

Bishop's Castle Community Seed Bank

Seed Saving: French & Runner Beans



- French beans are mostly self-pollinating, but should be planted 6-12 feet from other varieties to reduce accidental crossing
- Runner bean flowers need to be 'tripped' by wind or insects before the beans set, and are more likely to cross with other varieties grown nearby. Seed crops of runner bean should be at least 1/2 a mile away from any other varieties of runner bean.

Collecting Seeds:

- Allow the pods to mature fully on the plant until they start to yellow and dry out. In wet weather, collect the pods individually as they get to this stage.
- Spread in a dry place with good airflow until the pods are fully dry and brittle.
- Once dry, shell the beans and dry further. They're dry enough when they break when bitten, rather than leaving a dent.
- Label with the variety and date. If well-dried, and stored in a cool dark place in an airtight container, the beans will last around 3 years.



Seed Saving: Top Tips

- Only save open-pollinated varieties (not F1 Hybrids or GMOs).
- Save seed from healthy, strong mature plants
- Buildings, trees, and other barriers will limit insect flight patterns and wind pollination to a degree, but isolation cages can stop crossing.
- If on an open site such as an allotment, work with your neighbours to grow the same type of seed crop!
- Realseeds.co.uk and vitalseeds.co.uk provide lots of helpful resources and training.



Keeping Diversity Alive

Saving seed each season keeps the varieties and species alive, and allows the Seed Bank to grow and serve the community. These varieties are a part of our shared human heritage. Please keep them going. Content for this guide sourced from Realseeds.co.uk

The Bishop's Castle Community Seed Bank is an initiative of Food Forward BC, the Action Group driving our Community Food Resilience Strategy, and a part of the BC Climate Action Plan. Info from RealSeeds.co.uk

