

How to run a seed swap

If you're a gardener, looking to get into gardening or just love to create fun events for your local community, then Germin8 could be the Pollin8 challenge for you.

A seed swap isn't just about swapping seeds, it's about nurturing a network of like-minded people. A community like this can help each other out with heavier tasks, share equipment, ideas and knowledge, and this kind of support is truly invaluable. It also encourages newbies to get involved with gardening for wildlife, which is one of the best things we can do for bumblebees and other pollinating insects.

1. Planning your event

Date: If you're doing a seed swap, you want to make sure you organise the event in plenty of time for people to start sowing their seeds, which usually starts from February onwards. However, some people plant things up in the winter, so it could also be an idea to host a seed swap in the late summer or early autumn once people have harvested their own seeds.

Time: You'll have more interest in your event if more people can make it. If you host during the day on a weekend, it means that people who work and or have children might find it easier to attend.

Location: Local halls, schools, churches and community centres will likely be the ideal place to host your event. While there may be a fee, choosing these venues not only supports the community but also ensures that essential requirements, such as public liability insurance, are covered. While hosting the event indoors might be more convenient, an outdoor gathering in your garden or allotment could be far more enjoyable if the weather is nice. In that case, you would need to arrange for public liability insurance to legally protect you and any attendees in the event of any accident or injury.

Gather helpers: Do you have friends in your community, or do you know anyone who would be willing to help you run the event? As well as having extra hands on the day to help set up, it's also useful to have a more experienced gardeners present to help answer any growing questions your guests might have.

Extras: You might want to add to your event by having additional activities, for example organising a talk, a raffle or a quiz. Check out your toolkit for our bumblebee quiz!

Spread the word: Remember that when you're telling everyone about your event, use a variety of different methods as not everyone is online. Tell other local groups, post on your community page, and put up posters around the area. Check out our poster template in your toolkit. Clarify whether seeds should be dropped off before the event or brought on the day, and specify if they need to be organic or locally grown. Provide guidelines on how seeds should be labelled and packaged for swapping or selling. Don't forget to mention that attending the event will help raise funds for the Bumblebee Conservation Trust and offer a great opportunity to meet the local community, share knowledge and of course, swap seeds.



bumblebeeconservation.org

The Bumblebee Conservation Trust is a registered charity (England & Wales 1115634 / Scotland SC042830).

Correspondence address: Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Beta Centre, Stirling University Innovation Park, Stirling FK9 4NF.

Registered address: International House, 109-111 Fulham Palace Road, London, W6 8JA.



2. The event

The format: Most seeds swaps are run via an honour system. That is, you don't necessarily count how many packets or seeds people bring or take but instead trust that they haven't taken more than they should have. Most swaps involve a system where tables are set up with boxes labelled for different plant groups, i.e. flowers, herbs and vegetables, or if there are more seeds they might be split into plant families, i.e. brassicas, legumes, root vegetables. When people arrive, they can show someone the seeds they have brought, and they can add them into the boxes. They can then move around the seed table and pick some seeds that they would like to take. However, some people may prefer to trade depending on what type of seeds they have, in which case specific areas can be set up to facilitate this.

Collecting seeds: You may wish to collect seeds before the event so that you have a good idea of how many you will have at the event. Alternatively, if you know a lot of people are coming, you may prefer for people to just bring seeds with them on the day. In which case, it might be wise to ask people to come a little earlier to set up before everyone else arrives. If you are worried that you might not have enough seed, you could contact plant companies and nurseries as they might be willing to donate to charity events. You should also have an idea for what to do with any leftover seeds. You could donate them to a local community gardening group or school, or ask that everyone takes back what is left over from what they originally brought.

Donations: Think about how you'd like to raise donations at your event. If you're selling seeds, you may decide that all proceeds will be donated. Alternatively, you may want to include an entrance

fee to attend your event. If people arrive who don't have seeds to swap you could suggest they make a minimum donation for any seeds they take. You could also set up a donation station at your event so that people can donate in cash or you can direct them to donate on our website. People may be more likely to donate to the Trust if they can find out more about the work they'd be supporting, so do let us know if you would like any leaflets to support your event. Check your toolkit for a poster with a donation QR code to make donating as easy as possible for your guests to donate!

3. After the event

Stay in touch: Find ways of staying in touch with your attendees as maybe they would like to attend future events. Did they enjoy learning about bumblebees? Maybe you could direct them to our enews sign-up on our website so they can find out more about these amazing pollinators.

Shout about it: We'd love to hear all about your event, but make sure the rest of your community hear about it too! Take lots of photos and post them on your community page, circulate in a community email, or ask to write a short article for your local newsletter. Remember, if you plan on sharing photos or videos of your event, only do so if people have provided consent.

Get in touch!

Post: Bumblebee Conservation Trust, Beta Centre,
Stirling University Innovation Park, Stirling FK9 4NF
Phone: 01786 594 130
Email: membership@bumblebeeconservation.org
Web: www.bumblebeeconservation.org

Remember to take lots of photos and videos during your event, and tag us on social media so we can share them with our followers!

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