

## Halton Hills Public Library not only home for books, but also for seeds

The library is often associated with loaning books, but the Halton Hills Public Library is also a place where you can check-out seeds.

Started in 2018, the HHPL Seed Library, both at the Acton and Georgetown Branch, is a program that aims to promote food sustainability and the preservation of plant seeds.

Since starting five years ago, popularity for the program began to increase during the pandemic and now includes an expanded variety of seeds through donations and purchases, says Library Associate Christine Elliott.

“Definitely, from where things began, it’s grown a lot. So, with the pandemic, we’ve noticed food security was another important way that the Seed Library could support the community. We’ve been getting community donations to help keep it fully stocked and we also have a small budget that we’re able to put towards buying things like organic heirloom seeds because when we polled the community, that was using the collection, those are things they wanted to see. So, where we can, we try to bring in interesting seeds.”

According to Elliott, the seeds are available to anyone for pick up at the library from the Seed Library cabinet and are distributed in packages. Each package has labels which let the grower know the type of seed, planting instructions, and indicators, such as if the seeds are organic or have been donated from a local garden.

When it comes to donating seeds, Elliott says they accept seeds any time of the year and donors can fill out a form of what kind of seed is being donated and when it was collected.

“We do take donations year-round and we’ve put out some donation sheets that outline our wish list of what we are hoping you can tell us about the seeds. You don’t have to fill one of these out and attach it to every package you submit, it’s just a guideline about what you can note. The two most important things would be the year it was collected, as well as the name and variety.”

While a wide variety of seeds are welcomed, some seeds that are not accepted for donation include invasive species, industrial seeds that are coated with chemicals, and poisonous plants.

If you are interested in getting seeds from the Seed Library, Elliott encourages that you visit the online catalogue, before heading to the library, so you know what is in stock. Also, to ensure everyone can have access to the seeds, you are asked to keep within a limit of two packages per variety.

For more information on the Seed Library, and to view the catalogue, you can visit [hhpl.on.ca](http://hhpl.on.ca).



The Seed Library cabinet, as seen at the entrance of the HHPL Acton Branch, and a sample of available seed packages. *Scott Brooks photos*

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