots will easily overwinter in the garden and are still tender and flavorful in the second year. The very young leaves of spring can be added to a salad, and the roots keep well in a root cellar. Scorzonera is a perennial so you can establish one planting for a continuous supply of seeds—which will be produced in the second year—while planting a separate bed for eating.

## SORGHUM *Sorghum bicolor*

70 seeds per packet

*In my quest to find staple crops that we can grow easily in Vermont and that will broaden our diet, I've been experimenting with a variety of different grains. Sorghum comes in four versions: grain, sweet, dual purpose (grain and sweet), and broom. Grain sorghum can be ground into flour and used in baking, or it can be an ingredient in poultry feed. Sweet sorghum can be processed into a molasses-like syrup. Broom corn will allow us to make our own brooms again rather than importing them from a distant location!*

**Black African.** *90 days.* An early-maturing grain variety, plants are about 7 feet tall, heads are slender and bear beautiful, glossy black pointy seeds.

**Dwarf Mayo.** *120 days.* Technically a broom corn, but the seeds are so beautiful, multi-colored, and easy to thresh that they make a wonderful grain as well. Of all the trialed sorghums, this was the easiest to harvest since the plants are no more than about 6 feet tall. Come time to test seed for ripeness, you don't have to bend lengthy stems to pinch the seed. Long panicles on thick heads are ideal for making your own brooms. Given lots of space this variety will tiller heavily, producing a second tier of heads, about 4 feet in height and later to mature.

**Iowa Red.** *116 days.* Brick-colored seed on 10-foot plants. A gorgeous and very productive broom corn with red-tinged bristles.

**Lesotho.** *102 days.* An 8-foot tall grain sorghum with pale, round, ivory-colored seeds. The beauty of this exceptionally productive variety is that it is virtually without the tough seed coat that is often difficult to remove in other varieties. Grinds to a flavorful flour for use in pancakes, cookies, and breads. In Africa, sorghum is one of the most widely grown crops, used for both human and livestock feed, and in the brewing of beer.

**SORGHUM** *(continued)***70 seeds per packet**

**Mennonite.** *130 days.* A productive, dual-purpose heirloom variety from Missouri. Stunning, multi-tillered plants reach 10 feet. Brick-colored round grains can be ground into flour and canes can be processed into a sweet, light syrup.

**White Broom Corn.** *116 days.* This strain originated in Old Sturbridge Village, Massachusetts, and is the one from which brooms were made in early America. Another multi-purpose sorghum with 9-foot stalks and creamy tan seed that can also be used for poultry feed. The long bristles are outstanding for broom making.

**SPINACH** *Spinacia oleracea***150 seeds per packet**

**Haldenstein.** Named after the Swiss village in the canton of Graubünden where it has been grown out by virtually the entire population since before WWI, this winter variety does well if planted in the fall and allowed to overwinter in the ground. Large, deep green, moderately smooth, heart-shaped, pointed leaves, mild flavor. The prickly seeds indicate an old variety.

**SQUASH/MAXIMA** *Cucurbita maxima***30 seeds per packet**

**Red Kuri.** *90–95 days.* “Kuri” means chestnut in Japanese, and this might well describe its flavor. A tear-shaped winter squash with brittle, bright orange-red skin and deep orange, dry, nutty, delicious flesh. A beauty that holds its color when steamed. Fruits can reach 5 pounds. Mature, large squashes grown under favorable conditions, well cured, and stored at the proper temperature can keep for up to a year. Roast it with red onions, layer it in lasagne, or use it to make squash-flavored pasta or gnocchi.

**SQUASH/MOSCHATA** *Cucurbita moschata***30 seeds per packet**

**Musquée de Provence.** *90–100 days.* In a Vermont garden the vines of this French heirloom “cheese” squash will grow to about 20 feet and fruits will reach about 17 pounds. The heavily ribbed, flattened, green-ripening-to-ochre squashes have leathery skin with a milky cast. Very few seeds. The flesh is very moist, somewhat sweet and almost cantaloupe-colored. Its unusual flavor makes it a perfect partner for fruit in soups.

**SQUASH/PEPO** *Cucurbita pepo***30 seeds per packet**

**Black Beauty.** *44–64 days.* Glossy, black-green zucchini with creamy-white, fine-flavored, dense, very tender flesh, best harvested at 6 to 8 inches. Productive, open, upright plants will bear till frost. Introduced to US markets in the 1920s. An excellent variety for freezing.

**Golden.** *60 days.* A gorgeous, brilliant golden zucchini producing abundantly on bush-habit plants. There are very few open-pollinated yellow summer squash, and this one is exceptional in appearance, productivity, and flavor. The fruits are evenly yellow, tender to about 8 inches in length, and have a slight curve at the neck. The plants seem to be quite resistant to powdery mildew. Developed at Rutgers and introduced in 1973.

**Lebanese Light Green.** *50–55 days.* Ghostly light green in color with faint streaking, a bit wider at the blossom end, these dense and nutty-flavored zucchini will produce copiously until frost if kept picked. Plants have a tendency to branch and vine, making this an unusually productive variety. Fabulous grilled. Thin slices can be dried into chips with a surprisingly sweet flavor.

**TOMATO/ORANGE-YELLOW** *Solanum lycopersicum***50 seeds per packet**

**Jaune de Chardonne.** *80 days.* Indeterminate. A Swiss landrace, not commercially grown, collected originally from a farmers' market in Vevey. Lemon yellow and the size and shape of a plum, these juicy, sweet beauties are borne abundantly on heavy vines. In the early stages of ripeness Jaune can be used for drying.

**Ola Polka.** *70 days.* Determinate. Very compact, densely fruited plants with very dark green leaves. Fruits, weighing 2 ounces each, are perfectly round, pale yellow, juicy, and with a pleasant, mild flavor. One of three varieties I succession planted in the greenhouse. Seed originally obtained by seed saving pal Andrey in Belarus from a Polish commercial source.

**Orange Banana.** *79 days.* Indeterminate. Perfectly and uniformly apricot-colored, these elongated 3-ounce plum tomatoes are very productive and adapted to a wide range of uses from drying to sauces to fresh eating. Unusually full and sweet flavor for a "paste" tomato. Smooth-skinned and crack-free.

**Orange Queen.** *92 days.* Indeterminate. Round, softball-sized, 12 to 15 ounces each, deep golden orange color, late-ripening, with a rich flavor and ability to hold very well even at the ripe stage on or off the plant.

**Sweet Orange II.** *55 days.* Indeterminate. A round, crack-free, sweet-flavored, deep orange cherry tomato to rival Sungold in every regard. Huge yields on vigorous, disease-resistant vines. This is another introduction by Tim Peters of Peters Seed and Research. A family will need only one plant for a steady supply of bite-size tomatoes until frost.

**Zolotoe Serdtse.** *65–70 days.* Determinate. Don't ask me how to pronounce this. Translates from Russian as "heart of gold". Oxheart-shaped, smooth, crack-free, plump 6-ounce fruits are uniformly clementine orange, have a great zingy sweet/tart flavor and a little point at the bottom. Ripens early on compact plants. From a seed saver in Belarus.

**TOMATO/PINK-PURPLE** *Solanum lycopersicum***50 seeds per packet**

**Eva Purple Ball.** *65 days.* Indeterminate. Really more pink than purple. A late 1800s heirloom from the Black Forest region of Germany. Perfectly smooth, blemish-free 5-ounce fruits have a luscious, sweet, juicy flavor.

**Gezahnte Tomate Bührer-Keel.** *80 days.* Indeterminate. Its name means "toothed tomato," but I'd like to call it Concertina. Very deeply pleated so that slices are almost star-shaped. Pinkish in color, with a very thin skin and sweet, mild flavor. Fruits are irregular in size and shape and are borne heavily on vigorous vines. Could originally be an Italian variety from the region near Naples.

**Rose de Berne.** *80 days.* Indeterminate. One of the best. An heirloom from Switzerland of outstanding quality. Round, somewhat flattened, very smooth, uniform, blemish- and crack-free, extremely productive, 6-ounce, pink, thin-skinned tomatoes of superior sweet and juicy flavor.

**Togo Trefle.** *70 days.* Indeterminate. A rare heirloom from Togo, West Africa. Small, flattened, ribbed, ½-ounce fruits. A heavy producer with excellent rich sweet/tart taste and some variation in size, shape, and color. Extremely hardy and very tolerant of drought and heat.

**TOMATO/RED** *Solanum lycopersicum***50 seeds per packet**

**Amish Paste.** *80 days.* Indeterminate. An heirloom from Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Acorn- or heart-shaped with deep red color and intense tomatoey flavor. Meaty with few seeds, thick flesh, and 8 to 12-ounce fruits. Excellent for fresh eating or canning. A succulent choice—along with homegrown celery!—for the Italian bread and tomato salad *panzanella*.

**Baselbieter Röteli.** *70 days.* Indeterminate. From the Basel region of Switzerland. A small, blocky, 2-ounce plum tomato borne abundantly in large clusters. Very good taste, even in a year when the weather made it difficult to judge tomato flavor. Excellent for fresh eating, drying, or canning. Juicier and smaller than Royal Chico.

**Burbank.** *70 days.* Determinate. Medium-size, 3-ounce fruits, round, smooth, uniform, with good flavor and good drought resistance. Developed by Luther Burbank around 1915, with the highest total free amino acids of all tomatoes tested.



**Ganti.** 65 days. Semi-determinate. A Hungarian heirloom. An excellent tomato with tart, full-bodied flavor. Bright red, round, uniform 4 to 5-ounce fruits. One of my favorites.

**Kathleen's Wild Sweet Cherry.** 50 days. Indeterminate. This tiny, intensely tart/sweet ¾-inch cherry tomato was given to me by a friend who gardens in a community garden in Brooklyn. The rangy vines are loaded with clusters of 7 fruits that show no signs of cracking even after torrential rains. Ripens over a long period for a continual harvest, and delivers more flavor than I've ever encountered in a cherry tomato. Extraordinarily resistant to late blight.

**Kron-Prince.** 70–75 days. Indeterminate. The variety originated in India, but my seed came from a seed saver in Belarus. Very unusual tomato, borne in huge clusters of up to 20 3-ounce fruits, this amazingly productive, charming multi-purpose tomato is uniform in size, firm-fleshed, completely crack-free, heart-shaped with a pointed end. Juicy enough for fresh eating, but excellent for drying or a richly flavored sauce.

**Küssnacht.** 75 days. Indeterminate. An heirloom from the town of Küssnacht on the Lake of Lucerne in central Switzerland. Somewhat squat, irregularly lobed fruits weigh 3 to 8 ounces, are intensely flavorful and a deep, even red.

**Lyana.** 65 days. Determinate. One of the earliest varieties. High yield of very uniform, round, solid red, crack-free 3-ounce fruits on compact, 3-foot plants. Good flavor. Of Moldovan origin, bred by Prindestrovie Research Agricultural Institute. Succession planted in the greenhouse for fall eating.

**Muchamiel.** 75 days. A meaty tomato originally from Alicante on the Mediterranean coast of southern Spain, where it is cultivated as a winter crop, giving it some tolerance to cool conditions. The flattened, heavily ribbed, 7 to 11-ounce fruits have a very fine flavor. From ProSpecieRara.

**Old Fashioned Garden Peach.** 80 days. Semi-determinate. A so-called keeping tomato, which generally refers to a late-maturing, relatively thick-skinned, firm-fleshed tomato that holds well after picking. This is a globe-shaped, smooth-skinned, crack-free, 4-ounce tomato with better flavor than other keepers.

**Pomodorini di Sardegna.** 70 days. Indeterminate. A tiny, pear-shaped plum from Sardinia, growing in elongated clusters of up to 16 fruits. Rangy vines produce copious numbers of bright red, glossy, ½-ounce fruits over a long season. Like other cherries, it showed considerable resistance to late blight. Halved and dried, these beauties make bite-size “chips.”

**Royal Chico.** 85 days. Determinate. Compact and vigorous vines bear heavy yields of large, blocky plum tomatoes with firm, bright red, meaty flesh. Ideal for drying and one of the best for canning. This is a late-ripening tomato and it is possible, if frost threatens, to pull up entire plants, hang them upside down in the cellar, and allow the remaining tomatoes to ripen over time.

**Skorokhod.** 65 days. Determinate. Somewhat flattened, faintly ribbed, 2 to 4-ounce fruits with slightly green shoulders and firm texture. Good flavor. Another very early variety that did well as a succession planting in the greenhouse.

**South American Banana.** 90 days. Indeterminate. This very large, 5 to 6-inch, elongated tomato resembles San Marzano, but is not quite as blocky. A stellar canning tomato, with outstanding flavor, thin skin, few seeds, and good yield if you can wait for it to ripen!

**Thessaloniki.** 80 days. Indeterminate. Glecklers Seedsmen of Ohio introduced this Greek variety to the U.S. in the 1950s. Firm, uniform, crack-free 6-ounce fruits with superior flavor. Perfectly globe-shaped, this productive mid-season tomato would make an excellent choice for markets.

## TOMATO/OTHER COLORS *Solanum lycopersicum*

50 seeds per packet

**Indian.** 80 days. Indeterminate. What some might call a “black” or “bronze” tomato, this one is actually two-tone, with a purply underside and green shoulders when ripe. The interior is deep bronze. A gorgeous tomato with a fine, tangy flavor, 8 to 10-ounce fruits, and a moderate yield.

**White Delight.** 80 days. Indeterminate. Ivory white, 6 to 7-ounce fruits, tending toward lemon yellow on the shoulders. This is a somewhat flattened, faintly lobed variety with outstanding flavor and some variation in size and shape. My first seed came from Ruth Joly of Windsor Road Nursery in Claremont, New Hampshire, who has been growing it for many years. It was originally a commercial variety, perhaps sold under this name, but so far I have been unable to find any further historical information.

## TOMATO/OTHER COLORS *(continued)*

50 seeds per packet

**Yellow Out Red In.** *99 days.* Semi-determinate. Another keeping tomato, this one providing fresh tomatoes into January if stored carefully. Uniform in size, crack-free, very productive late-ripening tomato with pale yellow skin and a peachy-pink interior. Pick just when beginning to turn in color, lay in flats, tuck into the root cellar, and allow to ripen over time.

## WATERMELON *Citrullus lanatus*

25 seeds per packet

**Golden Midget.** *80 days.* Developed by famed New Hampshire plant breeder Elwyn Meader, and introduced in 1959, this diminutive, very early, perfectly round watermelon ripens to a golden yellow. The pink/red flesh is sweet and flavorful. Average weight is about 1½ pounds. An excellent choice where space is limited.

**Orangeglo.** *85–100 days.* Large, oblong fruits with light-green rind and dark, jagged markings produced on sturdy, wilt-resistant vines. The bright orange flesh is crisp, full of flavor, and almost addictively sweet. In my garden, fruits reached about 17 pounds, but they can grow to 25. Makes a fabulous smoothie with homemade yogurt and fresh raspberries.

## MISCELLANEOUS

**Caraway.** *Biennial.* Now that we are all making our own sauerkraut, we need caraway to flavor it, right? This aromatic and very hardy biennial will produce delicately flavored leaves in the first year, and seed in the second. Establish a bed in one corner of your garden. The plants will self-sow and offer a steady crop of seeds in subsequent years. Fantastic on roasted potatoes, or, of course, baked into rye bread. **100 seeds per packet.**

**Cilantro Standby.** *45 days.* This variety was bred by Tim Peters of Peters Seed and Research, a small seed company with over 20 years of careful breeding and preservation experience. Standby was developed for fall sowing and is extremely cold hardy and slow to bolt. The seeds of cilantro are, of course, coriander and, when freshly ground, are particularly aromatic. So this crop is a twofer. **65 seeds per packet.**

**Fennel selvatico.** *Hardy perennial.* This is a non-bulbing fennel grown for its highly aromatic seed. Start indoors at the end of March, plant out in early May. Allow plenty of room since the mature plants reach impressive dimensions. The seeds will ripen over a long season, so be prepared to harvest repeatedly. This is the classic fennel used to season Italian sausage. Each seed produces two seedlings. **100 seeds per packet.**

**Poppy Monticello.** An annual breadseed poppy originally grown by Thomas Jefferson. The large, floppy flowers are a beautiful, scarlet color with indigo blotches near the center. Best sown in the fall. Allow the seed pods to mature and dry on the stem, then shake out the seeds. Poppies readily self-sow. For seed saving plant only one variety a year to avoid crossing. **Hundreds of seeds per packet.**

## BARLEY/HULLESS *Hordeum vulgare*

60 seeds per packet

*Barley is an ancient food that now still ranks fourth in the world among cereal crops in terms of quantity grown and area devoted to cultivation. Its nutritional content and benefits are hard to overstate. It is easy to grow, easy to thresh, delicious and satisfying in its whole form. Plant as early in the season as possible—mid-April in our area—in moderately fertile soil, spacing seeds about 3 inches apart at a depth of 1 to 2 inches. Thresh by rubbing between your gloved hands, then winnow on a breezy day. Grains can be ground into flour for a dark, dense bread, cracked for a meaty hot breakfast cereal, or cooked whole for adding to soups or making into grain salads. Soak the grains several hours, then cook in ample water till tender.*

**Arabian Blue.** *104 days.* An awned, 6-row variety with deep purple grains and an average of 48 grains per head. Very easily threshed.

**Burbank.** *90 days.* Golden brown grains arranged in 6 rows on awned heads. Relatively large grains, plant height is 41 inches. A very productive variety that is easy to thresh. Introduced by Luther Burbank in 1920.

**Faust.** *80–100 days.* Awnless heads with an average of 45 grains each growing in 6 rows. The grains are a dark toasty gray-brown. Very easily threshed.

**BARLEY/HULLESS** *(continued)***60 seeds per packet**

**Naked.** *85 days.* Blond grains on 2-row awned heads. Very productive and very easy to thresh.

**Valsgergerste.** *96 days.* Originating in the town of Vals, canton Graubünden, Switzerland, this is a 6-row variety, with long awns and narrow, slender, elongated grains. Averaging 43 grains per head with a height of 36 inches. Very easily threshed.

**OATS/HULLESS** *Avena sativa***100 seeds per packet**

*Oats are very easy to grow in the home garden. Plant as early as possible and harvest when the stems begin to turn golden. All three of these varieties proved especially easy to thresh. Hold a sheaf in one hand and smack the heads on the inside of a tall bucket. Then winnow on a sheet pan.*

**Mozart.** *108 days.* 39 inches tall.

**Nusso.** *108 days.* An old Swiss variety. 3 feet tall.

**Terra Hulless.** *108 days.* High-yielding variety with large grains. 3 feet tall. Among the easiest to thresh.

**RICE** *Oryza sativa***50 seeds per packet**

*After several years of trialing upland—or dry land—rice varieties, this is the only one that has consistently produced ripe seed.*

**Duborskian.** *120 days.* A short grain, short season, hardy upland or paddy rice originally from Russia. This is a variety that has been grown successfully in various parts of New England. Seed should be soaked in water in early April till it sprouts, then transplanted to individual plugs. Wait till after all danger of frost, then plant in the warmest part of your garden, and keep well watered throughout the season. Harvest when seed fills out and turns firm and golden.

**Loto.** *110 days.* A cultivar developed in Emilia-Romagna, Italy. This is an extremely promising variety for cultivation in Vermont. A risotto rice, but the grains are slightly less starchy than Arborio, Vialone, or Carnaroli, so the resulting dish is not quite as creamy as classic risotto. Plants are low-growing, with the tallest measuring 25 inches, sturdy, upright, lush, and producing on average 35 tillers per plant, with around 73 seeds per panicle. In other words a highly productive, early variety. Panicles stay upright almost to the end of the ripening stage.

**RYE** *Secale cereale***100 seeds per packet**

**Perennial Rye Mountaineer.** Perennial grains offer many advantages. Because their roots extend deeper than those of annuals, they stabilize the soil, reduce erosion, reduce the need for fertilizer application, bring nutrients up to the surface, and, of course, provide a harvest over several years without requiring re-planting. Bred by Tim Peters, this variety produces slender, shatter-resistant heads, with delicate stalks almost 6 feet tall. Easily threshed. Good for poor soils. Plant in the fall for seed the following spring. Unlike most other grains, rye varieties will cross-pollinate, so for pure seed be sure to isolate from annual rye.

**Val Peccia.** *113 days.* This rye was found in the possession of two elderly sisters in Val Peccia, the highest side valley of the Maggia River in southern, Italian-speaking, Switzerland. At that elevation the rye grows to about 3 feet, however in a Vermont garden it will reach twice that height. Originally grown primarily for its straw, the long, slender stems were braided and wrapped around wheels of cheese. The cheeses were then stacked and bound together for shipment by mail into the lower valleys. The grain was also used for baking bread, and as our awareness increases of the nutritional value of rye breads, these older varieties deserve a closer look.

*Winter wheats tend to be more productive than spring wheats. Because they are planted in the fall, they save time in the spring when so much needs to be done in the garden. Ripening in mid-summer allows them to escape some of the disease pressures that afflict later-ripening spring wheats. Plus, their early emergence and dense foliage help suppress weeds. Superb flavor and baking qualities add to their desirable features. Plant winter wheats before September 15th, in moderately fertile, well-worked soil. Ideally, seeds should be sown about 8 to 12 inches apart in all directions, at a depth of about 1 to 2 inches. Closer spacing will mean less tillering and a slightly lower yield.*

**Maris Wigeon.** Developed in 1964 by the Plant Breeding Institute in Cambridge, England, this semi-hard winter wheat has excellent bread-baking qualities. Good yield on awnless heads, strong straw with little tendency to lodge.

**Sirvinta.** A hard winter variety from Lithuania, introduced in 1989. A beautiful, awnless, very productive variety with fat, easy-to-thresh golden heads on golden stems growing to 5 feet. The only winter wheat I've grown that does not lodge. Excellent cold tolerance. Despite only average protein content, Sirvinta has outstanding baking qualities.

**Ukrainka.** This hard red winter wheat was developed in 1924 at the Mironovka Experimental Selection Station—now called the Mironovka Institute of Wheat Selection and Seed Production—110 km south of Kiev. Plants are 51 inches tall, heavily tillered, very productive. Plump grains are dark tan and ripen in mid-July. Excellent milling and bread-making qualities.

**Vermont Read 1898.** A soft white winter wheat, originally released in 1895 by G.A. Read of Charlotte, Vermont. A hybrid of Canadian heritage varieties Bearded Fife x Early Arcadian with plump, blond grains. Very productive, multi-tillered 49-inch plants with an unusually-shaped seed head that is typical of a club wheat, i.e. slightly denser at the tip. Ripening in mid-July.

