

Norwegian Heritage Seed Savers

Planteklubb for Grønnsaker, Potet og Urter

The Norwegian Seed Savers is a new organisation, established by the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre (Genressursenteret) in collaboration with the Norwegian Garden Society (Hageselskapet) in 2006 with the aim to conserve old heritage vegetables by active cultivation through a group of amateur gardeners throughout Norway. By autumn 2008, 40 people had joined. Members have initially been given access to seed and vegetative material mostly sourced from the Norwegian Genetic Resource Centre in collaboration with Nordgen, with a total of 220 varieties and accessions available: 3 Onions (Kepaløk), 1 Leek, 27 Swedes, 17 Turnips (including the old North Norway land-race Målselvnepe, available on the market in Tromsø), 34 Cabbage, 1 Brussel Sprout, 2 Tomatoes (Norderås and the yellow variety Tante Ci), 8 French Beans, 10 Peas (including the commercially cultivated Ringeriksert), 6 Caraway (Karve, used in Aquavit production), 1 Garden Angelica (Vossakvann, an old variety with solid stalks), 40 Jerusalem Artichoke, 9 Horseradish, 21 Potatoes (including the popular blue variety, Blå Congo, now available in supermarkets), 22 Rhubarb and 17 Shallot varieties collected in the 1970s from all parts of the country. In addition, a project to map, collect and conserve old varieties of perennial onions (mainly *Allium fistulosum*, *A. scorodoprasum*, *A. victorialis* and *A. schoenoprasum*) started in 2008 and material will be offered to members next year. Further, an old 80+ years old Finnish Garlic (Alexandra) has been found to be well suited to the Norwegian climate and is now cultivated by about 10 members. Some 45 % of all offered varieties have been distributed to the group. However, some are obviously easier to conserve in a garden situation than others and experiences are being monitored through an annual report which members are asked to complete each autumn. A guide to seed saving is also being prepared.



Members are found throughout the country

More Information from the coordinator, Stephen Barstow (stephenb@broadpark.no) or Åsmund Asdal at Genressursenteret.



Pictures (from top left, left to right): Potato "Røde fra Skjåk", Potato Rød Mandel, Jerusalem Artichoke "Dømmesmoen" in flower, Jerusalem Artichoke diversity (Dagnøytral, top in centre), Potato "Blå Kongo", French Bean "Klosterbønne", Horseradish from "Sogn", Brussels Sprout "Jøtunsalget", Garden Angelica "Vossakvann", Welsh Onion (*Allium fistulosum*), a variety found on old turf roofs along the Gudbrandsdalen, Turnip diversity (Målselvnepe, top left), Caraway, Caraway soup (a traditional spring dish), Rhubarb diversity, Shallot collection at Nordgen. Photographers: Members Hiltrud Hemmersbach, Nadine Ranke, Unni Østby Strand and Stephen Barstow.