

# HOW TO SAVE LETTUCE SEED



**1** Let your lettuce plants grow well past when you would have eaten them. Seed is harvested after the plant 'bolts' (sends up a flower stalk), flowers, sets seed, and dries. Lettuce seeds are ready for harvest 2 to 3 weeks after the flowers bloom.

**2** Lettuce seeds are very small, and can be harvested by shaking the seed heads into a paper bag. To maximize the amount of seed harvested, leave the plants in the ground and harvest weekly as new seeds mature. Once the lettuce seed heads are almost totally dry, you may pull the entire plant and hang upside-down over a paper bag.



**3** Lettuce seeds are light, and winnowing tends to blow both seeds and chaff away. Instead, seeds can be cleaned by screening. Use a fine mesh screen that will allow the seeds to pass through but will restrict the white 'feathers' and larger chaff. Shake the screen gently while lightly blowing the chaff off the screen. Alternatively, seeds can be cleaned by rubbing them against a rough paper plate. The feathers should fall off the plate while the seeds are free when the plate is tipped.

