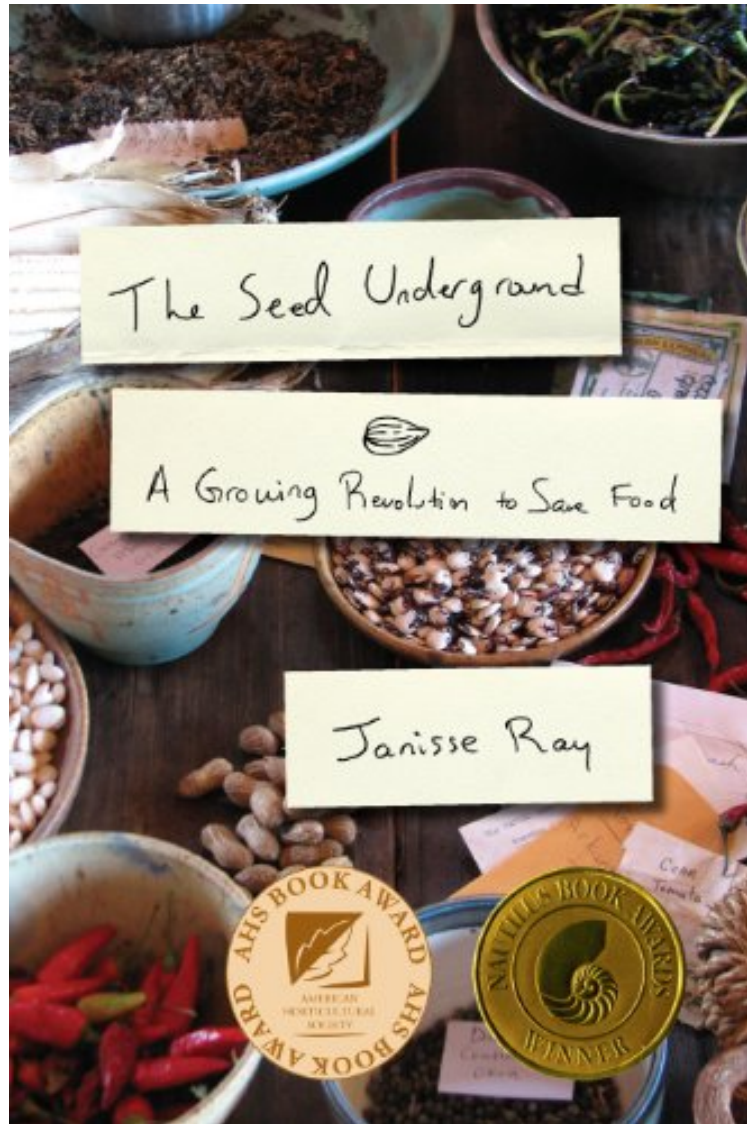


(Free read ebook) The Seed Underground: A Growing Revolution to Save Food

The Seed Underground: A Growing Revolution to Save Food

Janisse Ray

ePub | *DOC | audiobook | ebooks | Download PDF



[Download](#)

[Read Online](#)

#573693 in Books 2012-07-06 Original language: English PDF # 1 9.02 x .63 x 6.021, .81 #File Name: 1603583068240 pages Ships from Vermont | File size: 23.Mb

Janisse Ray : The Seed Underground: A Growing Revolution to Save Food before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Seed Underground: A Growing Revolution to Save Food:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. This book is a must read about how people around ...By Lizzy W. This book is a must read about how people around the USA are saving our seeds from extinction. Monsanto has bought out most of the seed companies and has engineered all seeds to not be viable, be pesticide-resistant so they can use pesticides on them and to have other qualities that are artificially and chemically induced. GMO foods have at

least 20 percent less nutrition, and have dangerous side effects that can cause neurological disorders to cancer. Other parts of the world have banned GMO seeds and products but not here.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Loved This Book!By Jewell BurnsGreat book. It is not easy to write an interesting and entertaining gardening book, but this one is just that. Stories of seed savers and the seeds they have saved was heart warming. The stories of seeds is being lost in our quick paced society and this book documents some of those stories.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Best book I read in 2014 !!!By Jim in TexasMy favorite book I read in 2014! Very readable, very well written, very entertaining. - Lays out the case against GMO seeds crops as a clear present danger to our food security at the home garden community garden levels. Also, lots of practical information for amateur gardeners who save open pollinated heirloom seeds.

There is no despair in a seed. There's only life, waiting for the right conditions-sun and water, warmth and soil-to be set free. Everyday, millions upon millions of seeds lift their two green wings. At no time in our history have Americans been more obsessed with food. Options- including those for local, sustainable, and organic food-seem limitless. And yet, our food supply is profoundly at risk. Farmers and gardeners a century ago had five times the possibilities of what to plant than farmers and gardeners do today; we are losing untold numbers of plant varieties to genetically modified industrial monocultures. In her latest work of literary nonfiction, award-winning author and activist Janisse Ray argues that if we are to secure the future of food, we first must understand where it all begins: the seed. *The Seed Underground* is a journey to the frontier of seed-saving. It is driven by stories, both the author's own and those from people who are waging a lush and quiet revolution in thousands of gardens across America to preserve our traditional cornucopia of food by simply growing old varieties and eating them. *The Seed Underground* pays tribute to time-honored and threatened varieties, deconstructs the politics and genetics of seeds, and reveals the astonishing characters who grow, study, and save them.

Midwest Book -*The Seed Underground: A Growing Revolution to Save Food* offers stories of ordinary gardeners who try to save open-pollinated varieties of old-time seeds, and blends their stories with that of Janisse Ray, who watched her grandmother save squash seed and who herself cultivated a garden rich in heirloom varieties and local strengths. It's a story of not just gardening, but harvesting and preserving vintage varieties of food, and will appeal to gardening and culinary collections alike with its powerful account of saving seeds and old varieties on the verge of vanishing. Booklist-Nature writer and advocate Ray continues her thoughtful exploration of rural life with this timely look at heirloom seeds. After sharing some startling statistics (in the last 100 years, 94 percent of seed varieties available in America have been lost), she delves into why and how we have become so dependent upon such a small group of seeds and why this lack of diversity poses such a threat. Ray wisely buttresses facts with personal experiences, recounting the development of her own seed-saving habits, then introducing farmers and gardeners across the country who share their often generations-spanning histories of seed preservation. These personal perspectives of homespun habits stand in stark contrast to industrial agriculture, and support Ray's argument that the American food system is broken and these are the sorts of people who can show us how to fix it. She succeeds beautifully on all counts, evincing a firm grip on science, history, politics, and culture as she addresses matters of great significance to all of us. The Bookwatch-*The Seed Underground: A Growing Revolution to Save Food* offers stories of ordinary gardeners who try to save open-pollinated varieties of old-time seeds, and blends their stories with that of Janisse Ray, who watched her grandmother save squash seed and who herself cultivated a garden rich in heirloom varieties and local strengths. It's a story of not just gardening, but harvesting and preserving vintage varieties of food, and will appeal to gardening and culinary collections alike with its powerful account of saving seeds and old varieties on the verge of vanishing. Kirkus s-A naturalist's rally for the preservation of heirloom seeds amid the agricultural industry's increasing monoculture. Ray (*Drifting into Darien: A Personal and Natural History of the Altamaha River*, 2011, etc.) unabashedly proclaims that seeds are "miracles in tiny packages. Through accounts of her own journey in saving them, as well as facts and anecdotes, she urges readers to consider the practice, in order to avoid genetic erosion, to improve health, to work against a system that determines and limits availability, and more. Without stridence, Ray forthrightly presents her case, advocating for small organic farmers and less corporate dependence. In her most persuasive chapters, she recounts her travels in Georgia, Vermont, Iowa and North Carolina to meet others involved in saving specific varieties. She emphasizes the importance of diversity and also the ways in which preservation becomes a cultural resource; each seed bears a singular history that is often not only regional, but familial. Readers new to the topic will find that Ray's impassioned descriptions skillfully combine discussions on plant genetics and the metaphorical potential of seeds. Alternating between science and personal stories of finding her own farm, attending a Seed Savers Exchange convention, and increasing activism, the author also includes a brief section on basic seed saving and concludes with chapters that confront the idea of the homegrown as merely idyllic. With a nod toward Wendell Berry, this work emphasizes the importance of individuals working as a community. Recommended for experienced gardeners guerrilla or otherwise and novices searching for alternatives to processed, corporatized food. Publishers Weekly, Starred -In this enchanting narrative part memoir, part botany primer, part political manifesto Ray,

author of the acclaimed *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, and lately returning to her childhood obsession with farming, has a mission: to inspire us with her own life to understand food at its most elemental... the most hopeful thing in the world. It is a seed. In the era of dying, it is all life. Ray is inspired by the eccentric, impassioned, generous characters she visits and interviews, gardeners and farmers who populate the quietly radical world of seed savers, from Vermonter Sylvia Davatz, self-proclaimed Imelda Marcos of seeds, to the more phlegmatic Bill Keener of Rabin Gap, Ga., who gives Ray two 20-inch cobs of Keener corn, grown by his family for generations, as well as Greasy Back beans and some rotten Box Car Willy tomatoes to save for seed. Despite the book's occasional tendency toward polemic, avid gardeners will relish recognizing their idiosyncratic, revolutionary sides in its pages, and its likely to strike a spark in gardening novices. Even couch potatoes will be enthralled by Ray's intimate, poetically conversational stories of her encounters with the "lovely, whimsical, and soulful things [that] happen in a garden, leaving a gardener giddy.

Foreword s- At the center of most of the world's most enduring epics, myths, and legends are spellbinding tales of plants that offer immortality, grasses and flowers that offer sustenance for humans and other animals, fruit that contains the knowledge of good and evil, and seeds that when sown across a barren land flower into apple trees. As environmental activist and poet Ray reminds us in her own mesmerizing tale, the history of civilization is the history of seeds, and she fiercely and lovingly gathers the stories of individuals committed to saving seeds, not only to preserve the legacy of certain plants but also to ensure plant biodiversity in an agricultural environment where large corporations encourage monoculture. As a young child, Ray delightfully learned the value of saving seeds, watching the stunning plants that grew from those she sowed. She warmly recalls her grandmother giving her some Jack bean seeds one summer, and from that moment I got crazy about seeds because I was crazy about plants because long ago I realized that the safest place I could be was in the plant kingdom where things made sense where nothing was going to eat you. Throughout high school when other girls were dating or playing sports Ray was ordering seeds, planting, watching, and exhorting them to grow. Because of her love of seeds and her practices of saving and planting them to keep crops alive for future generations, Ray discovers organizations and scores of other individuals devoted to saving our food in the same way. With her typically forceful passion, Ray points to the ways in which the system is broken: our food is going extinct (by 2005, 75 percent of the world's garden vegetables had been lost), and it is hazardous to our health, harming the earth, annihilating pollinators, and nutritionally impotent. Ray tells the stories of these many men and women making a difference in their own corners of America, such as Will Bonsall, a Noah whose juggling several hundred varieties of potatoes, peas, and radishes as he saves their seeds, or Sylvia Davatz, who is trying to develop a supply of locally grown seeds as the underpinning of a regional food supply. Encouraged by the overwhelming commitment to the seed revolution, Ray fervently proclaims that we can protect what's left of our seeds and in our revolutionary gardens, develop the heirlooms of the future. She urges us to begin now. Never content simply to weave charming and compelling stories, Janisse Ray offers a long list of what each of us can do at real food, buy organic, grow a garden, try to grow as much food as you consume, save your own seeds to develop a sustainable lifestyle that fosters biodiversity and a richer and more fruitful relationship between humans and nature. Ray provides a helpful list of organizations and resources to help her readers get started. Saving seeds isn't just good science; it's a subtler war against the loss of our stories, our history, our connections with each other: Where we live and what we live with is who we are. Add to that, what we eat. And share. For readers eager to get started, several how-to chapters offer basic seed-saving tips and lessons on hand-pollinating and controlling the purity of certain seeds. The *Seed Underground* [is] not a seed-saving manual, but Ray recommends several reliable guides in the resource section at the end of the book. The effect she hopes to have on readers, Ray claims, is modest: My goal is simply to plant a seed. In you. But a poet knows full well the power of words, and if a rally could be contained in the pages of a book, *The Seed Underground* is one, its language by turns incantatory, pleading, rabble-rousing, a challenge to rise to the occasion, to man up or lie there and bleed. From the stirring call to reclaim our seeds developed by our ancestors, grown by them and by us, and collected for use by our citizenry to their irresistible names, like Little White Lady pea, Speckled Cut Short Cornfield bean, Purple Blossom Brown-Striped Half-runner bean and Blue Java pea, Ray boldly seduces us into joining this critical and much-needed revolution.

--Atlanta Journal Constitution "What a dream of a book-my favorite poet writing about my favorite topic (seeds) and the remarkable underground network of growers who are keeping diversity alive on the face of this earth while putting delicious food on our tables! If books can move you to love, this one does."--Gary Paul Nabhan, author of *Chasing Chiles* and *Restoring America's Food Traditions* "Traveling about the country to introduce us to some of her devoted fellow seed savers, Janisse Ray teaches us more than we thought we needed to know about seeds: how remarkable they are, why they need saving, how to save them, and how many of them-each holding the future of some particular plant-have been lost and are being lost to our indifference. But in a world where everything we love-including seeds-seems to be under threat, Ray ultimately offers us hope. 'Everything the seed has needed to know is encoded within it,' she assures us, 'and as the world changes, so it will discover everything it yet needs to know.' A poetic, and always hopeful, book."--Joan Gussow, author of *Growing, Older and This Organic Life* "This is an important book that should be required reading for everyone who eats. Big biotech companies are patenting and privatizing seeds, making it illegal for farmers to retain their own crops for replanting. In a series of engaging and lyrical profiles, Ray shows that by the simple and pleasurable act of saving seeds we can

wrest our food system from corporate control."--Barry Estabrook author of *Tomatoland: How Modern Industrial Agriculture Destroyed Our Most Alluring Fruit*"If I get to feeling a little blue about our prospects, I'm liable to reach down one of Janisse Ray's books just so I can hear her calm, wise, strong voice. This one's my new favorite; a world with her in it is going to do the right thing, I think."--Bill McKibben, founder of 350.org"This is an unmatched treasure trove of information... *The Seed Underground* is an excellent choice for readers seeking a depiction of the current critical situation in farming all in one, easy-to-read book."--Gene Logsdon, author of *A Sanctuary of Trees* and *Holy Shit*About the AuthorWriter, naturalist, and activist Janisse Ray is a seed-saver, seed-exchanger, and seed-banker, and has gardened for twenty-five years. She is the author of several books, including *The Seed Underground*, *Pinhook and Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, a *New York Times* Notable Book. Ray is on the faculty of Chatham University's low-residency MFA program, and is a Woodrow Wilson Visiting Fellow. She has won a Southern Booksellers Award for Poetry, a Southeastern Booksellers Award for Nonfiction, an American Book Award, the Southern Environmental Law Center Award for Outstanding Writing, and a Southern Book Critics Circle Award. She attempts to live a simple, sustainable life on a farm in southern Georgia with her husband, Raven Waters.