

# Sunflower



## Skill Level-Easy

Autumn Beauty: 60 days. Multi-headed flowers range from bright yellow to gold to dark burgundy, with some bicolors. Under ideal conditions one plant can have up to two dozen flowers blooming at the same time. Very nice for cutting. Plants grow 5-8' tall.

## How to plant:

DIRECT SEED 18-24" apart

SEED DEPTH 1-2 inches

GERMINATION 80-100

ROWS 18-24" apart

## Green Thumb Tip

Sunflower seed, leaves and stems emit substances that inhibit the growth of certain other plants. They should be separated from potatoes and pole beans. Where sunflower seeds are regularly used as bird feed, toxins from the accumulated seed hulls eventually kill the grass below. Harmless to animals or people, the toxins eventually biodegrade in the soil.

## Harvesting the seed:

Monitor the flower heads on your sunflower daily when it begins to wilt. It is ready to harvest when the back side of the head turns brown.

Cover the sunflower head with a paper bag to protect the seeds from the birds (don't use plastic). Tie it closed with a piece of string to keep ripening seeds from falling out and onto the soil.

Cut the flower stalk about 12 to 18 inches below the bag. Turn it upside down and hang it from the stem in a well-ventilated spot in a warm, dry room until the flower head is completely dry. This can take from one to five days.

Check the bagged sunflower head every day. Shake it vigorously. You'll hear loose seeds rattling around inside the bag. Open the bag and feel the flower head for dryness. Brush your fingers lightly over a few of the seeds in the head. If they're falling off easily, they're ready for storage.



The Waupaca Seed Library is a circulating collection of seeds hosted by the Waupaca Area Public Library.

The seeds are available to anyone with the intention of growing and collecting new seed to be returned to the library for other patrons.

The goal is to have borrowers collect seed to make available to the public for planting the following year to continue the cycle.