

Workshop Title:

Basic Annuals - Squash and Beans

Speakers:

Patrice Fortier, Greg Wingate

Executive Summary:

This presentation dealt with the specifics of growing squash and beans. Special detail was given relating to seeding and seed saving. The presentation was done bilingually with squash in English and beans in French.

Main Notes:

Squash

- Squash lends itself to eating and saving seed, you can have your cake and eat it too!

Some considerations when saving seed:

- Squash is an outcrosser. There are both males and female flowers on the same plant. Flowers are pollinated by insects (mainly bees). Different varieties within a same species may cross.
- Rules to maintain variety:
 - It is important to start with an open pollinated (OP) variety as opposed to a hybrid.
 - Prevent intermingling with isolation, hand pollination or by only growing one squash of each species. Greg explains taxonomy.
- Genus, Species, Variety
- Cucurbitae (all) = genus

- Pepos include acorn squashes, delicatas, hullless pumpkins, etc. They can be recognized by the big serrations in their leaves, star shaped stems that do not widen nearer the fruit.
- Maximas include hubbards. They have more rounded leaves and corky stems that are not ridged.
- Moschatas include cheese type squashes, butternuts and seminole. The leaves are somewhat serrated, leaves and stems are hairy. The stems are star shaped and get larger closer to the fruit.

An isolation distance of 500ft between members of the same species is usually enough for home use. An isolation distance of up to ½ mile or more is recommended for absolute purity.

When hand pollinating, one must first learn to distinguish male and female flowers and learn about flower development.

- Before the flower opens, tape flowers shut to prevent opening. The following day, take male flower, brush male pollen onto female stamens, close up female flowers and mark them.
- Keep at least six fruit to maintain genetic diversity. More is better.
- Selection. One may select for many traits: earliness, size, production, vigour, flavour, and storage...
- Harvest. Grow the plants as long as possible. Once the plants have died back from frost, harvest the squash. One wants a thick hardened skin; this is especially true for summer squashes. Allow squash to after-ripen: the flavour will

improve, the seed may mature further and one may establish (and select for) storing quality.

- Seed harvest. Scoop out seed cavity. Soak the seeds and flesh overnight. This allows the seeds to separate from the flesh and may remove natural seed germination inhibitors. Then clean and dry the seed. Then winnow with wind or a fan.
- Seed storage. Store in dry conditions in airtight container. Squash has good seed viability, easily up to 5 years.

Q&A

Why are there always so many more male flowers than female flowers? Where on the plant should one look for the female flowers?

Female flowers are fairly randomly distributed. There is often a glut of male flowers before female flowers appear.

One participant has been hand pollinating squash but the fruit harvested from such hand pollinating has not yielded fertile seed. Why?

Greg is not sure what the problem is but suggests pollinating early in the morning and using many male flowers for every female flower.

Does cutting the vine or pruning it encourage more fruit production or ripening?

Greg does not know.

Someone grew many varieties of squash (without isolating different species). Is it worth saving the seed? Will it produce edible squash?

It will likely produce something edible, but not true to type.

A participant grew Guatemala Blue squash and the seed germinated immediately (within an hour) of opening the fruit. Why?

Other attendees stopped using water due to the same problem and now use a shop-vac to dry-harvest the seed. Some varieties are probably more susceptible to premature germination than others.

Les Haricots

Cultiver le haricot

- Il s'agit d'une culture très simple.
 - Il existe principalement trois espèces en culture (de 90 à 120 jours à maturité).
- *ATTENTION: Les catalogues identifient souvent mal les espèces. Il faut apprendre à identifier soi-même les fleurs.
- C'est récent dans l'histoire du haricot de sélectionner pour les cosses fraîches. Ceux-ci ne donneront généralement pas de bonnes fèves sèches.
 - Les haricots coccineus (haricots d'Espagne) sont plus sensibles aux croisements. Ils peuvent être pollinisés par les oiseaux mouches! Ils peuvent aussi bénéficier d'être secoué légèrement pour assurer une meilleure pollinisation (à moins d'être dans un endroit où il vente beaucoup).

- Lorsque cultivé pour la semence, le haricot devrait être récolté au stade papier (ou avant si nécessaire) pour éviter que les cosses se défassent et que les haricots tombent au sol.
- Pour le vannage, Patrice nous suggère d'aller consulter la vidéo de « BC Farm and Foods » que l'on peut trouver sur YouTube.
- Les variétés grimpantes ont un rendement supérieur.

Q&A

Pourquoi les cosses deviennent-elles noires?

Patrice ne sait pas de quoi il s'agit. Une autre participante pense qu'il s'agirait peut-être d'un champignon.