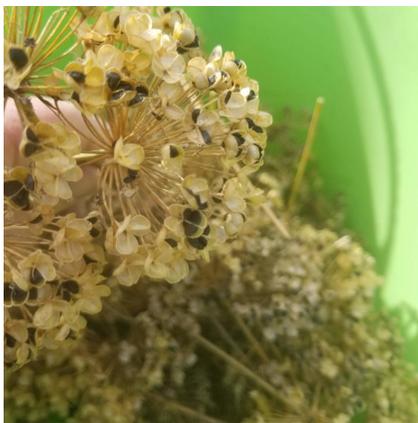


Greetings!

Are seed catalogs starting to arrive in your mailbox? I already have a tall stack of colorful catalogs begging for my attention - and money. But before I dive in with dreams, plans and a budget for next year's garden, I'm gathering thousands of 'free' seeds from the farm to use for next year's plants.



Yesterday I gleaned Garlic Chive, aka Chinese Leeks (pictured here) and Large Leaf Italian Parsley seeds from their scapes and planted them for spring plant sales. Bonus: the dried scapes will be used in dried floral arrangements.

Seed saving has always been a part of our plan at Windcrest Farm. The last two years of national seed shortages, plus our goal of becoming even more sustainable, has pushed saving seed up our priority list of farm tasks.

Seed saving isn't difficult, but it does require planning ahead - and that planning starts now, by selecting the right seeds and/or plants to start with.

Here are four things to keep in mind if you plan to save your own seed:

1. **Choose plant varieties that are listed as 'open-pollinated'** as your seed producing plants, and not 'hybrid' varieties. Seed catalogs and good nurseries will note which varieties are open-pollinated with notations such of 'OP' or sometimes call them 'heirloom' varieties. Hybrid varieties will have the notation of 'F1' and seeds saved from these varieties will not produce the same plant characteristics as the plant the seed was saved from.
2. **Understand how your plant is pollinated.** Some plants self-pollinate, while others require another plant to exchange pollen with. Knowing what your plant requires in order to produce seeds helps with Item #3 below.
3. **Keep plant isolation distances** in mind. Many plant types require a distance between different varieties to prevent cross-pollination. This means you will need to plan and plant your seed producing varieties based on isolation distances.
4. **Know when a seed is mature for gathering.** Immature seeds will not sprout and grow your next crop. The time to harvest fruit and flower seeds is long after the time you would harvest the same fruit and flowers for eating or fresh use.

Happy Seed Shopping!

On The Farm

Beginning in late November, the pace at the farm turns from the rush of production to a time for reflection and much needed rest, with bursts of renovation and repair in between. Our seed starting greenhouse, known as Little Greenhouse (LG) got a new plastic covering and the wood framing boards were replaced by aluminum. Ray has been re-wiring LG as well as making other upgrades and improvements. The on-farm Garden Center, which was created this April, continues to expand and evolve and will be ready to welcome more visitors in 2022.

We are re-opening the Windcrest Learn & Grow Garden School in 2022. We have welcomed so many new gardeners into our world during the pandemic and we are excited to offer our support to both new and seasoned gardeners with fundamental and advanced workshops and some creative classes as well. With all there is to offer, I will devote an entire newsletter to our 2022 classes.

Speaking of creative, in addition to finishing 2021 paperwork and planning for 2022, I'm taking some time to be creative as well as productive. The '[Bloom Room](#)', which was also a 2021 addition to the farm, is still brimming with dried flowers and other beautiful plant material, so it's time to make some fun gifts and decorations. Below are a few examples of my Bloom Room Creations.



[Bloom Room Creations](#)



Windcrest Farm is located in Monroe, NC. Established in 1978, we provide Charlotte-metro families, farmers, restaurants and local businesses with USDA Certified Organic flowers, herbs, fruits, produce, and specialty products such as fresh baby ginger and turmeric.

If you have a special request, please let us know. Our Custom Grow program can help assure you get the freshest products grown just for you. Contact Mary at mroberts@WindcrestOrganics.com

Mary Roberts
The Second Season Farmer

Your comments help us create the best farm experiences and your reviews help others decide if our farm is the best in what we offer!

If you can take a moment to let us know your thoughts through a product review or comment, we would appreciate it.

To leave a review on Google, [click here](#) and click on the Review stars to enter your comments.

If you prefer to send your comments, reviews and/or questions directly, email Mary at mroberts@windcrestorganics.com.

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