

## Heirloom Gardens

An heirloom is something of special value, passed from one generation to another. So what's so valuable about seeds? Humans have been manipulating plant



genes for thousands of years, carefully saving vegetable and fruit seeds with their favorite flavor, texture, and uses. Heirloom seeds are often adapted to

the region, pest resistant, and tend to ripen over an extended period of time, rather than all at once. A variety for every occasion, culture, and dinner table.

After WWII advancements in mechanization, irrigation, fertilizers and lab modified crops led the way for intensive large scale, high yield farming. This brought the Green Revolution averting famine in regions. Yet businesses often chose seeds based on shipping needs and profit margins, rather than flavor and texture. Today, it's estimated only 3% of vegetable plants grown in 1900 are still grown. We still grow heirloom varieties at the Homestead Farm garden. Come visit!



## Teosintes

Corn is a great example of over 6,000 years of seed selection. Its original form of Teosinte has small and hard kernels compared to today's large sweet corn kernels.



Carl Barnes of Oklahoma connected with his Native heritage by isolating ancient corn varieties. With selective seed collecting, he made a new heritage variety known as Glass Gem.

**Stop by the Visitor Center Office for program information.**

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