The Seed Library at Cleveland Public Library

Cleveland Public Library

Children

|

Tweens (10-12)

|

Teens

|

Adults

|

Intergenerational

The Seed Library at Cleveland Public Library

Apr 1, 2021

$5,000+

$$$

Byline
Marina Marquez, Branch Manager, Cleveland (Ohio) Public Library

In collaboration with the Cleveland Seed Bank, The Seed Library at Cleveland Public Library strives to preserve biodiversity and to promote local, heirloom varieties of plants.

The Seed Library allows you to “check out” a packet of heirloom seeds, grow your own heritage vegetables or flowers, save seeds from the best plants, and then lend them to a friend or neighbor, participate in a “seed swap,” or use them yourself next year. Together, through seed saving, we can adapt the seeds to our region and create a local, resilient seed supply that meets the needs of future generations.

Advanced Planning

The Cleveland Seed Bank is an initiative of The Hummingbird Project, a nonprofit based in Cleveland that works for social change through ecological regeneration and community empowerment. The Cleveland Seed Bank works to inspire, educate and grow a community network of seed savers.

The Cleveland Seed Bank was formed in 2013 to address a fundamental gap in our local food system: a regional, diverse and community-stewarded seed supply. Annually, the Seed Bank partners with Greater Cleveland Public Libraries to work toward this mission by offering events and workshops on seeds and seed saving; distributing organic, open-pollinated seed through public library systems; and leading through example through our seed stewardship. We believe that locally adapted seeds are the foundation of a resilient and sustainable food system.

The Cleveland Seed Bank currently works with High Mowing Organic Seeds to provide certified organic non-GMO seeds to library patrons through the program. High Mowing sources many of the varieties directly from independent, passionate organic seed farmers across the nation in addition to the 40-acre working farm owned and operated by their founder in northern Vermont.

Several seed libraries were the impetus for the creation of several community gardens along with a youth garden club, and Cleveland Growing Strong, a local grassroots project documenting the community garden and urban agriculture movement here in our city. The website features oral histories of pivotal people,

locations and organizations.

Marketing

Libraries are responsible for displaying information about the Seed Library Program and their partnership with the Cleveland Seed Bank. Creative license is given to each branch manager and their staff. Librarians are encouraged to publish the program in quarterly newsletters and local publications and share the information with urban farmers and gardeners in their community.

A brand package for the Cleveland Seed Bank and the Hummingbird Project is available to use for promotions and marketing materials. The Cleveland Seed Bank also provides a media kit for more information about the organization and the work we have collectively done in the community.

Budgeting

The Seed Library is sponsored through the operating budgets of their respective libraries and local businesses. Each seed library costs $1,000 and consists of 500 seed packets. This price includes the seed saving workshops.

Day-of-event Activity

This is a seasonal program offered annually in spring, summer and fall. The Seed Library program opens on the Spring Equinox and closes on the Autumn Equinox.

Seed starting and seed saving workshops are available at library locations. No background knowledge is required to participate these workshops. Seeds are available for pickup at eight library branches.

Program Execution

Patrons of the library branches and community are invited to "check out" up to five seed packets per month from the Seed Library. In exchange for the seed packets, we request information about the patron to use for grant reporting purposes and to measure the reach and depth of our program.

Paper checkout forms are made available near the wooden box of seeds. Patrons fill out the form and return the completed sheet to a library employee, who will then make sure all of the required information is recorded and legible.

Checkout forms are uploaded at the end of each week to keep the program data up to date throughout the season. Alternatively, libraries can facilitate digital seed packet checkouts using an iPad or a computer if the materials are available to do so.

Here is the 2020 list of seed packets to choose from.

Due to COVID-19, our 2020 reach was not typical for the Seed Library as it was delivered virtually via postal mail. With the return of non-virtual distribution this year, we will be able to reach more young folks, men and people of color with our in-person model. This will be through the library system itself who have a broader reach throughout Cleveland.

Advice

If your library, company or neighborhood group would like to sponsor a Seed Library next year, please reach out to info@clevelandseedbank.org as soon as possible.

Did you try this program at your library? Share your experience using this form.

Supporting Materials

Document
seed_packets.pdf
Download this Program as a PDF

- Programming Librarian Facebook Group

Slideshow Images





More Programs

Oct 27, 2016
Children (9 and under)+ | $$$
Image



Toy Lending Library

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Nov 25, 2020
Children (9 and under)+ | $
Image



STEAM Club at Home: Fossil Dig

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Tweens (10-12)
Jan 7, 2021
Children (9 and under)+ | $
Image



Tiny Library

Audiences:

Children (9 and under)
Tweens (10-12)
Teens (13-16)