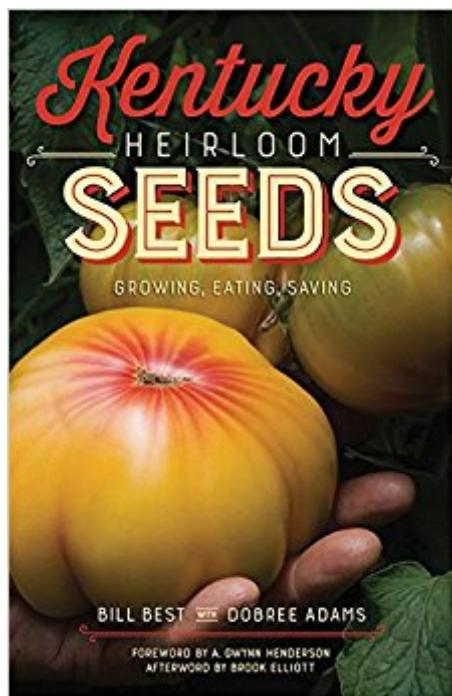


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# Kentucky Heirloom Seeds: Growing, Eating, Saving



## **Synopsis**

Saving seeds to plant for next year's crop has been key to survival around the globe for millennia. However, the twentieth century witnessed a grand takeover of seed producers by multinational companies aiming to select varieties ideal for mechanical harvest, long-distance transportation, and long shelf life. With the rise of the Slow Food and farm-to-table movements in recent years, the farmers and home gardeners who have been quietly persisting in the age-old habit of conserving heirloom plants are finally receiving credit for their vital role in preserving both good taste and the world's rich food heritage. Kentucky Heirloom Seeds: Growing, Eating, Saving is an evocative exploration of the seed saver's art and the practice of sustainable agriculture. Bill Best and Dobree Adams begin by tracing the roots of the tradition in the state to a 700-year-old Native American farming village in north central Kentucky. Best shares tips for planting and growing beans and describes his family's favorite varieties for the table. Featuring interviews with many people who have worked to preserve heirloom varieties, this book vividly documents the social relevance of the rituals of sowing, cultivating, eating, saving, and sharing.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"In the expanding contemporary world of heirloom seed savers, Bill Best is already legend with over 700 varieties of discrete beans and hundreds of tomatoes stockpiled and catalogued at his farm outside of Berea, Kentucky. Best is distinguished not only for his collection of seeds, but for his keen interest in the stories that accompany them and his ability to weave those stories into the history of

a people and a region, the Appalachian South. At a time of growing attention to and focus on American foodways as history, Best's book is a valuable resource that will be used across the discipline."•Ronni Lundy, author of *Victuals: An Appalachian Journey, with Recipes and Shuck Beans, Stack Cakes, and Honest Fried Chicken*"Bill Best's language and tone of voice are elegant notes of calm discourse in a shrill world. Beneath the tackiness of American popular culture there is a depth of traditional culture that is invisible to the mass media. The book is a kind of seed itself, fecund, filled with life and potential."•Gurney Norman, author of *Ancient Creek: A Folktale and Kinfolks: The Wilgus Stories*

Bill Best, professor emeritus from Berea College, is a Madison County, Kentucky, farmer and one of the charter members of the Lexington Farmers' Market. Widely known as a saver, collector, and grower of heirloom beans and tomatoes, he is the author of *Saving Seeds, Preserving Taste: Heirloom Seed Savers in Appalachia*. Dobree Adams is primarily known in the region as a fiber artist and photographer. She gardens and farms on a river bottom of the Kentucky north of Frankfort.

A wonderfully written book full of history and inspiration. Not just for folks from Kentucky, but for anyone interested in our botanical heritage, heirloom seeds, and saving biodiversity.

Wonderful book by renown seed saver Bill Best. Filled with stories of seed saving and history.

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