

Seed Saving Instructions

Fall Lesson 4 - Grade 5 requires the following preparation before teaching the lessons:

1) About 5-6 days before the lesson:

Do the following preparation with enough seeds so that there are at least 10 seeds per student:

- Cut a few tomatoes in half across the middle. With a spoon, scoop seeds from the ripe fruits out of the flesh and into a cup. Add a very little bit of water (just a few tablespoons).
- Cover the container with a piece of plastic-wrap and then poke the plastic-wrap with a paring knife or pen point to put a small hole in it.
- Place the container of seeds in a warm location (65°-75°F).
- For the next day or two, move the seeds around and replace the plastic-wrap each time (remember to poke holes in the new plastic-wrap).
- You will start to notice some fungus starting to grow on the seeds.
 - Why do we let mold grow on the seeds?
 - A layer of fungus eats the coat that surrounds each seed and prevents it from beginning to grow (germination). It also produces antibiotics that help to control diseases that could form on the seeds.

2) About 2-3 days before the lesson:

Do the following preparation with seeds from new tomatoes (not the ones you have already set aside). You should have enough seeds so there are at least 10 seeds per student:

- Cut a few tomatoes in half across the middle. With a spoon, scoop seeds from the ripe fruits out of the flesh and into a cup. Add a very little bit of water (just a few tablespoons).
- Cover the container with a piece of plastic-wrap and then poke the plastic-wrap with a paring knife or pen point to put a small hole in it.
- Place the container of seeds in a warm location (65°-75°F).
- For the next day or two, move the seeds around and replace the plastic-wrap each time (remember to poke holes in the new plastic-wrap).
- With the first round of seeds you prepared (Step 1 above), do the following:
 - Take the container of fermented seeds to the sink and with a spoon carefully remove the scummy surface. Pour the container's contents into a strainer and rinse the seeds with water many times. If you do not have a strainer, you can do this by hand, but make sure to get them as clean as possible. Note: The seeds that sink are more viable.
 - Remove as much water from them as possible.
 - Line an open plate with a piece of wax paper and place the seeds on to the paper. Spread them out evenly so they are in a single layer. Place the plate in a safe location where the seeds can dry for a few days.
 - Every day, move the seeds around, making sure they are always in one layer.

On the day of the lesson:

Bring the seeds from Step 1 (prepared 5-6 days earlier) and the seeds from Step 2 (prepared 2-3 days earlier) to the class. For the seeds from Step 1 (prepared 5-6 days earlier), the students will each take those home in an envelope. For the seeds from Step 2 (prepared 2-3 days earlier), each group within the class will receive a cup of these seeds as they go through the Seed Saving Activity.