

Saving Vegetable Seeds

Vegetable	Cycle	Pollination	Pollinator	Isolation Distance	Seed Longevity	Notes	Source
Bean	A	Self		100'	2-3 yrs	Lose vigor rapidly.	Fedco Seeds
Soybean	A	Self		100'	2-3 yrs	Space farther apart than for market crops.	Fedco Seeds
Beet/Chard	B	Cross	Wind	1/2 mi	3-5 yrs	Beets cross with chards.	Fedco Seeds
Broccoli/Kale/Cauliflower	B	Cross	Insects	1/2 mi	3-5 yrs	Hot-water treated seeds last only 1 yr. Crossing among brassica species is complex, consult a good reference book.	Fedco Seeds
Carrot	B	Cross	Insects	1500'	2-3 yrs	Crosses with wild species.	Fedco Seeds
Celery	B	Cross	Insects	1500'	2-3 yrs		Fedco Seeds
Corn	A	Cross	Wind	1/2 mi	2-3 yrs	Adequate population essential.	Fedco Seeds
Cucumber	A	Cross	Insects	1500'	5-10 yrs	Harvest at yellow blimp stage.	Fedco Seeds
Dill	A	Cross	Insects	1 mile	3 years	Also self-fertile, but cross-pollination is more robust	Global Seed Network
Eggplant	A	Self		150'	2-3 yrs		Fedco Seeds
Leek	B	Cross	Insects	1500'	2 yrs		Fedco Seeds
Onion	B	Cross	Insects	1500'	1 yr		Fedco Seeds
Lettuce	A	Self		50'	2-3 yrs	Start indoors, need long season for seed.	Fedco Seeds
Melon	A	Cross	Insects	1500'	5-10 yrs	Muskmelons will not cross with watermelons.	Fedco Seeds
Mustard	A	Cross	Insects	1/2 mi	3-5 yrs	Crosses with wild species.	Fedco Seeds
Pea	A	Self		50'	2-3 yrs	Do not save seed from diseased plants.	Fedco Seeds
Pepper	A	both	Insects	500'	2-3 yrs	Some varieties cross more readily than others.	Fedco Seeds
Radish	A	Cross	Insects	1500'	3-5 yrs		Fedco Seeds
Spinach	A	Cross	Wind	1/2 mile	2-3 years	Separate male and female plants; 10+ plants under wind-proof bag, move to ensure pollination	Global Seed Network
Squash/Pumpkin	A	Cross	Insects	1500'	2-5 yrs	Moschata 2-3 yrs, pepo & maxima 3-5 yrs. These three species generally do not cross.	Fedco Seeds
Tomato	A	Self		25'-100'	5-10 yrs	Potato-leaf types need the greater isolation distance.	Fedco Seeds

A=annual, B=biennial Self=self-pollinated, Cross=cross-pollinated by another plant
 Crossers require minimum populations (genetic diversity) to maintain vigor.
 Isolation distance helps to prevent unwanted cross-pollination between varieties.