



Seed Savers
EXCHANGE®

2018-19 GRATITUDE REPORT



Your support is making a difference.



Our mission is to conserve and promote America's culturally diverse but endangered garden and food crop heritage for future generations by collecting, growing, and sharing heirloom seeds and plants.

YOUR IMPACT

Because of you, Seed Savers Exchange is making a measurable difference for seeds and people all over the world. You are the reason our participatory work to preserve and share heirloom varieties continues to grow in scope—by growing heirloom, non-GMO vegetables, fruits, and flowers in gardens and on land across the continent and the world, we are all protecting the biodiversity of our food and garden heritage.

The Seed Savers Exchange 2018-19 Gratitude Report highlights what we have accomplished in the last year as a result of your generosity, and leads to where we are headed in the year to come with your continued support. We are grateful you are a part of our passionate community of supporters and partners in this work. And we are grateful for the many ways you have helped to build and sustain this amazing movement to safeguard heirloom seeds and the rich, beautiful, delicious diversity they add to our lives.

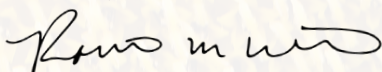


LETTER FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

This has been an incredibly transformative year, as we transitioned into a visionary and creative strategic planning process with community partners, our Board of Directors, and our insightful and talented staff. As a mature nonprofit, Seed Savers Exchange knows it is always of paramount importance to take the time to pause, reflect, and engage in ways that ensure our work continues to align with our mission, vision, and core values. Because of your continued support, we are able to confidently head towards our 50th anniversary with a clear vision of how to nourish our legacy of saving and sharing heritage seed in addition to cultivating seed literacy in our extended community.

I am thrilled to see the ways that our organization continues in the commitment to serve our culturally diverse communities, by engaging powerful projects like the Indigenous Seed Rematriation Program and the Citizen Science Corps. It has been incredibly heartwarming to bear witness to the impact of our seed restoration and preservation work in grassroots communities, activating fruitful intercultural collaboration that will nourish many well beyond our time. When the generosity of a seed guides our work, we have the capacity to grow an intergenerational legacy that is diverse and flavorful, and will offer us the resilience needed in the years to come. Thank you for being a part of this community.

Warmly,



Rowen White, Board Co-Chair

2018-19 HIGHLIGHTS

SUPPORTING AND EMPOWERING A COMMUNITY OF GARDENERS AND SEED SAVERS

Seed Savers Exchange enhanced the Exchange again last year—making your experience sharing open-pollinated, non-GMO varieties of seeds gardener-to-gardener even easier and more accessible! The open sharing of seeds has been a core value since

our founding and continues to be at the center of our mission. So in 2018 we added Kathryn Gilbery, Exchange and Outreach Coordinator, to our staff to work directly with the 383 (and growing) people who list over 11,000 varieties on the Exchange every year, as well as the thousands of gardeners, farmers, plant breeders, researchers, and others who request seeds from the Exchange for growing, germplasm, and more.

Please visit *exchange.seedsavers.org* to explore the online Exchange, and marvel at the immense diversity of seeds available.

In 2019, Kathryn is not only continuing to connect with past Exchange listers but

also reaching out to encourage new listers as well. She is talking with farmers and plant breeders about how they use the Exchange, and working to promote the resource as broadly as possible as we look toward fostering and supporting new generations of seed savers.



The cover of the 2019 Exchange print Yearbook, which is 504 pages this year. Thank you for your support of seed saving and sharing.



Bill McDorman stands in his corn grex patch outside of Flagstaff, Arizona. Because of you, SSE continues to foster the preservation and growing of heirloom seeds. Photo courtesy of Bill McDorman.

THE RISE OF HEIRLOOM SEEDS PROJECT

Seed Savers Exchange completed an exciting project in 2018 documenting the rise of the heirloom seed movement through the companies it fostered. Seed Savers Exchange has led the heirloom seed movement since 1975, and has inspired numerous other seed companies to specialize in rare, regionally adapted, delicious, and irreplaceable open-pollinated varieties. Many of these companies were founded by our own Seed Savers Exchange members using seeds accessed through our Exchange!

Based on research and outreach conducted by Assistant Seed Historian Kelly Loud, this online exhibit, *The Rise of Heirloom Seeds*, tells the stories of nine small seed companies founded by SSE members and the varieties they have preserved. Visit seedsavers.org/the-rise-of-heirloom-seeds to learn more!



Because of your support, communities like Taos Pueblo and many others will be able to grow their ancestral seeds again. Photo courtesy of Rowen White.

SEED REMATRIATION: RETURNING SEEDS TO THEIR CULTURES OF ORIGIN

With the help of Board Chair Rowen White, SSE began a collaboration in 2018 with the Indigenous Seed Keepers Network to research and grow out (regenerate for new seeds) unique and rare seeds in our seed bank collection whose origins could be traced back to Indigenous communities. SSE identified and grew out 25 indigenous varieties of corn, squash, and beans in 2018. A portion of the seeds harvested have gone back into our seed bank for preservation, and a portion are being shared with their cultures of origin—to be grown again with the honor and love that they deserve. Because women have traditionally been the keepers of the seeds, this is called “seed rematriation.” We are continuing this work in 2019 with additional researched varieties.



SeedLinked connects people with information on varieties from other gardeners/farmers.

REINVENTING PARTICIPATORY GROWING: SEEDLINKED

The Seed Savers Exchange ADAPT program is excited to be collaborating in 2019 to beta test SeedLinked, an emerging seed-data platform. A web platform and application available to anyone, SeedLinked seeks to connect people with information on varieties from other gardeners/farmers. SeedLinked puts the control back in the hands of farmers, gardeners, and consumers. As a participatory and decentralized plant-breeding model, SeedLinked is proposing a radically different approach to seed selection. SeedLinked is developing a platform that uses weather data, soil data, and crowdsourced observations to show what other farmers with similar conditions think of varieties. Plant breeders will have access to incredibly granular data, helping to drive their own selection decisions and giving them insight on farmers' evaluations, new crosses, variety performance, and market needs. Visit seedlinked.com to learn more.



Interns (left to right) Emily Gomersall, Meredith Collins, Sylvie Lednicky, and Audry Gibson spent Summer 2018 learning from and contributing to key projects at Seed Savers Exchange's Heritage Farm headquarters.

ENCOURAGING THE NEXT GENERATION: INTERNS AT SEED SAVERS EXCHANGE

Seed Savers Exchange welcomed four young women to our staff in the summer of 2018, three Seed Regeneration Interns and one Seed Rematriation Intern. With the help of these interns, Seed Savers Exchange increased the number of seed varieties regenerated in 2018 by nearly 40% over varieties grown in 2017, directly increasing our capacity to maintain the viability of the collection of over 20,000 heirloom garden varieties that we have amassed during our 45-year history.

The work of the interns was particularly critical in growing out rare and at-risk varieties. Of the group of rare seeds regenerated last summer, 41% were selected for grow-out because they were classified as at-risk varieties due to low seed viability or low inventory. Regenerating these rare seeds was essential to save these varieties for today and for the future. In turn, the interns learned about seed viability, caring for at-risk varieties at all stages from seed to harvest, and maintaining adequate inventory.



ENSURING SEED SURVIVAL

Along with long-term preservation in our seed bank, select varieties are also sent to backup preservation storage at the USDA seed vault in Fort Collins, Colorado, as well as the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Norway. Seed Savers Exchange has the only non-governmental seed collection included in the Svalbard Global Seed Vault, making our work unique as well as vitally important.

Equally important, we are using a number of strategies to get more of these varieties into gardens and on farms across the country, to assess how they are growing in different regions and ensure that seeds continue to be generated and saved across the country.

THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE AT HERITAGE FARM

In the summer of 2018, SSE launched a campaign to raise money to restore our iconic 1929 barn at Heritage Farm, which was in dire need of a new roof, windows, and siding. The support from our community was generous and heartwarming, and the barn restoration began last fall. It was completed in the summer of 2019.

The barn restoration is an important first step in an ongoing initiative to enhance the visitor experience for the 12,000-14,000 people who come to Heritage Farm each year. In 2019, we are beginning work to restore the Farmhouse Garden at the main farmhouse, including creating a terrace for guests and visitors to meet, gather, and view the farm valley. Around the terrace, we plan to bring back cherished and historic ornamental varieties from Iowa farmhouse gardens of the past. As we move forward in 2019, we are seeking support from additional donors and partners to ensure that the vision for this project is fully realized, and we are recruiting community partners to help maintain gardens and trails.

A new photo gallery and visitors' kiosk was added to the Lillian Goldman Visitors Center, and new interpretive signage was installed along our most popular hiking trail.

A visit to Heritage Farm is one many remember and treasure for years, and we strive to provide our visitors with the best possible experience. This past year, as in previous years, thousands of



Our historic barn undergoing restoration, thanks to the support of our community.

individuals enjoyed the beautiful and educational display gardens; collected apples in our historic orchards; admired our iconic red barn that houses classes, barn dances, and seed processing; viewed rare heritage livestock breeds; and explored our network of more than eight miles of hiking trails. In addition to our display gardens and orchards, Heritage Farm's 890 acres in the Driftless Region of Northeast Iowa is home to limestone bluffs, spring-fed trout streams, sweeping ridgeline vistas, grass pastures, and prairie and forest areas that draw visitors from near and far.

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS

HERMAN'S GARDEN AND DISASTER RELIEF: The SSE Herman's Garden and Disaster Relief Seed Donation Programs continue to provide seeds to schools, community groups, and people in need across the continent, ensuring our collective ability to grow healthy, delicious food. **In 2018, over 77,000 seed packets were donated to over 650 groups and individuals.** Thank you for making this possible.



Photos courtesy of Maureen Griffin.

"Seed Savers has made many, many people happy, and your donation will help put healthy and nutritious food on the tables of so many of our members. Please know how appreciative we all are for the generosity of Seed Savers."

—Maureen Griffin, Eugene Area Gleaners

CITIZEN SCIENCE CORPS: A growing number of SSE members are participating in our Citizen Science Corps programs, with **69 participants** helping our Preservation and Evaluation teams to grow out 228 different varieties in 2018! These engaged members are helping to ensure that there is enough seed for storage in our seed bank as well as sharing on the Exchange, working with us to evaluate varieties from our seed collection for inclusion in our catalog, and collaborating to assess how seeds are growing in different environments and regions. We are grateful for their efforts, and for your support of this critical work.

EVENTS, TOURS, AND PRESENTATIONS: In 2018 and into 2019, Seed Savers Exchange has reached **3,530 people** with tours and educational events at Heritage Farm, and over **2,000 people** with off-site presentations, roundtables, and conferences. With this work, we are sharing both passion and knowledge about heirloom seed saving, biodiversity and open pollination, growing organically, and ensuring that people have access to healthy, delicious food. Because of you, we will continue to engage and educate thousands of additional people in the coming year.



Photo of seeds courtesy of Timothy Noyes. photo of cabbage courtesy of Bjorn Bergman.



Citizen Science Corps participants Liz and Talus Piatkowski of White fish, Montana, grew these 'German Extreme Dwarf Bush' tomatoes.



A tour of the Evaluation Garden at Heritage Farm.

WITH THE HELP OF OUR COMMUNITY:

Seed Savers Exchange depends on our community of volunteers each and every week throughout the year. Volunteers help at events throughout the season and also assist with administrative and education work on a weekly basis, helping with tasks ranging from organizing seed packet donations for community gardens to researching seed histories and working in the gardens at Heritage Farm. In 2018, **74 volunteers donated 1,320 hours** to this important work.



COMMUNITY SEED NETWORK:

In partnership with USC Canada, SSE launched the Community Seed Network website in 2018, an important step in evolving the way we reach people across the continent. In 2018-19, the Community Seed Network empowered and engaged **nearly 500** active members and countless others in the seed world across the United States and Canada to connect, share, and learn. It also provides free resources for those new to the movement. Visit communityseednetwork.org for more information!





RESCUING SEED FROM EXTINCTION: SSE rescued three varieties from near extinction in 2018!

These three rare varieties from the collection ('Lillibridge Kettle Family' runner bean, 'Harry Strom' black oats, and 'Corn Husk Doll' corn) had extremely poor germination rates during in-house germination tests, but our Preservation team decided to persevere and grow them out to harvest any seed we could get. From two plants and a small handful of seeds (of one of the varieties) at the start of last year, in 2019 we have reached the point where we once again have a viable, stable population and adequate seed for storage. Without your support of this work, these varieties could have been lost to us forever.

Please let us know if you have comments or questions about the impact of your support, the work highlighted here, or our plans moving forward. Our board and staff are currently engaged in a strategic planning process that will set the stage for our work in the coming years, and we are excited to be heading into a new chapter for the organization.

Thank you very much for your support of Seed Savers Exchange. We are grateful you are with us in this important work.

LEADERSHIP

Founded in 1975 by
Diane Ott Whealy and Kent Whealy

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Co-op Partners Warehouse

Country View Dairy
Kalona Organics
Organic Valley
River Root Farm
Rubaiyat
Sacred Blossom Farm
Winneshiek Medical Center

SUPPORTERS

SUPPORTERS OF PROGRAMS, PROJECTS, AND INITIATIVES

Restoration of Our Historic Barn

Clive and Penny Blazey and The Diggers Club

Claudia Wester

Douglas and Alice Rimer Foundation

The J.R. Borowy Fund

Todd E. Huffman

Paul M. Westbrook

Thomas P. and Patricia A. O'Donnell Foundation

Decorah Bank & Trust

Sherwin-Williams

The Exchange

The Blooming Prairie Foundation

UNFI Foundation

The Farmhouse Garden

Stanley Smith Horticultural Trust

Lillian Goldman Visitors Center Photo Gallery

Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area

Intern Program

Bill and Kris Osterbur, In Memory of Daniel S. Berger, MD

R.J. McElroy Trust

John Everson

Silos & Smokestacks National Heritage Area

Rematriation Project

Indigenous Seed Keepers Network

Oona Coy and Ben James Fund

Native American Food Sovereignty Alliance

Photo Booth

Iowa Economic Development Authority

Independent Garden Show Presence

Winneshiek County Development Inc Biz Booster Program

SUPPORTERS

A SPECIAL THANKS TO OTHER PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS

Amy P. Goldman Foundation
Amy Goldman Fowler
Hain Celestial
The Vervane Foundation
The Seattle Foundation (anonymous)
Schnieders Family Foundation
Clif Bar Family Foundation
Haskell Fund
Kari Wenger and Peter Henry
Siegel Family Foundation
The Walton Family Foundation
Decorah Hotel/Motel Tax Committee
Kelley and Stephen Wilkinson
The William Wishnick Foundation
Jeanette and Christopher Phelps
Alpha/Omega Charitable Foundation, Inc.
Barbara Schilling
The Chanticleer Foundation
Minnesota State Horticultural Society
The Livestock Conservancy
Ogden Publications
SeedLinked
University of Wisconsin – Madison
Featherstone Farm

NEW LIFETIME MEMBERS IN 2018

Martha Clatterbaugh	Peter Malmgren
Rosalind Creasy	Dan and Fran Reilly
Cormac Kennedy	Sarah Ross
Lisa Douglas	Martha Stewart
Rob Johnston, Jr.	Susan and Leslie West

A sincere thank you to these and all of the individuals, businesses, and organizations that are supporting our work. If you see an error in one of the listings here, please contact us.

FINANCIALS

This financial information is for the ten months beginning January 1, 2018, and ending October 31, 2018. Seed Savers Exchange moved from a calendar year to a November 1 through October 31 fiscal year in 2018, and future financial statements will reflect full 12-month fiscal years with this time frame.

SUPPORT AND REVENUE

Contributions:

Corporations	\$281,104	6%
Membership	\$238,229	5%
Donations	\$158,408	3%
Fundraisers & Sponsorships	\$131,692	3%
Foundation Grants	\$104,267	2%
Sales & Shipping	\$3,768,793	80%
Investment income	\$13,437	<1%
Rental income	\$11,536	<1%
Other income (inc. Conference & Events)	\$29,491	<1%

Total support and revenue \$4,736,957

EXPENSES

Programs	\$3,209,350	70%
Management & General	\$1,126,905	25%
Facilities (Farm expenses)	\$191,914	4%
Fundraising	\$61,645	1%

Total expenses \$4,589,814

Net revenue \$147,143



THANK YOU!

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To support Seed Savers Exchange's work or to learn more about a specific program, please contact Heather Haynes, Development Director, at hhaynes@seedsavers.org or 563-387-5671. To donate online, please visit seedsavers.org/donate. Thank you for being a part of our community!

Seed Savers Exchange

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VISIT

Lillian Goldman Visitors Center

3074 North Winn Road
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