The background features a stylized landscape. The top half consists of several overlapping, semi-transparent green triangles of varying shades, creating a mountain range effect. The bottom half is a solid, bright orange color, representing a field or a sunset sky. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern.

# Seed for the community

## Teprine Baldo

Seed sovereignty, food security, inter-cultural exchange, agriculture  
and education

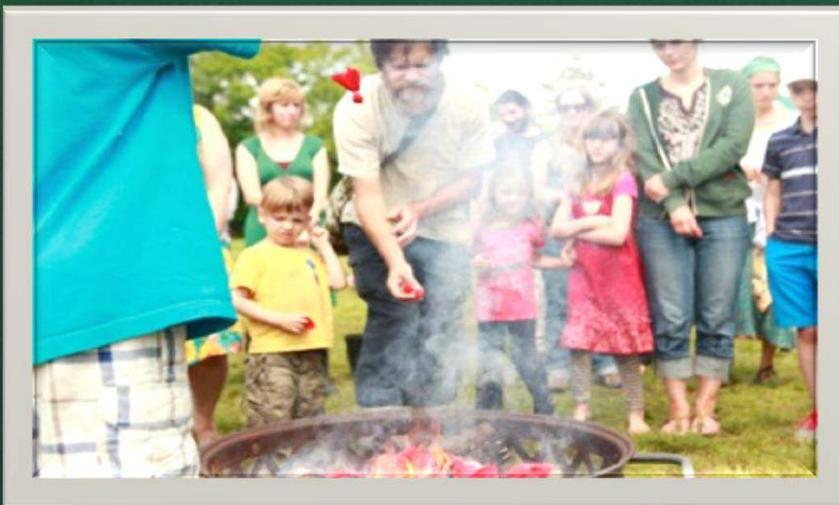
## STRAWBERRY MOON FESTIVAL

The opening ceremonies of the Strawberry Moon Festival. Stephen McComber opened up the event with a circle and a ceremonial song. The Voices of the Koas are an Abenaki woman singing group who also helped open the event. The event focused on agriculture and seed knowledge as well as ceremony and storytelling from Indigenous communities



## STRAWBERRY MOON FESTIVAL

Stephen Ranehstaienthos McComber & Kevin Kanahsahon Deer from Kahnawake helped us learn about the sacred medicine of Tobacco at the Strawberry Moon Festival. Each participant had the opportunity to make a prayer in the fire.



## CROW MOON FESTIVAL

Opening ceremony for the March Crow Moon festival. Fred Wiseman Abenaki from Vermont and farm partner tells the story of how the Pinnacle mountain in Frelighsburg is a sacred mountain for his people and how his grandmother used to take him there and tell him about the healing properties of the water source that runs through it and onto the Council Fire seed farm that we work on.



At our opening ceremonies at the Crow Moon Festival 2016 we were fortunate enough to have Nicole O'Bomsawin and the drummers from Odanak Québec share the maple ceremony celebration. This celebration honors the coming of the maple water as the marker of the new year. Next year the festival will spend the whole day learning the full maple ceremony of the Abenaki people of Quebec.



The Seed Festival is the same weekend as the Crow Moon and allows for seed savers, growers and distributors to come together to sell their open pollinated, heirloom, Indigenous and rare seeds. It is a time for celebration and life and we are always happy to have great speakers present their stories and knowledge.



Most importantly is creating safe spaces for children and their families. In Indigenous cultures there is a way of life that says you are only here temporarily and that all your actions have implications for 7 generations down the line. If we can teach our children love and respect for mother earth and all it's inhabitants, including seeds, we have done our job.



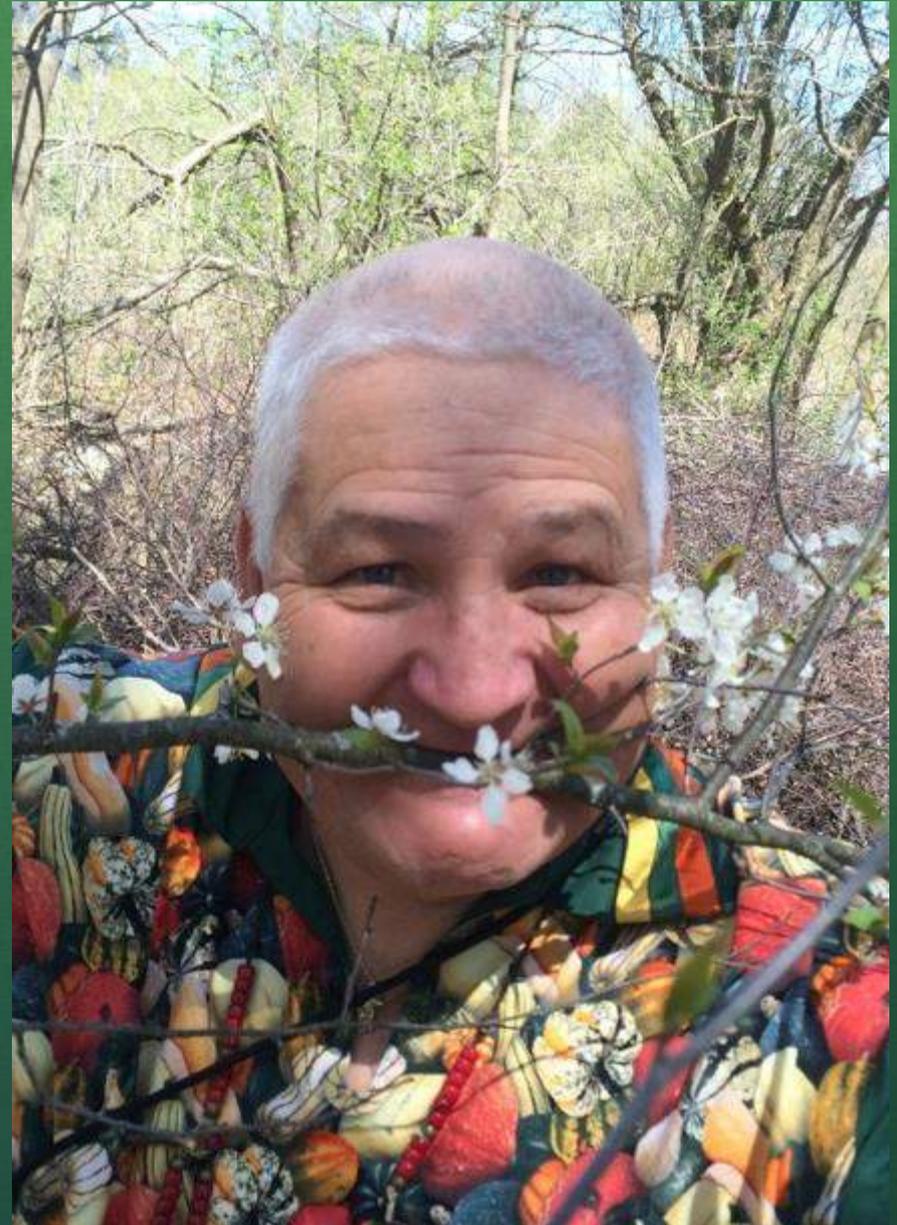
# Beginning the season with Silverbear

Stephen McComber teaches us how to play the deer button game, a game that the Mohawk people play at the beginning of the season to decide whether the women or the men would prepare and tend to the garden. Of course the ladies won!



# How to tell when to plant your corn

Stephen is a very playful mentor and teacher. Here he tells us about the wild plum blossoms and how they can also be a teacher to us, letting us know when to plant our seeds.



# Sowing the seeds

Here Stephen McComber teaches us how to plant squash seeds, direct seeding.

He shows us that his grandfather taught him to put the seeds in his mouth and wet them with your saliva.

This way they have some extra love when you put them in the ground.



# Teaching children how to grow food

My son and Yann Vergriete from Bauta plant some corn seeds together. This year we planted some Blue Bear dance corn on the farm. It was a super experience growing it, learning how this ancient seed relative grows back in the land that it came from.

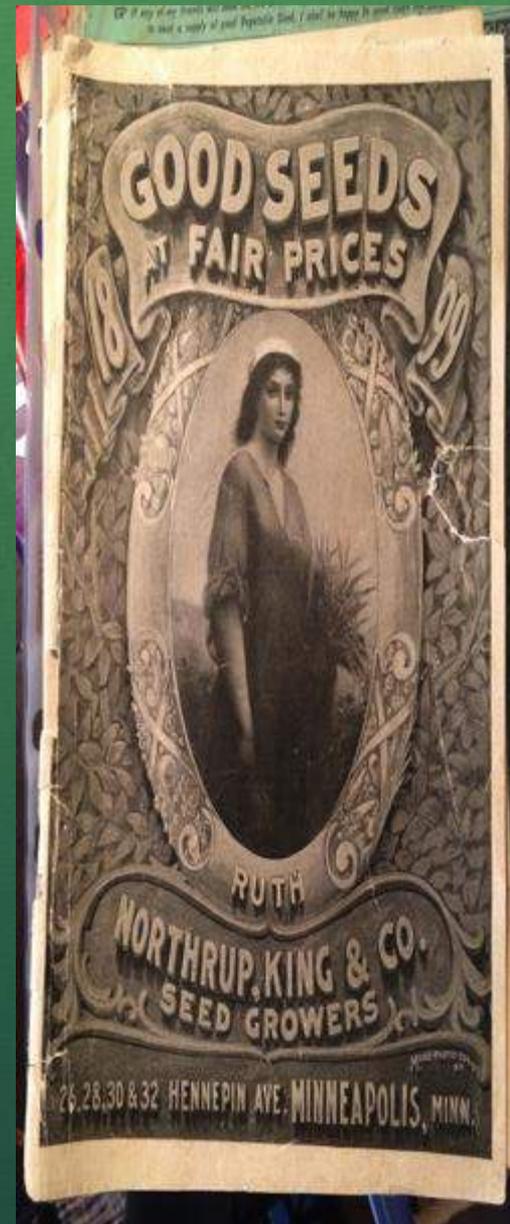
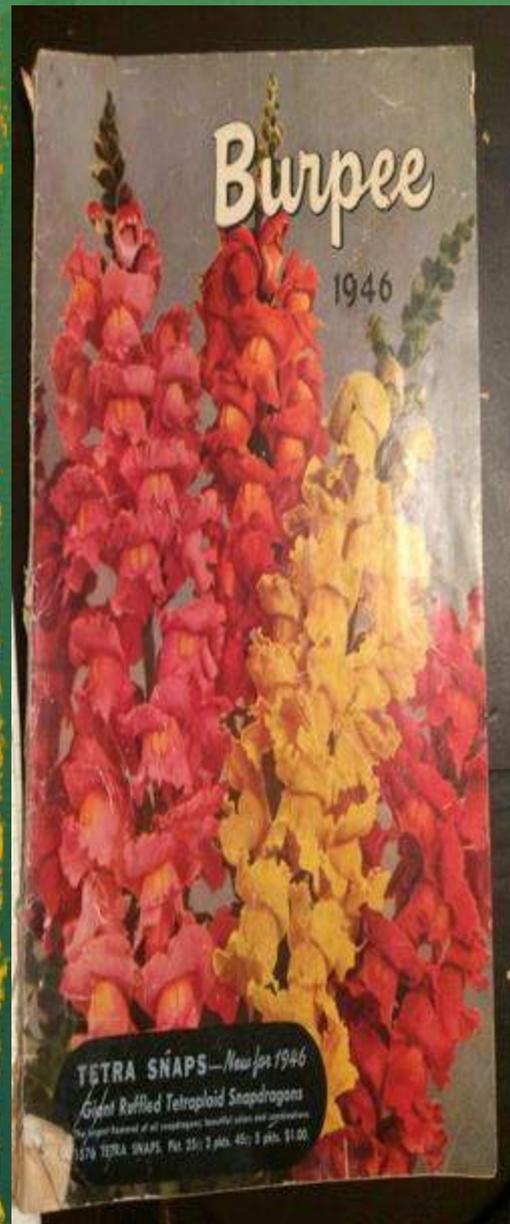
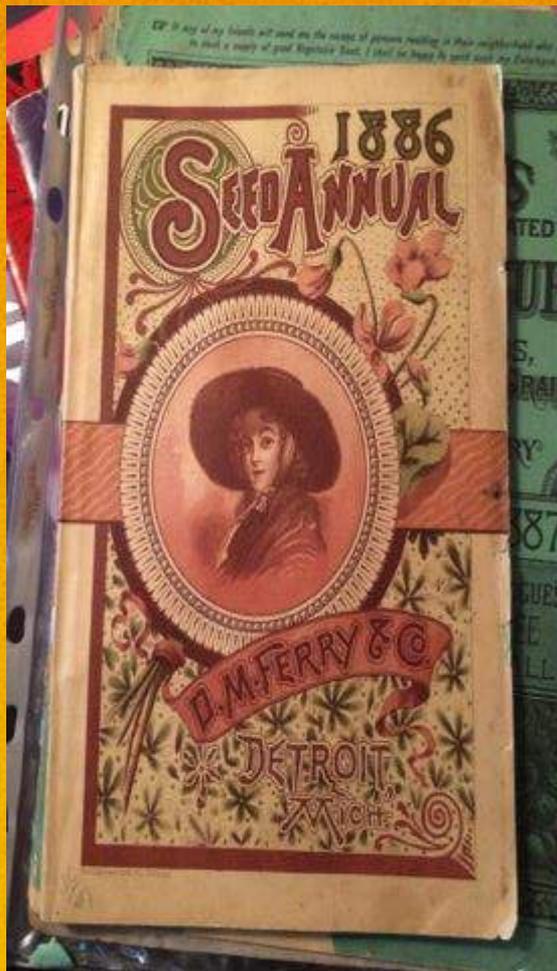


# How to pick your seeds properly

Stephen McComber asked us to pick some seeds out of a bowl and decide which seeds were suitable to harvest and which ones were suitable for eating. Not all seeds that are harvested should be sold as seed. It is important because what you choose from your batch, the properties of the plant and seed will be reproduced the next season.

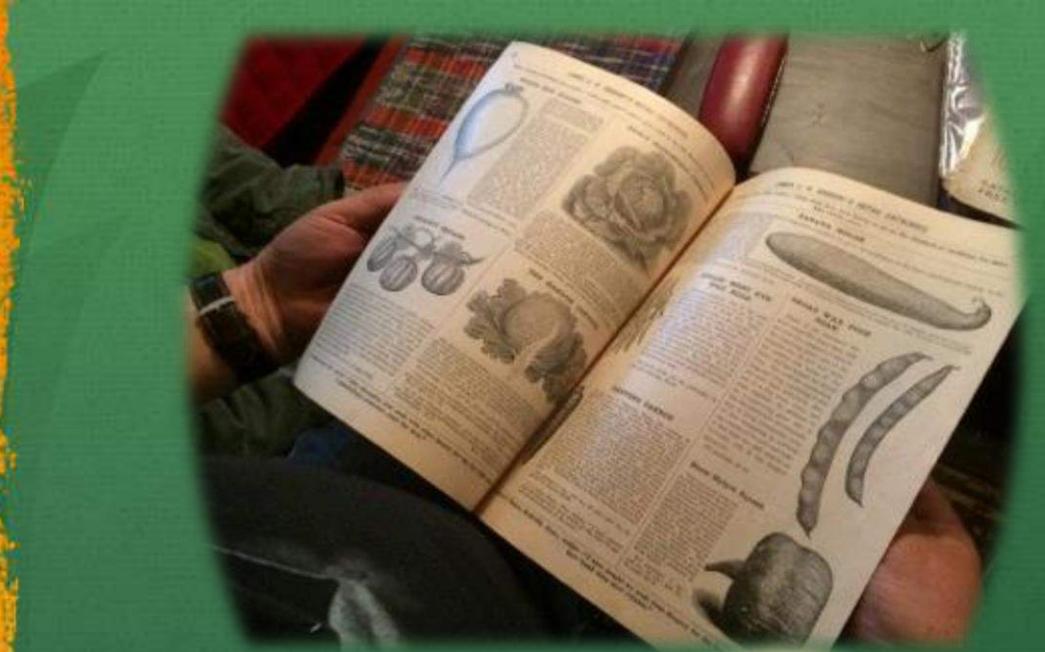


# Seed Catalogues from 1886, 1899 & 1946



# Inside the old Seed Catalogues

The amount of different varieties of seeds has dropped by 75% since 1900s and we have lost old cultivars of foods that our ancestors grew in abundance. These magazines have great articles on corn (sweet not Indigenous flour) and beans and peas and even talks about 'hybridization' of corn, this before we had the very professional hybrid technology of 2016. The Old catalogues were very descriptive to make up for the lack of photographs.



# Harvest party at the Fire Council Farms

To mark the changing seasons as we did with the Crow Moon (spring), Strawberry Moon (summer) we have the Harvest Moon (fall) event.

This season we were fortunate enough to have both Stephen McComber and Fred Wiseman participate in harvest activities.



# The participants at the fall harvest

So incredible to have many hands on the farm to help harvest the last of the summer plants before the frost comes in. Many patrons of the Native Friendship Center of Montreal came and participated in our activities that day. We ate good food, had good conversations and shared knowledge from various communities.



# Super women and their passion for seeds

A lot of amazing hard work has gone into the farm this summer but I could not have done it without my two amazing solidarity sisters Ashley Demartini and

Anne-Marie Lefebvre who have been so supportive and helped with all the fun and not so fun work on the farm.

I wanted to take this opportunity to thank them from the bottom of my heart!

My family needs particular mention too! No house stands without a solid loving foundation.



# Abenaki Bean Hole

Fred Wiseman taught myself and the staff at the farm how to dig an Abenaki bean hole to make delicious baked beans. During the harvest day, the participants were able to dig a hole and line it with stones. The day before we dug one, lit a fire and baked the beans because it takes almost 12 hours to cook the beans. Miammmmm!



## BEAN HOLE BEANS RECIPE

### Prepare the Bean hole:

Dig a hole in the ground approximately 3 feet deep and the diameter of your bean pot plus 8 inches. Lay earth carefully to the side of the hole.

Line it with field or river cobbles.

Build a fire in the hole and let it burn down to large embers and ash. This can take half a day before enough coals are produced to cook the beans properly.

### Ingredients:

Use Wabanaki dry beans such as Marfax, Maine Yellow Eye, Jacob's Cattle. If unavailable, Soldier beans will work.

Traditional ingredients include lots of maple syrup for sweetness, and some form of animal fat such as bear grease. In the 19th century salt pork or ham hocks became the meat of choice. Today, molasses and brown sugar can substitute for the maple syrup, and people add onions and even tomatoes.

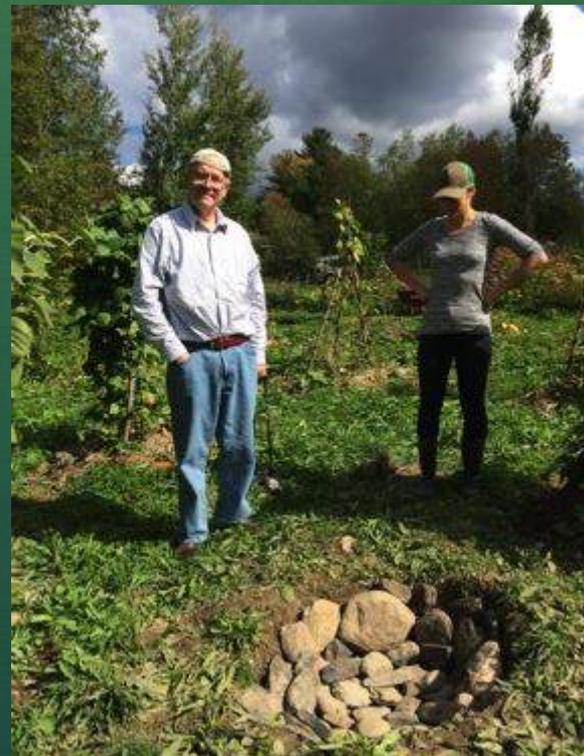
### Recipe:

Put the beans (they can be pre-cooked if a shorter bake is required) and other ingredients in a cast iron pot and cover with water and a lid. Dig out the embers and ash from the hole and set to the side. Place the pot in the hole with a pot hook, cover with a wet dish towel or burlap sack, shovel the embers and ashes on top of the pot, and then cover the hole with dirt. Cooking time varies depending on which recipe is used but it can take as long as 46 hours. Dig out and lift out the pot with a pot hook and enjoy!



## MAINE WABANAKI-STYLE EARTH OVEN

Archaeologists have shown that the ancient Wabanaki people used heated, stone-lined pits to slow cook their food. This old technique has given us the "Bean-hole Supper" and the "New England Shore Dinner." Here is an example of a mid-20th century "Bean Hole" style earth oven.



# Bean Hole fire

It takes hours to get your bean hole ready for the cast iron pot of beans. You need to ensure that you have at least

8 inches of coal that heat up your stones for hours. If your hole is too deep with too much thermal mass you can burn your beans. When you are ready, you shovel out the coals, put the pot in and shovel coals and dirt over it. Dig it up the next day and voilà!



# Braiding corn and picking healthy seeds

Stephen took the time to show us how to pick out the right corn seed based on how the cob and kernels on the cob looked. Were they healthy, how were they shaped & was the color right? He then showed us how to properly husk and braid the corn so that we could hang it up to dry and harvest the seeds next season. Such an incredibly fun and wet activity!



# Ending the season right!

We had the amazing opportunities to harvest beans, corn and squash with Stephen McComber. He taught us how to pick and braid our corn and even taught us the Alligator dance. I had the honor of dancing with him, my great friend and partner in crime, Ranehstaienthos McComber.

I want to also thank Yann Vergriete, Helen Jensen and Jane Rabinovicz for their faith in the project and without whom the work we do would not be possible! Nià:wen

