



Pourquoi une bourse aux graines ?
La diversité des variétés cultivées en un territoire millénaire que nous ont légué les communautés paysannes. Sa préservation est essentielle à notre avenir. Les multinationales de l'agrochimie manipulent le marché, imposent des lois de protection sur les variétés, mais que des bénéfices en fin de compte. L'Organisation mondiale pour la protection des variétés végétales (UPOV) pour encourager toujours plus de variétés. La Commission européenne propose, pour 2011, une directive commune qui doit réglementer et limiter encore plus le droit des paysans et des jardiniers à reproduire et à distribuer leurs propres semences.
Nous nous joignons et nous nous engageons à soutenir une multitude de variétés de plantes. Ce n'est pas la seule manière de garantir la sécurité alimentaire. Il est essentiel de la soutenir de manière appropriée, la diversité de la production de nos semences, nous permet d'obtenir, la diversité de la production de nos semences, nous permet d'obtenir, la diversité de la production de nos semences.

Haricots de Choisy-le-Reau

Haricots blancs

Haricots noirs

Haricots blancs

Haricots blancs

Haricots blancs

Haricots blancs

Haricots blancs

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From seed to seed
An educational film on the production of seeds

Introduction

Seeds are the origin of life. For thousands of years, the diversity of cultivated plants has fed humanity. These seeds, passed down from generation to generation, are of crucial importance worldwide.

But the diversity of cultivated plants is increasingly under threat. The introduction of high yielding and hybrid varieties, patents on plants, as well as the use of chemical fertilisers, pesticides and GMOs have led to the disappearance of 70% of cultivated plant diversity since the 1930s. For example, only a few «profitable» cereals are used in industrial agriculture. They require huge quantities of water and energy, and depend on environmentally destructive inputs.



Commercial seed varieties are now selected by a handful of multinational companies whose main priority is profit. The same logic applies on the legislative level: proposed European legislation intends to limit farmers' and gardeners' access to seeds. They will no longer be able to sell, exchange or give away seeds from their own crops.

Example of the alliaceae module:

Onion, biannual plant:

Sowing in seed-beds, labelling, germination, the seedling before planting, planting, growth, bulb harvest, choice and number of seed-bearing plants for the following year, selection criteria, bulb conservation, second year bulb planting, specific upkeep, hermaphrodite flowering (“perfect” flower, i.e. with



male and female organs) with explanation of the natural barrier preventing pollination within the same inflorescence, the necessity of insect pollination and the risks of cross-breeding between varieties, explanation of variety conservation using geographic isolation, spacing in time, the flowers with mature seeds, flower harvest and drying, manual seed extraction and drying, conservation in natural or deep-frozen conditions, seed life expectancy, selection criteria: precociousness, late harvest, long or short harvest, taste, storage capacity, resistance to diseases, to heat, to cold, to drought, to humidity....

the concept of natural cross-breeding, a diagram on hybridisation and its consequences for the first generation of seeds, explanations on the conservation of varieties through geographic isolation, spreading out of sowing periods, anti-insect nets depending on varieties, mosquito nets with small bumblebee hives, manual pollination, the different stages of the fruit up until full maturity, harvest of cucurbitaceae, seed extraction using the water and fermentation method or the dry method, drying and storage of the seeds, conservation in natural or deep-frozen conditions, life expectancy of the seed, selection criteria: precocity, late harvest, long or short harvest, taste, storage capacity, resistance to diseases, to heat, to cold, to drought, to humidity...



Not only are these developments threatening the survival of small-scale agriculture, but they also endanger food security worldwide. Seed diversity is crucial to mankind's survival because it enables plants to adapt to changing climates and environments. Seeds are a common good, just like water, air and earth, and must remain so.



Why a film?

The loss of countless small farmers who once created and reproduced thousands of plant varieties has meant that we have lost not only diversity but also the know-how built up over the centuries.

At the end of the 19th century, small local companies worked to maintain and develop seed potential. They have largely disappeared today, or have been bought up by big companies, resulting in a massive reduction of the number of varieties for sale. Seed production has become the affair of professionals employed by companies that go to great lengths to convince the public that one needs to be highly qualified to be able to do the job.

It is not easy to find seeds adapted to all kinds of farming conditions and it is often impossible in Third World countries. An enthusiasm for gardening has, however, increased over the past few years. This can partly be explained by loss of trust in industrially produced foods and the need to survive in times of crisis. The creation in towns and suburban areas of collective or shared vegetable gardens is also part of a more general attempt to build social networks.

In Europe a few small associations still maintain and distribute heirloom varieties as well as sharing seed production skills through workshops, training courses, books and documents. They are helped by farmers and amateur gardeners who reproduce the varieties they cultivate. The more people get involved in the conservation and multiplication of seeds, the better will we be able to put an end to the disappearance of plant diversity. Basic training in seed multiplication techniques is crucial. There are few books on this topic and these are of little use in countries where illiteracy is widespread.



- fabaceae: green bean, pea, lentil, chick pea, broad bean
- alliaceae: leek, onion, asparagus
- apiaceae: carrot, fennel, parsnip, parsley, dill, celery, coriander, lovage



- chenopodiaceae: chard, spinach, beetroot
- poaceae: sweetcorn
- lamiaceae: basil
- amaranthaceae: amaranth
- portulacaceae: purslane
- valerianaceae: lamb's lettuce

Example of the cucurbitaceae module:

From seedbed to seed harvest:

The distinction between species, sowing in seed-beds or directly into the ground, labelling, germination, the seedling before planting, planting and the number of necessary seed-bearing plants, male and female flowering with verbal explanation of monoecious plants (where male and female flowers are on the same plant), insect pollination, explanations on allogamy (where the pollen of another plant is needed),

The different modules

- brassicaceae: cabbage, radish, turnip, rocket, watercress
- asteraceae: lettuce, chicory, cardoon, artichoke



- cucurbitaceae: squash, courgette, cucumber, melon, watermelon, calabash
- solanaceae: tomato, pepper and chili, aubergine



Images will enable viewers to follow the development of plants from seed to seed, to help them understand the biology of flowers, the phenomenon of pollination as well as the techniques and methods used to extract, select and store seeds. Close-ups will allow detailed observation and make it easier to recognise plant characteristics.



Who is this film for?

The film is intended for all those interested in seed production - beginners, amateur gardeners, farmers, vocational colleges, children, those who wish to contribute to the conservation of plant diversity, those for whom it is urgent to grow their own seeds in order to adapt to different climate conditions or for food security... Seeds have always been given away and exchanged. The skills and know-how needed to produce seeds must also travel freely. There are many seed swap events in Europe, and this movement is growing. They make it possible to distribute countless varieties to the wider public.

However, sharing this knowledge is difficult during these events since so many people come and time is limited. The aim of this educational film is to enable those aware of the issues to produce their own seeds in their own gardens or fields.

The techniques will be explained simply and will be translated into several languages: English, French, German, Spanish - and more if we find the translators.



The film's promoters and makers:

The European Civic Forum is an association active in several European countries. One of its priorities is to defend small-scale and collective agriculture that respects social rights. It also supports other associations which safeguard fertile seeds both on the practical and institutional level. This is possible thanks to a European network of local initiatives and public awareness campaigns.

Different modules, each representing a botanical family, will be filmed and edited, following the same pattern.

Parts will be filmed using a macro lens in a studio. They will show the seed, the flower and the fruit in as great detail as possible, as well as the key techniques needed to obtain the seeds.



For example, the fundamental steps of fermentation and selection of tomato seeds will be filmed this way.

Other parts will be filmed outside, so as to show the plants in their natural environment. The scale will change so as to appreciate larger spaces or contexts (the garden or greenhouse).

The focus will be on plants, but those working with them will also be present. This is a form of agriculture in which there is a strong human involvement: the seed producer regularly touching and handling the plants. Hands will therefore be constantly visible on screen.

Explanations will not be given directly by those filmed. It is during the editing that complementary information will be added if necessary.

The seed producers involved in the film:

The Longo maï cooperatives in the Alpes de Haute-Provence, in Ardèche, and in the Bouches-du-Rhône (France).

Alan Carter, professional seed producer for Kokopelli near Nice in the Alpes Maritimes.

Bibliography:

Seed production manual by Dominique Guillet, Kokopelli
Handbuch Samengärtnerei, Andrea Heistingner, Arche Noah,
Pro Specia Rara



Film conception

The aim of the film is to be a simple educational tool in its form, presentation and distribution. Maximum space will be given to images rather than to voiced comments. Each stage of seed development and every step and technique will be filmed.



Longo maï was born in 1973. It is made up of nine cooperative farms in France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria and Ukraine. They produce and process a wide variety of local cereal and vegetable crops. All of the cooperatives produce their own seeds and most organise regular seed swaps, thereby helping to increase interest for such varieties and stressing the importance of maintaining them.



Kokopelli is an association based in France working to safeguard biodiversity and soil fertility. A close partnership has developed between Longo maï and Kokopelli. It is thanks to Kokopelli that several members of Longo maï have gained considerable know-how in seed production, above all of vegetables. Training workshops are regularly organised with a Kokopelli seed producer in the Longo maï farm at Limans in southern France. Longo maï is part of the “godmother-godfather network” which helps to maintain the association's seed-bank. It is a member of Kokopelli's “Seeds without Borders” network which offers seeds to peasant organisations and communities across the world. Longo maï and the European Civic Forum have also participated in Europe-wide awareness-building campaigns, emphasising the importance of seeds. One of the most effective ways to arouse the interest of both city and rural dwellers, individual and collective gardeners is to organise local or international seed swaps.



How and by whom?

The producers:

Martina Widmer and **Sylvie Seguin** are both members of the European Civic Forum and of the Longo maï cooperative in Limans. They each have ten years of experience in growing food and producing seeds. In collaboration with Kokopelli, they have participated in the organisation of seed swaps, in setting up the “godmother-godfather network” for the conservation of seed varieties. They have also provided seeds for the "Seeds without Borders" campaign. Both are involved in the Europe-wide "Seed Sovereignty Campaign" that aims to increase awareness on this topic.

Filmmaker:

Olga Widmer

Filmmaker, chief operator, film editor, Olga Widmer has worked for documentary cinema for ten years. She has also directed several documentaries, including one for the Swiss Longo maï association on Farming Politics in 2011. For more information: olgawidmer.com

Lighting:

Daniel Solomon

Daniel Solomon studied in the Kamera Obscura Film School (Tel Aviv, Israël). He has been camera operator assistant for several documentary films and light technician assistant for several television films.

Montage:

Olga Widmer

Contact and link:

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To see the trailer: <https://vimeo.com/51870861>