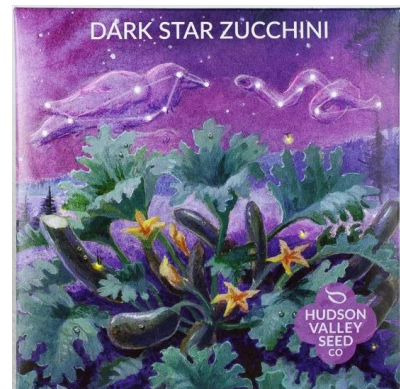
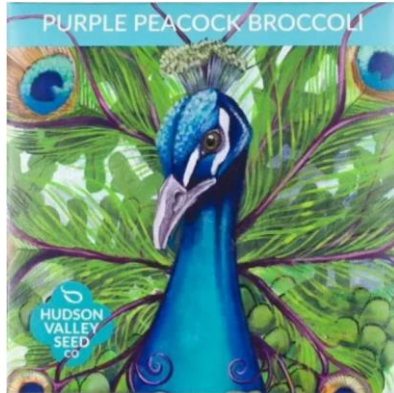


## EXCITING NEW VEGETABLE CULTIVARS for 2020

The retail seed market is dominated by large ag-chem companies that sell seed grown in tropical countries to re-packagers for retail sale to home gardeners. However, groups like Urban American Farmer ([www.urbanamericanfarmer.com](http://www.urbanamericanfarmer.com)) and Culinary Breeding Network ([www.culinarybreedingnetwork.com](http://www.culinarybreedingnetwork.com)) are partnering with small American growers, small seed companies, and chefs to produce cultivars for “the optimization of flavour, health, texture, visual intrigue and art.” Their testing “laboratories” are fields and kitchens. Here is a list of some exciting new seed offered by some smaller Canadian and American seed breeders and sellers:



### NEW AND FABULOUS

**ROW 7** – “A seed company dedicated to deliciousness” [www.row7seeds.com](http://www.row7seeds.com)

A partnership between a New York chef and a vegetable seed breeder offers a range of seeds, including:

**Beet ‘Badger Flame’** – orange swirls in a gold beet is outstanding when eaten raw

**Snow pea ‘Beauregarde’** – dark purple pods that hold their color when cooked

**Pepper ‘Habanada’** – all the floral sweetness of Habaneros without the burning heat

**Centercut Squash** – the chef’s challenge to the breeder led to the production of seed for this squash, bred from heirloom ‘Tromboncino’; a sweet, nutty, meaty flavour

**898 Squash** – a reimagined butternut with concentrated sweetness, flavour and color

**BC ECO SEEDS** – seed produced by 17 BC farmers with a focus on organic, regenerative practices  
[www.bcecoseedcoop.com](http://www.bcecoseedcoop.com)

**Broccoli ‘Purple Peacock’** – a fabulous broccoli-kale cross that produces many small, loose, dark-purple florets and leaves; the whole plant is edible in salads or lightly cooked and is also beautiful in a vase

**Carrot ‘Nash’s Nantes’** – deep orange, coreless and sweet

**Carrot ‘Vampire’** – reddish skin, juicy and crunchy; popular at farmers’ markets, so seed often sells out

**‘White Winter’ Kale Sprouts** – a cross between Brussels sprouts and kale with edible leaves and sprouts

**Turnip ‘Turga’** – well-suited to home garden and no-till soils; delicious and keeps well

**FULL CIRCLE SEEDS** – 27 years of organic seed production in Sooke, BC

**Cherry Tomato Mix** – red, white, yellow, black-red, pink and green tomatoes in a range of shapes (an alternative to Whole Foods’ budget-breaking mix)

**Red-leafed Amaranth** – provides tender fresh greens during hot weather when many other greens get bitter, for use either fresh or cooked like spinach; with a lovely pop of color, the flowers attract pollinators (particularly butterflies); the seed themselves can also be collected and used in salads, grain

dishes or traditional Hopi cornmeal flatbread. Leave a few seed heads in the garden for birds who will excitedly flock to them.

**Corn 'Who Gets Kissed'** – a very sweet bicolored corn that grows well in our cooler springs and has an extended harvest window; as this seed was new in 2015, it often sells out; there is also a sister corn called 'Jump Up and Kiss Me' (both names reference community harvest festivals where corn was shucked by a group and whoever shucked a bicolored head had to jump up and run around the outside the shucking circle in exchange for a kiss)

**New Zealand Spinach** – doesn't bolt in heat and is often perennial or self seeding



#### WHAT'S TRENDY IN VEGETABLES?

Bright colors are popular. The color-producing compounds not only add flavour and visual appeal, they also increase nutrient content – higher carotenoid levels produce brighter oranges and the same anthocyanin that is found in blueberries produces the purple-blue colour now seen in some vegetables.



Carrots 'Pus Asita'



'Juane Obtuse du Doubs'



'Swiss Gniff'



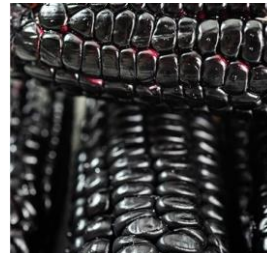
'Purple Dragon'



Corn 'Hopi Turquoise'



'Hopi Pink Flour'



'Andean Kulli'



'Atomic Orange'



'Chinese Pink Celery'



'Red-leafed  
amaranth'



'Red Rubine'  
brussels sprouts



'Italiko Rosso'  
dandelion

Baker Creek Heirloom Seeds [www.rareseeds.com](http://www.rareseeds.com) sells a wide variety of these cultivars grown by small farms.

Many gardeners are also growing grains like amaranth, buckwheat and quinoa, and beans, lentils and chickpeas for drying – Saltspring Seeds ([www.saltspringseeds.com](http://www.saltspringseeds.com)) sells a wide range of these seeds that produce well in our climate. The owner, Dan Jason, is also the author of an excellent book on this topic: 'The Power of Pulses: Saving the World with Peas, Beans, Chickpeas, Favas and Lentils'. His book is available through the North Vancouver District Library.



### **BC-GROWN SEEDS**

Seed growers select seed from their strongest plants which carry genetically coded traits for growing well in the environment they are grown in so 'Blue Lake' bean seeds grown in a tropical country using high water, fertilizer and pesticide inputs will not be the same as 'Blue Lake' bean seed grown in BC or in a similar climate in an ecologically-sensitive manner. BC gardeners can obtain seeds for plants that best match our local growing conditions by buying seed from ecologically-sensitive local seed producers. Lists of BC, Oregon and Washington organic seed growers are available at [www.bcseeds.org/bc-seed-companies](http://www.bcseeds.org/bc-seed-companies) and <https://seedalliance.org/directory/>

Now is the time to get excited about growing some new cultivars along with your old favourites. Unlike bulbs or plants that require border inspection to be brought into Canada, seeds can be ordered online from around the world without paying any duty and without border clearance.