

Launching New Ways to Plant Native



Looking for a fun way to involve your kids in dreaming about the garden this winter? By making “seed bombs” using one of the easy methods described below, you can get your hands dirty and help our local ecosystem.

And the best part is, you and your child don’t have to wait until spring to toss the seed bombs into the garden. In fact, many of Connecticut’s gorgeous native plants, such as black-eyed Susan’s, red columbine, and many varieties of milkweed, require a period of cold stratification in order to bloom. That means, many native seeds need to go through a cold winter in order to bloom in the spring (think of it as a “roller coaster” of temperatures). I

recommend collecting seeds from your garden, sharing with neighbors, or buying native seeds through the Northeast Seed Collective, as all of the seeds they collect are from our local ecoregion.

Have fun getting your hands dirty trying these ways to make seed bombs. Check out the book *Garden Alchemy* by Stephanie Rose for more details in making your seed bombs and her curated list of seeds to add! The recipes below are from Rose’s book:

Clay-Based Seed Bomb:

Materials: 5 parts compost, 1 part clay powder, water, seeds

1. Mix together the compost and clay powder in a bucket, slowly adding water until the mixture is held together.
2. Roll into balls and add a pinch of seeds. Push large seeds into the middle of the ball, while smaller seeds can be dispersed throughout.
3. Optional: have fun adding dried flowers or pretty flower seeds to the outside.
4. Let dry in a cool, dry place.

Paper-Based Seed Bomb:

Materials: 8-10 sheets white paper, 1-2 sheets dyed tissue paper, water, immersion blender with jar, dish towel, bowl, seeds, ice cube tray or candy mold. (The pink hearts as seen in the photo were made with the paper method - keep in mind for Valentine’s Day).

1. Shred the paper. Paper can be printed but the more ink that’s used, the more it’ll affect the color of the seed bomb and adding some dyed tissue paper adds color.
2. Put the shredded paper in the immersion blender jar and pour in warm water to cover the paper, letting the paper soften in the water for 10 minutes.
3. Use the immersion blender until paper is a pulp, with a consistency like oatmeal.
4. Put the dish towel over a large bowl and pour the paper pulp into the center of the towel, squeezing the towel to remove excess water.
5. Mix the seed into the paper pulp, adding about ¼ teaspoon or 12 pinches of small seeds. Press the mixture into an ice cube tray or candy mold.
6. Remove extra moisture from the pulp by pressing with a dish towel to speed up drying time and discourage the seeds from sprouting too early.
7. Carefully remove seed bombs from the mold and place on a board to dry.

Credit for the seed bomb recipes goes to *Garden Alchemy* by Stephanie Rose.

Once dried, have fun launching the seed bombs into a bare spot in your garden by hand, via slingshot or creating your own launcher. Happy planting!