The Power of One: Seeds
by Sarah Lindblom

In my vegetable garden I sometimes get overwhelmed with the number of tasks ahead, but I try to take a lesson from the humble seed. Once planted, a single vulnerable seed will demonstrate its resilience even when faced with adverse conditions. With a little care from its gardener, the seed’s potential is multiplied.

As the future of food hangs in the balance many are turning to seed saving as a way to build community, preserve cultural heritage, and to grow food that just tastes better. Jeff Aldrich of Mana Gardens is growing an array of open pollinated vegetables for local farmers and gardeners out of Buffalo this year and his reasons are mostly political. “Seed, like water, is a common good” Jeff says, and he is dedicated to preserving biodiversity and to maintain that seed belongs to everyone. He and others call for open source licenses so seed cannot be patented. Only open pollinated seeds can be saved, and Jeff says an easy way to get started is with lettuce which doesn’t cross pollinate. Mary Sue Stevens—photographer, farmer, and Jeff’s wife—says that fewer people are starting things from seed. “It’s the magic and wonder of watching a seed pop out of the soil—kids aren’t having that experience anymore.”

If you are thinking about growing a garden you can find Mana Gardens’ open pollinated varieties at 1400 N Hwy 25 Buffalo on Sunday afternoons in May, The Buffalo Farmer’s Market and at the Local Roots Food Co-op online marketplace.

Vandana Shiva explains that, “Humanity has eaten more than 80,000 plant species through its evolution—we now rely on just eight crops to provide 75 percent of the world’s food.” We can each contribute to food biodiversity and one seed at a time is all it takes.