WHY OPEN-POLLINATED SEEDS?

Simply put, open-pollinated seeds 'breed true'.

When an open-pollinated (standard) variety self-pollinates or is naturally pollinated with another of the same variety, the resulting seeds will produce a plant basically identical to the parent.

This stable reproduction of the variety is crucial for the Seed Library in that borrowers can expect to grow the same plant as that of the person who returned the seed. That is to say, you know what you are getting.

When careful seed saving and variety preservation continues for generations, we get what is known as an heirloom or heritage variety.

Open-pollination is also beneficial in that the natural variation and selection that occurs over generations means the variety becomes better suited to the bioregion in which it has grown.

A hybrid is achieved through the cross-pollination of varieties. Hybrids are common, can occur naturally and have several benefits. They can produce seed, but it is not genetically stable and will not produce a plant identical to the previous generation.

For Seed Library borrowers, this means that they could not be sure of what characteristics the resulting plants would have, whether they would resemble the parent, or even grow at all.

Seed Library Tips

- ☐ Contribute known standard varieties or those marked OP
- ☐ Varieties marked F1 are not suitable for the Seed Library
- ☐ Hybrids can become open-pollinated, standard varieties after successive generations of stable breeding…many of our vegetable varieties began this way!