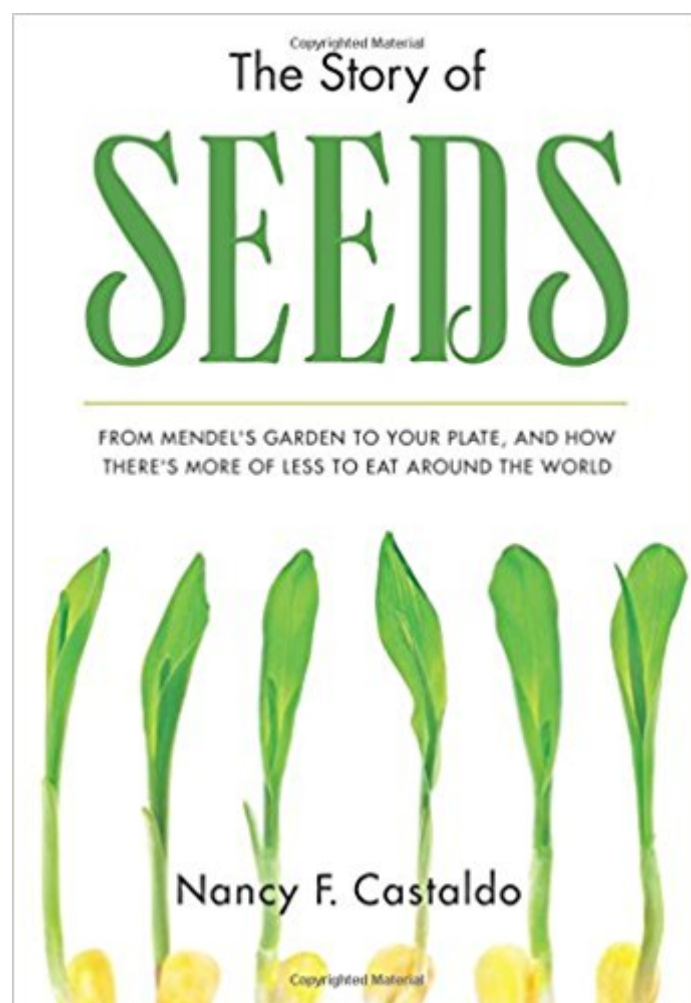




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# **The Story Of Seeds: From Mendel's Garden To Your Plate, And How There's More Of Less To Eat Around The World**



## Synopsis

Something as small as a seed can have a worldwide impact. Did you know there are top-secret seed vaults hidden throughout the world? And once a seed disappears, that's it's gone forever? With the growth of genetically modified foods, the use of many seeds is dwindling of 80,000 edible plants, only about 150 are being cultivated. With a global cast of men and women, scientists and laypeople, and photographic documentation, Nancy Castaldo chronicles where our food comes from, and more importantly, where it is going as she digs deeper into the importance of seeds in our world. This empowering book also calls young adult readers to action with suggestions as to how they can preserve the variety of one of our most valuable food sources through simple everyday actions. Readers of Michael Pollen will enjoy the depth and fascinatingly intricate social economy of seeds.

## Book Information

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Children's Books > Science, Nature & How It Works > Recycling & Green Living

Age Range: 12 - 17 years

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Gr 5-8-Castaldo notes that because of climate change, big farming, and habitat loss, our planet is losing biodiversity "at a depressing rate," and she proceeds to lay out the frightening hazards of monocultural agriculture-from the Irish potato famine to the current decimation of banana and coffee species-and the use of genetically engineered seed stock. Along with doing her best to raise reader

anxiety about this issue with statistics and ominous trends, she also highlights the often-heroic efforts of scientists to create and preserve seed banks, notably the Vavilov Institute of Plant Industry in Saint Petersburg and the Svalbard Global Seed Vault in Norway. Additionally, she introduces a slate of worthy "Seed Warriors," from pioneers such as Luther Burbank and Nikolai Vavilov to the contemporary likes of Dr. Sanaa Abdul Wahab El Sheikh in Iraq, chef Sibella Kraus, Indian activist Dr. Vandana Shiva, and Carl White Eagle Barnes, "Cherokee Corn Elder." The author caps her plea for action with suggested activities and with extensive lists of print and online resources, seed "libraries" in and beyond the United States, and advocacy organizations. As Castaldo cites examples of biopiracy and agroterrorism and contrasts genetic modification research with "natural" hybridization, her approach is distinctly alarmist; offer Natalie Regis's *Genetically Modified Crops and Food* (Britannica, 2016) to readers after a more judicious evaluation of GMOs. VERDICT An impassioned call to action, likely to leave readers both scared and inspired.-John Peters, Children's Literature Consultant, New York City (c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

National Science Teachers Association 2017 Top Science Trade Books for K-12 Students Nerdy Book Club Nerdies 2016 Longform Nonfiction Nonfiction Detectives: Best of 2016 Northland College Young Adult Notable Book \* "A terrific, engrossing resource." "Booklist, STARRED review "This eye-opening book on the science and politics of agriculture serves as a wake-up call to readers about the fragility of something many of us take for granted: our plant-based food supply. Castaldo clearly lays out a case for the importance of plant diversity (œSeeds equal life•), presenting engaging scientific and historical information..." "Horn Book Magazine "An impassioned call to action..." "School Library Journal "Castaldo delivers a sobering global status report" and a call to action...Well-crafted and inspiring." "Kirkus "Castaldo breaks down threats like climate change and disease, while providing a greater sense of interconnectivity in nature and within world communities." "Publishers Weekly

Excellent book for my 5th graders. I also learned things I did not know about seeds.

This book is a powerful read, riveting. It lays out the humble, albeit nearly ignored, beginnings of genetic research by Mendel to the capitalistic exploitation of big business. If you're not a agronomist, it is unlikely that you recognize how critical seeds are to global survival. There are many examples of the role they play, and how entire types of produce meet their demise. Historically, the

ironies that play out among scientists during wartime are sad, yet fascinating. To believe in something so passionately that these people put the proliferation of the world food source ahead of their own well being is an unrivaled act of selflessness. Prior to reading this book, I was on the fence about genetically modified seeds. After having read about how capitalistic companies are leveraging uneducated farmers out of their land, I am at odds as to why this is not more publicly exposed...It's a sickening display of preying on people who don't have global knowledge of the world, all for financial gain. In a society where the focus is on materialism (Bruce/Kaitlyn Jenner considered courageous?) and egocentrism, maybe we need to re-establish some new ground rules... Everybody who has ever put food in their mouth needs to not only know the patriots (past and present) in this book, they need to have a rudimentary understanding of the dynamics of agriculture from this perspective. This should be taught in school combined with other history.

I love this book! Great read!

Picked this up on the "new" shelf in the library because I've been painting an abstract series on the mystery and beauty of seeds. What an eyeopener. We all know there's something wrong with GMOs, but are hard put to explain it with clarity. Not sure if this is a child's book or adult. But for my money, it's just the right amount of information to introduce either to the impending crisis of biodiversity in food crops in the world. Did you know heirloom seeds are often destroyed during war? Destroy the food source, destroy the population. Fascinating, informative, beautiful, historical--more than you'd ever expect from a book about seeds, for Pete's sake. A jumpstarter. I will be painting seeds with more purpose now and supporting biodiversity as a gardener and consumer. And surprise, also learned my local library is a dedicated seed library. Must visit.

The Story of seeds covers history, scientists, about seed collection and controversy. It says 12 and up, but I think some 10 year olds would enjoy it. Curious grown ups would find it fun. I know about soils and weeds and I loved it. Nancy

The Story Of Seeds was a fascinating and inspirational read, unlocking the past while also giving us a glimpse into the future of our food. This easy to read text was loaded with unsung heroes, easily digestible information, passion, hope and a plan for the future. This should be a staple in all middle school and high school libraries.

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