

## LTPL Seed Sharing Library

### Heirloom Beans 2017

We are happy to share our growing collection of heirloom beans. The beans below were chosen because they have been successfully grown and harvested in Michigan. Each type of bean has a story, and that story is often interwoven with the history of our country. These beans below are traditionally grown on to the dry stage, then harvested and stored for winter use. Some are good to eat at the “snap” stage when picked very young, but the pods quickly become tough and stringy as they mature. Most can be harvested and cooked at the “shell” stage when the pods and beans are not yet dry. For storage and seed-saving, however, the beans must be grown until fully mature and the outer pods and seeds are completely dry.

Although we generally do not insist that people grow out and return seeds to the Seed Sharing Library, in the case of the heirloom beans we hope that you make your best effort to do so. If everyone who grows the beans returns enough seed to share with just one or two other gardeners it will help our collection grow and become self-sustaining, and, in turn, serve more people.

If you have an heirloom bean that you grow that does well in Michigan, please consider donating some seed to this collection. If there is a family story or a piece of history that goes with the bean, please share that as well.

**Arikara Yellow:** Bush, 80-85 days. A tan to creamy yellow dry bean originally from the Arikara nation of the Dakota Territory. These seeds were obtained by Lewis and Clark during their famous expedition, and the beans helped feed and sustain the members of the expedition through the arduous Fort Mandan winter of 1805. They were grown by Thomas Jefferson at Monticello, and Jefferson referred to them as "forward" beans, because they bore so early in the season. They were first commercially introduced by Oscar Will in his Pioneer Indian Collection of Seeds in 1915. Drought tolerant and productive, these beans can be harvested young and as snap beans or dried in the pods for stews and dried bean dishes.

**Black Coco:** Bush, 95 days. This is a French heirloom with purple-striped green pods that contain large, round, shiny, black seeds. This variety grows on an upright, bushy plant about 18"-24" tall with good resistance to drought and disease. Although it can be harvested very young and used as a snap bean, it is best grown on as a dried bean and is very good for making a rich-flavored black bean soup.

**Black Turtle Bean:** A favorite in South and Central American, Caribbean, and American Southwest cuisine, black turtle beans have a mild, sweet, earthy flavor that combines well with assertive seasonings like chili peppers and cumin. Use in spicy soups, stews and casseroles.

**Calypto Bean:** Bush, Beautiful black and white bean. Grown in the Caribbean region for over 400 years, and is also known as the Yin-Yang Bean because of the striking resemblance to the Chinese Yin-Yang symbol. Calypto had a smooth, creamy texture and a potato-like taste.

**Cherokee Trail of Tears:** Pole, 65 days. This heirloom was brought from Tennessee by the Cherokee people as they were marched across the Smoky Mountains to Oklahoma by our Federal Government in 1839. This winter death march is known as the Trail of Tears, and over 4,000 people suffered and died

making the trip. This bean variety was donated to Seed Savers Exchange in 1977 by one of the descendants of those people, Dr. John Wyche from Hugo, Oklahoma. This prolific variety is good as a snap or dry bean and has shiny, black beans. Vigorous, vining plants.

**Good Mother Stallard:** Pole, 90 days. Productive variety that yields 5-6 maroon-and-white beans per pod. Originally introduced to Seed Savers Exchange by Glenn Drowns, it has been grown in the U.S. for generations. The beans can be harvested either as a green shelling or as a dry bean, and is known to be superior in baked beans and soups because of their creamy texture and hearty, nutty flavor.

**Hidatsa Shield Figure:** Pole, 90 days. Grown by the Hidatsa People of the Missouri River Valley region of North Dakota. It is said to be one of the pole beans grown with corn and squash as the “Three Sisters.” The beans are oval and white with a golden “shield” marking around the eye of the bean. Can be harvested early as a fresh bean but most often dried for storage. It is a creamy and delicious soup bean.

**Lina Sisco’s Bird Egg Bean:** Bush, 85 days. Lina Sisco was one of the six original members of Seed Savers Exchange when it was founded in 1975. This heirloom bean was brought to Missouri by covered wagon in the 1880s by her grandmother and then grown by her family for generations. The tan and burgundy seeds reliably produce an excellent crop and can be harvested either as a green shelling or dry bean.

**Peregion:** Bush, 95 days. An heirloom from Oregon, this small, glossy bean is tan with stripes and swirls of dark brown, with some seeds being solid brown. It can be harvested young as a snap bean, but is best dried and used as a delicious soup or baking bean. It is said to hold its color after cooking. While it a bush plant, it sends out long runners and should be grown with support or given room to sprawl.