



# CITIZEN SEED TRIAL

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SEED SYSTEM EVOLUTION!

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#CITIZENSEED

Hello Citizen Scientists,

We are happy to announce that seeds have been mailed and should be arriving at your doorsteps in the next little while. Here's some information that will help you get started.

## **Trial Design**

The goal of a variety trial is to compare varieties of the same crop. This will help you decide which variety works best for your location. There are more than 400 of us participating in the CST trials this year so we will be able to see if there are any beneficial characteristics of the varieties that hold true throughout our various climatic conditions.

To eliminate external environmental variables, it's best to plant the two varieties in similar conditions. *For example, if you have one variety of tomato in a pot, it's best to have the other tomato in a pot as well. If your Beauregard snow peas are in a full sun location, try to have the Slocan snow peas in a full sun location as well.*

Tomatoes and peas are both self pollinated so growing the two varieties close together is fine. As biennials, beets will not go to flower and seed till next year, so it's perfectly acceptable to plant them close together this year. Don't forget to clearly label all your crops.

**How many plants should I grow?** As many as possible! Aim to have at least 3-4 plants of each variety. The more plants you grow of each variety the easier it will be to compare. Certain traits may appear in some plants that won't appear in others of the same variety, this should be especially noticeable in the breeding populations (Alpharora tomato and beet trial)

## **Planting**

General planting guidelines for each crop. These are just suggestions, feel free to do your own research and use your own expertise.

### **Tomatoes**

Start seeds indoors as soon as possible, preferably with bottom heat. Warm locations like the top of the fridge are perfect. Sow seeds 5mm-1cm deep. Keep tomato seedlings in a bright location to avoid legginess. Direct seeding is an option for those in warmer climates and frost risk has passed.

Transplant your tomato seedlings 2-3 feet apart, making sure they have at least 2 true leaves (versus [cotyledons](#)). Be mindful of the temperature when transplanting, wait till night temperatures are consistently about 7 C. Be prepared to support your tomatoes as both are indeterminate varieties, click [here](#) for information about staking.

### **Peas**

Direct sow 3 cm deep before May. Plant close together if you plan on thinning later or around a foot apart otherwise. Choose a

method to support your vining pea plants that works best for you. A simple method is to plant your pea plants near a fence and add netting. Stacking is also a good option but may require more effort to train the plant up. Click [here](#) for more ideas.

## **Beets**

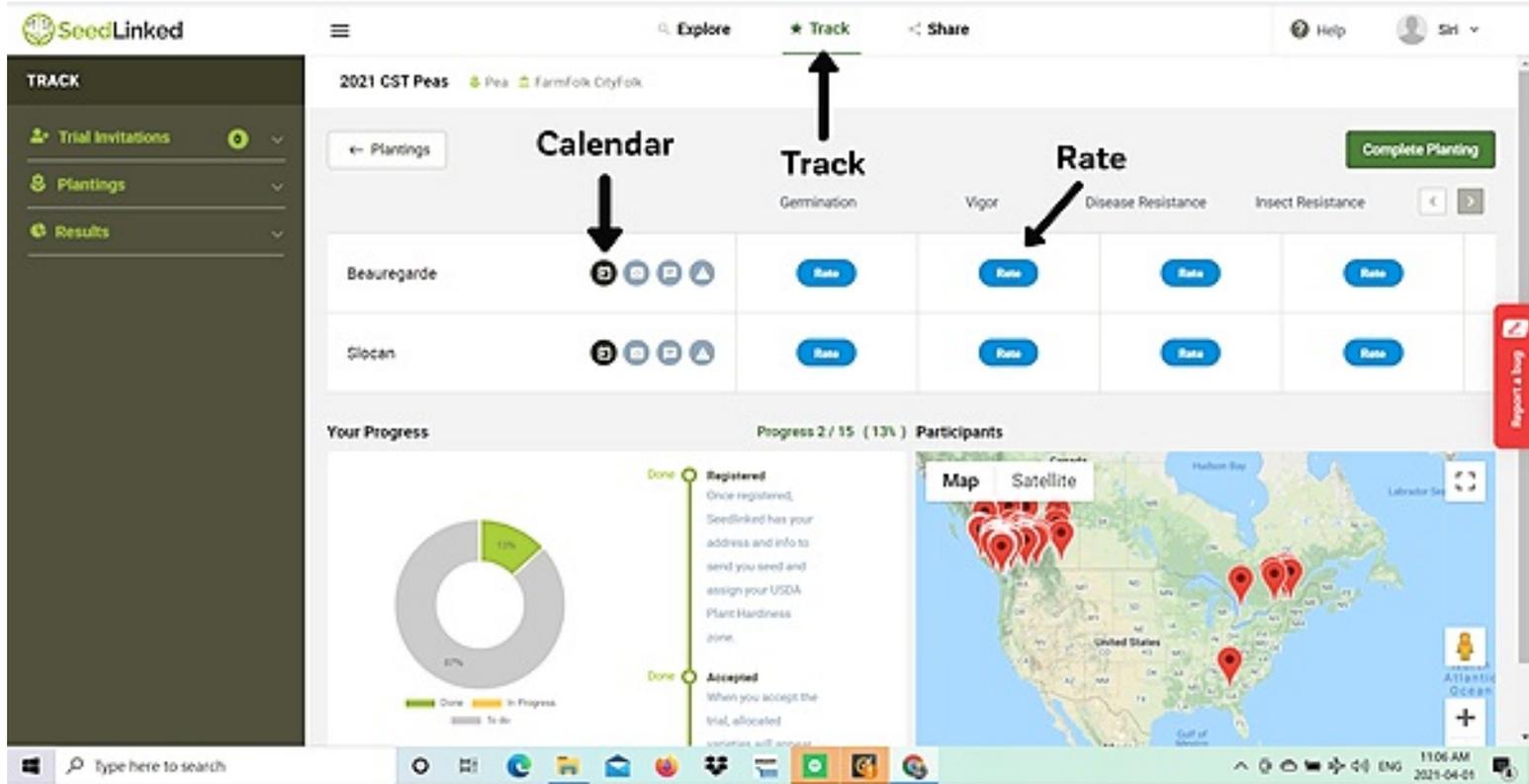
Direct sow April-July, after the last frost date has passed. Germination can take up to a couple of weeks. Sow 1 cm deep and around 5-10 cm apart, rows 30 cm apart. Make sure the soil is kept moist. As beet seeds are found in a nut cluster, pick the strongest plant and thin the others. To avoid damaging the roots, instead of pulling the seedling, simply cut the greens off and enjoy a little snack. This should be done when seedlings are around 5 cm tall.

## **Crop Evaluation**

Evaluating your crop health will be ongoing throughout the season. Look to see if you can spot any pests or diseases present. Take note of this and upload pertinent findings to [SeedLinked](#).

The first step will be to upload your planting dates and germination rates to SeedLinked. To calculate germination simply count the number of seedlings that come up and divide by the number of seeds planted. Here's a quick [SeedLinked](#) tutorial.

1. Login to SeedLinked on your computer
2. Navigate to the Track bar found on the middle top of your screen
3. Hit the blue review button of the desired trial
4. Once you see the screen below, you can click on the black calendar button to enter planting and transplanting dates. Click on the blue rate button to enter your evaluation of the various traits.



We are looking forward to seeing how this year's Citizen Seed Trial goes. Feel free to share pictures and thoughts with us through the CST facebook group, email, or other social media. Tag #CitizenSeed and @FarmFolkCityFolk.

Email Siri at [mvcoordinator@farmfolkcityfolk.ca](mailto:mvcoordinator@farmfolkcityfolk.ca) with any questions, comments, or concerns.

Happy planting,

BC Seed Security Team

## Extra Resources

[Citizen Seed Trial Facebook Group](#) - A public group for those signed

up for this years and past years Citizen Seed Trial. The group is also open to those who are interested in following along. A great place to share your photos and ask questions and help your fellow citizen seed trial grower

[Tomato Growing Tips](#), [Pea Growing Tips](#), [Beet Growing Tips](#) - All from the Farmers almanac

[A Farmers Guide to Doing an On-Farm Variety Trial](#) - Please note this publication is a guide for the experienced growers. Don't be overwhelmed, rather use it as a tool to understand what a variety trial is used for

[Harvest Newsletter Sign up](#) - Our monthly Harvest Newsletter is a great way to keep in touch and updated with all of our programs and upcoming events.



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