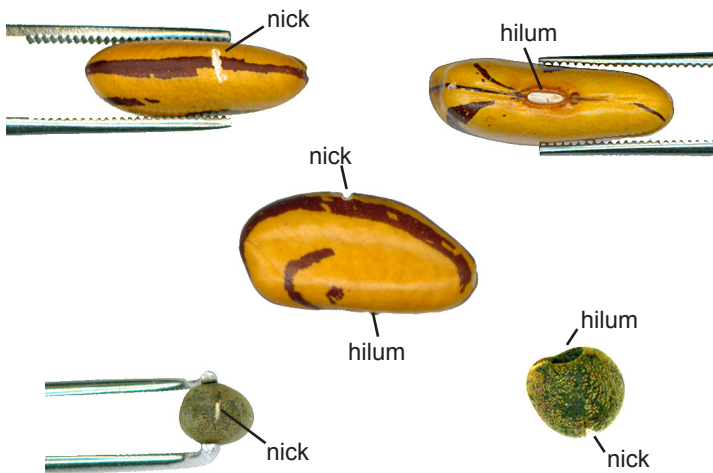


PLANTING HARD SEEDS

Beans and okra may have hard seeds, or seeds that do not easily absorb water due to an impermeable seed coat. Hard seed germination often occurs late and erratically. While it is inconvenient for gardeners, hard seed is actually an effective plant survival mechanism; seeds that germinate later may take the place of those that germinated earlier but didn't survive. Unique traits like hard seeds are what make the diversity of plant species so important to preserve.



At Heritage Farm, we test each variety for germination and hard seed percentage. Every bean and okra variety we distribute includes these percentages on the packet. Refer to this information to determine your variety's likelihood of germination. Depending on the number of seeds you've received and the number of plants you desire, you may want to consider scarifying, or nicking, each seed before planting.



Scarification creates a small opening in the seed coat where water can be absorbed. This can be done at home with a pair of nail clippers. The best place to nick the seed is opposite the hilum, or point of pod attachment, where you are least likely to cause damage. Simply make a small, shallow cut using the corner of the nail clippers.

Be sure to cut only the seed coat. A deeper cut may harm the seed's growing tissues. Plant seeds as soon as possible after scarification. Please contact us at (563) 387-5633 if you are unsure how to interpret your seed's germination and hard seed percentages.



Seed Savers
EXCHANGE