



# Transition Farming & Biodiversity

## *The Importance of Seed Saving*



# The Importance of Seed Saving

In order to build a resilient and sustainable community, one that can cope with the challenges facing us, we need to ensure that the principle of food and seed sovereignty becomes a foundation in how we feed ourselves, our families and communities.

To do this we need to evolve beyond the current idea of food security to [Food and Seed Sovereignty](#).

## Why is it important to save seeds?

- It preserves and evolves our local seed genetic diversity.
- Seeds are part of the Commons.
- Seed sovereignty needs to become a cornerstone of how we transition our farms to be more ecologically and climate resilient.
- It is important to create local living seed banks.
- It gives farmers and growers much greater autonomy over the provenance of all their crops.
- It enables better adaptability to local growing conditions.

Kevin Dudley and Thomas O Connor( Manna Organic Farm) shared their expertise on the practical skills of seed saving at a farm level.

Kevin has a long history of working with seeds. He worked with Seed Savers and in their orchards helping to save seed. Kevin has traveled widely which has greatly enhanced his experience and knowledge. He spent several years running the CSA farm at Cloughjordan, where he grew the vegetables from seed saved from many years of plant generations.

## During this workshop participants learned:

- History of seed saving
- The cooperate takeover of seed genetics in the last 50 years.
- On farm seed saving and the importance of seed sovereignty
- The importance of creating local living seed banks rather than long-term storage models
- Building and Preserving Crop Diversity and Heritage
- Practical seed saving varieties and where to start

## Epigenetics and Seeds

Seeds and plants evolve in every generation adapting to their environment, while building symbiotic relationships with the biology surrounding them.

### Group Activity:

With the expert help of Kevin Dudley and Thomas O Connor participants separated and cleaned seed. The basic equipment and methods for low tech at home on the farm seed saving was examined. The equipment included a farm hack seed cleaner and storage systems.

Participants experienced at firsthand how Manna farm had saved seed varieties such as Turnip / Lettuce /Garlic /Onion, etc with a focus on the importance of epigenetics

### Resources:

An introduction to seed sovereignty: <https://shado-mag.com/what-is/seed-sovereignty/>

The Gaia Foundation's Seed Sovereignty Programme: <https://www.seedsovereignty.info/news/ireland/>

Irish Seed Saving Organisations: <https://irishseedsavers.ie>

<https://brownenvelopeseeds.ie>

<https://talamhbeo.ie/projects/seed-sovereignty/>

