



August 7, 2013 —

**Seeds**

This week we've been reflecting on the miracle of seeds, those little packets of potential life to which we owe our food source.

Seeds are beautiful in and of themselves, from tiny to huge, round to flat, spotted, speckled and colored. But beauty is only seed-coat deep, and the real miracle of the seed lies within, in their ability to germinate and grow.

When you watch a time lapse video of a seed germinating the first thing you see is the seed swelling, absorbing the water that triggers the end of dormancy. As the seeds become engorged with water they shift position, like they're getting antsy to grow.

The root starts to grow next, smooth and white, snaking out of the seed coat and downwards, always downwards. If you flip a germinating seed on its side the root switches direction immediately, adjusting to the change in orientation. This is called gravitropism, the ability to sense gravity and shift the rate of cell growth to point the root in the right direction.

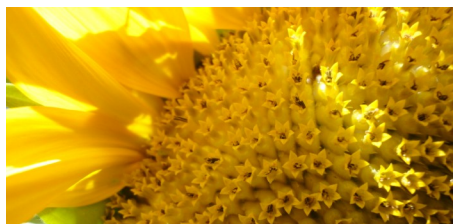
After the root gets established in the soil the stems begin to arch upwards, pushing through the soil and lifting up the seed, like a stooped figure with a bowed head slowly standing up.

As the seed rises in the air, the first leaves of the plant expand until they push free of the seed coat, unfolding towards the light. This part happens kind of fast, and just like that the seed is gone, a dormant form come to life.

Growing microgreens like the sunflower sprouts in HAH shares is a great way to get intimate with seed germination. It takes a lot of seed to grow microgreens—each week about 12,000 sunflower seeds are grown for HAH shares. This sounds like a lot, but a large sunflower can produce up to 2,000 seeds per head.

Weeds definitely take the prize when it comes to copious seed production. Purslane, for instance, is a common weed in our Sierra gardens whose competitive strategy is to be insanely fertile — one plant can produce up to 240,000 seeds! And once they're in the soil, the seeds stay viable for 5 to 40 years, just waiting for the perfect time to germinate. Generations of seed, all from one plant. This is why farmers talk about the seed bank in the soil with an air of foreboding. No matter how much you weed, you know there are more seeds lurking, waiting to germinate and grow to their full weedy potential.

Saving the seed of crops from year to year is an art and a science in itself, one that most small farmers don't practice for lack of space and time, but a key to sustaining a farm. We are wholly dependent on the seed companies who make a business of seed production, selling a packet or a pound at a time. They know what crops to prevent from cross pollinating, when to harvest and process the seed, and how to print those beautiful seed catalogs that keep us coming back for more each and every year.



*Full Share:*

- Kale or Chard
- Apples and/or Asian Pears
- Summer Squash
- Onions
- Cherry Tomatoes
- Basil
- Radishes
- Blackberries
- Sunflower Sprouts

*Half Share:*

- Spring Mix
- Summer Squash
- Onions
- Turnips
- Carrots
- Apples and/or Asian Pears

*What Grows Where:*

**DAWN GARDENS**

summer squash, kale, basil, chard, cherry tomatoes, blackberries

**GRASSFED GARDENS**

sunflower sprouts, turnips, summer squash, potatoes

**SIERRA VALLEY FARMS**

spring mix, carrots, radishes

**GREEN CEDAR FARM**

apples, asian pears

**THE STUMP FARM**

onions

.....

*Bread Share Flavor:*

Curry and Cheddar

*Pasta Share Flavor:*

Sweet Pea Fettuccine

.....

## Turnip and Potato Patties

Sort of a cross between a pancake and a fritter.

### INGREDIENTS

1/2 pound turnips, peeled and cut into 1/4-inch cubes (about 1 1/3 cups)  
6 oz potato, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes (about 1 cup)  
2 1/2 Tbsp thinly sliced scallion greens  
1 egg, beaten lightly  
1/4 cup all-purpose flour  
Grapeseed oil, peanut oil, or canola oil (high smoke point vegetable oils)  
Salt and pepper



### DIRECTIONS

In a large saucepan of boiling salted water, cook the turnip and potato cubes for 15 to 17 minutes, until they are tender, and drain them. In a bowl, mash them with a fork and stir in the scallions, the egg, flour, and salt and pepper to taste.

Coat the bottom of a large, heavy bottomed skillet with about 1/4-inch of the oil. Heat the pan on medium high heat until the surface of the oil begins to shimmer, but not smoke. Spoon 1/4-cup mounds of the turnip potato batter into the pan, flattening them into 1/2-inch thick patties with the back of a spatula. Fry the patties until they are golden, turning them once, about 4 minutes on each side. Transfer the patties to paper towels to drain off excess oil.

Source: [www.simplyrecipes.com](http://www.simplyrecipes.com)

## CROP Updates

**Potatoes** — We thought we'd have our first potatoes this week but—psych!—no dice. Despite tons of gopher trapping and releasing beneficial nematodes to hunt wireworms, the critters still put a serious dent in Grassfed Gardens' potato crop this year. We'll team up with some of our other growers to get you potatoes later in the season.

**Turnips** — We have our first turnips coming on this week, some Purple Top Globe and some Golden Globe. These ones were grown at one of Grassfed Gardens' harsher sites, so the greens are on the tough side but the roots are a-okay.

**Cherry Tomatoes** — It's really summer now that the tomatoes are here! Enjoy the first of the cherry tomatoes from the Dawn—more are soon to come.

**Blueberries** — Sad but true, blueberry season has come and gone this year. It was a good run this season, and we will dream of those little blue bits of heaven until next year.

### Wash It!

All of our produce is fresh off the farm.  
Please wash before using.

## BLACKBERRY LIQUEUR

It's blackberry season! Celebrate with this liqueur.

### Ingredients

1 cup water  
3 cups 80 proof vodka  
3 cups white sugar  
3 cups ripe blackberries



### Directions

Shake together the water, vodka and sugar to dissolve sugar. Gently mix together with the blackberries, taking care not to cut or crush the berries. Leave to infuse about 10-12 days until the berries have lost most of their color. Pour thru a fine strainer and discard the berries. Store in a decorative bottle in the fridge.

Source: [food.com](http://food.com)

## YOU'RE INVITED TO THE DAWN GARDENS!

Every Saturday through September the Dawn Gardens has a farm stand and open garden in Indian Falls. Swing by between 8am and noon to meet farmer Manuel and the garden interns and take a tour of the vegetable beds, flowers and fruit trees. You won't be disappointed, its beauty is outrageous! To get there just head out on Highway 89 and turn onto Indian Falls Road. Give them a call with any questions at 284-6036.