

What You Can Do To Preserve Open-Pollinated Seeds

from *The Seed Underground: A Growing Revolution to Save Food* by Janisse Ray

(Chelsea Green Publishing, 2012)

Eat real food.

Learn to cook it. If you are eating processed food, you are electing for agribusiness to feed you, and you will not be supporting the preservation of heritage seeds or yourself.

“Cooking outweighs class as a predictor of a healthy diet,” said Michael Pollan.

Buy organic food. Organic regulations currently prohibit the use of GM.

Ask your local farmer or grocery store manager if the foods they are selling are GM.

Grow a garden.

Try to grow, between yourself and your friends, as much food as you consume. Make a trip to the supermarket a strange and intolerable experience.

Become a farmer.

Become a young farmer.

Become an elder farmer.

Become a girl farmer.

Become a small farmer.

Become an aspiring farmer.

Grow open-source seeds.

Buy them from small, independent seed companies.

Buy organic seed.

Save your own seeds.

Trade seeds within your community.

Learn to hand-pollinate.

Select plants for seed saving based on your locality and conditions.

Learn to breed seed.

Never grow GM seed.

Nourish your pets and farm animals with non-GM feed.

Promote your local farmers market and farmers markets in general.

Become a seed activist.

Work for local and national sovereignty over seeds.

Work to make the United States a GM-free nation.

Work to refocus agricultural experiment stations.

Work to retrain extension agents in organic, seed-based, low-input systems.

When the Farm Bill is up for reauthorization, work to have it represent small and organic farmers, not Big Ag.

Work for the rights of small farmers.

Work for the intellectual property rights of indigenous farmers.

Educate others about the importance of open-pollinated seeds.

Help pass a food sovereignty ordinance in your village, city, county, or state.

Succeed in passing laws requiring GM foods to be labeled in your state and country.

“Be joyful although you’ve considered all the facts.”

—Wendell Berry, “Manifesto: The Mad Farmer Liberation Front,” from *The Country of Marriage*

Farmer Rights

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We sustainable farmers understand that we do not own life. We believe that farmers should have the right

to good food

to food sovereignty

to grow and share seed year to year, generation to generation

to the free exchange of genetic material among ourselves

to define our own agricultural policies

to choose diversity

to grow what we choose in the manner we choose without being subjected to chemical overspray, pollution residue, coal ash, and genetic drift

to sell what we grow, as long as it's safe, in the manner we see fit

to sell fresh, raw milk

to a food distribution system that does not displace families, farmers, animals, or wipe out indigenous peoples, landraces, and food customs

to offer leftover produce to gleaners

to be free of regulations sponsored by Big Ag designed to put us out of business

to be protected from sprawl and other development that threatens to swallow our farms

to economic security

Fedco has a great seed-saving guide online.
Here's the link to it:

<http://www.fedcoseeds.com/forms/seedschool.pdf>