

Native Plant Seed Harvest and Processing

Wet Seed

Originates from fleshy fruits, including berries, pomes, and drupes, and require additional processing prior to storage or sowing.

RIPENESS & FERTILITY INDICATORS

FLESHY FRUIT MATURITY:

- Slightly overripe (a little beyond what you'd like to eat)
- Some fruit beginning to drop from the plant
- Uniform, fully developed color
- Soft texture and readily releases from plant

RIPLE SEED CHARACTERISTICS (VS. UNRIPE):

- Plump and turgid
- Firm and distinct from surrounding flesh
- Sinks in water
- Large (Note: discard seeds that are significantly smaller, but avoid selecting for only the largest seeds)
- Darkened in color



Ripe *Ribes sanguineum* fruit



Ripe and fertile *Malus fusca* seed (top) compared to underripe and infertile *Malus fusca* seed (bottom)

Dry Seed

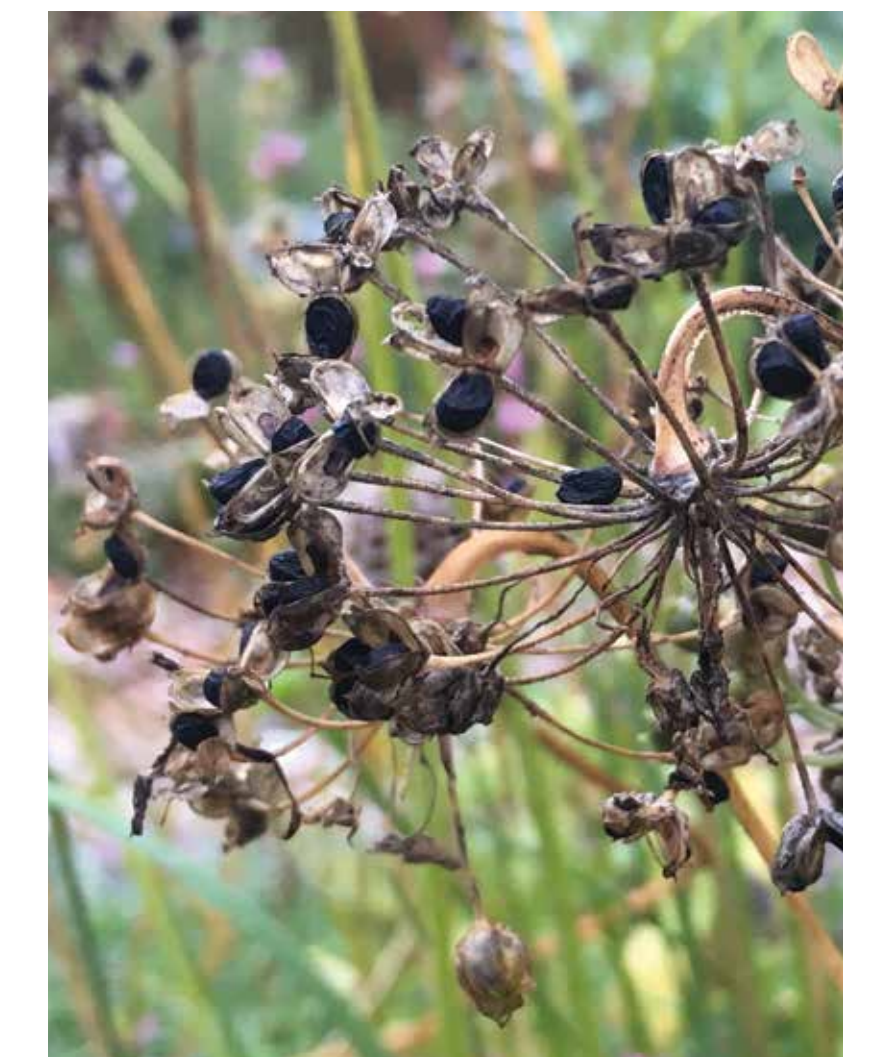
Originates from dry fruits, often produced in seed heads or pods, and are near-clean at the time of harvest.

RIPENESS & FERTILITY INDICATORS

- Seed heads and seeds completely dry on the plant
- Seed heads rattle when shaken
- Full, uniform color change has occurred
- Seed heads beginning to dehisce
- Seeds release easily from seed heads



Ripe *Lomatium utriculatum* seed



Ripe *Allium cernuum* seed

WET SEED PROCESSING

1. HARVEST AND PRE-CLEAN

Remove stems, leaves, and other non-fruit debris

2. STORE (IF NEEDED)

Refrigerate in a sealed container for less than 2 days to reduce mold risk

3. PROCESS

Food process with a rubber-coated blade, adding just enough water to barely cover fruit

4. SEPARATE PULP

Dilute mixture and pour off pulp
Perform float test
Repeat processing and separation as needed

5. DRY

Dry seeds for 24 hours in a seed dryer

6. WINNOW OR SCREEN SIFT

Remove remaining debris

7. STORE

Package and refrigerate until sowing

DRY SEED PROCESSING

1. HARVEST AND PRE-CLEAN

Remove leaves, stems, and excess debris

2. DRY

Hang in a cloth or mesh bag at room temp for at least 2 days

3. THRESH

Food process with a whisk paddle blade

6. WINNOW OR SCREEN SIFT

Remove remaining debris

7. STORE

Package and refrigerate until sowing



Sifting dried seed heads through a mesh screen

TOOLS



Food processor with Plasti Dip-coated blades used to extract wet seeds



Food processor whisk attachment used to thresh dry seeds



Seed sifting screens of various sizes used for dry seed cleaning



Seed dryer made from a five gallon bucket and fan



Dryer trays made from strainer inserts for five gallon buckets