

SETTING UP A SEED AND SEEDLING SWAP

A “How-To“ Guide brought to you by: Harvey Park Neighborhood Susty Group

A RECENT SUCCESS

For two years running the Harvey Park Susty Group has conducted a Seed and Seedling Swap in the Spring for the community. Neighbors bring seeds and seedlings to share and take home others' seeds and seedlings to plant in their gardens. Folks who don't bring items to share can make a donation to a nonprofit organization. The first year we made donations to Denver Food Rescue and in the second to our operating fund to host future activities.



STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL EVENT

1. **Choose Date/Time:** At a meeting decide when and where to hold the swap. Springtime is best. We chose the neighborhood Rec Center on a Saturday morning.
2. **Audience:** Discern who will bring seeds and seedlings to ensure there is plenty to share. Tip: Make sure they haven't been treated with pesticides to protect pollinators.
3. **Advertise** the upcoming event through your neighborhood newsletter, social media (Facebook and Next Door), your neighborhood Rec Center, library, schools, and small business hubs if you create a flier. Spread the word too through your neighbor-to-neighbor contacts.
4. **Add Extras:** Consider vendors or activities for your event. You can try selling painted rocks with herb and vegetable names for donation effort, or host workshops on gardening techniques and/or rain catchment systems, vermiculture, etc.
5. **Consider inviting representatives** from related organizations such as Denver Urban Gardens, People and Pollinators Action Network (PPAN), Denver Recycles, etc.
6. **Set up your space:** Designate an area for seedlings/live plants, and arranging seed tables by categories to make it easier to shop. Make sure to leave spaces for wandering between tables.
7. **Bring Supplies:** Envelopes or small sealable bags so gardeners can take a few seeds from a larger supply. Pens for the tables so neighbors can mark information re: varieties, growing conditions and maturity times on their envelopes. If you'll have a lot of plants to share, provide some boxes for carrying.
8. **Provide Directions:** It's helpful to have a large sign or poster to let folks know how to participate.

Try this event in your neighborhood today!



Seed swapping in action, painted garden rocks at the Harvey Park Seed Swap

WHAT MADE THIS EVENT SO GREAT?

It was great to see community members getting to know each other while sharing seeds, garden situations, gardening techniques, food preparation ideas, and sustainability ideas. Families would swing by with children in strollers. Folks seemed happy as they left with their new seeds, seedlings, hopes of a bountiful harvest and new social connections with fellow community members.

LESSON LEARNED

- 1) Make certain you have enough people power to take care of all the details of the event. There are a lot of moving parts.
- 2) Ensure the event is planned early enough so that the details can be submitted to your neighborhood newsletter (quarterly)