

Plant Seeds and Growth

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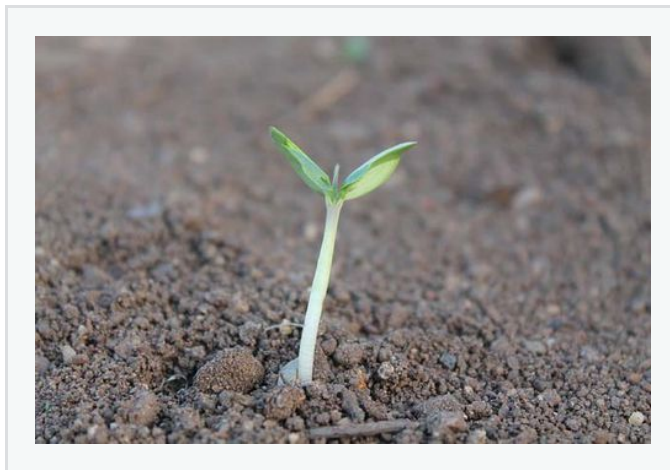
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How Do Seeds Grow?

By ReadWorks



Many plants start out as small seeds. How does a seed grow?

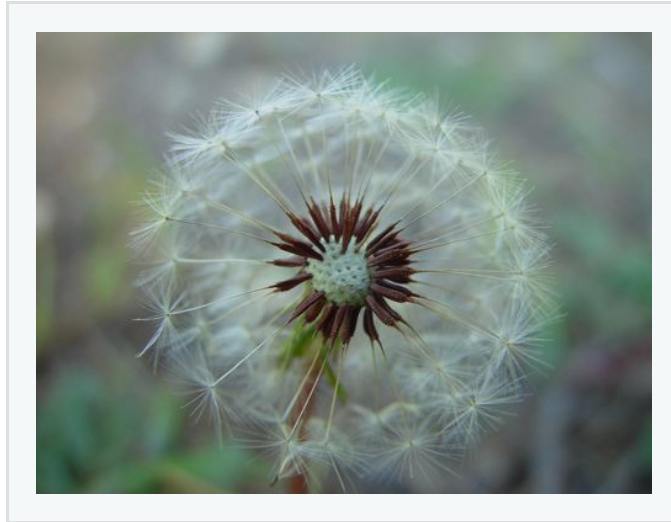
First, a seed falls or is put into dirt. Water and the sun's light might help the seed to start growing.

Soon, the seed breaks open. Roots start to grow down into the dirt. Then a shoot pushes up through the dirt. The stem and leaves pop out next.

Soon, the little plant will be grown-up.

Wind Helps Plants Grow

By Linda Ruggieri



Credit: Alex Valavanis, CC BY-SA 2.0

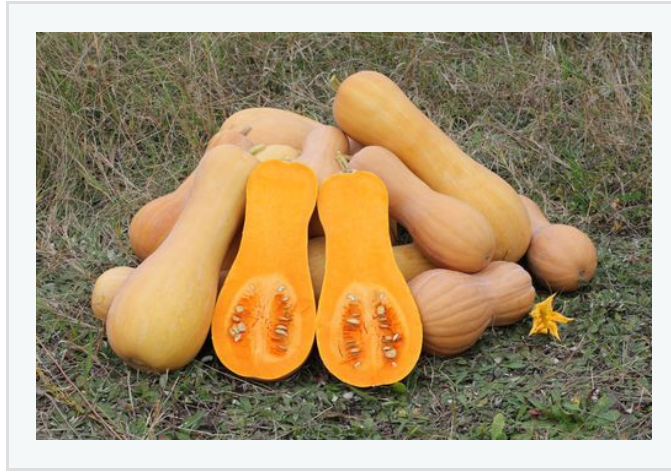
Wind is air that moves. When air moves, it blows things from one place to another.

Wind blows seeds around. That allows new plants to grow. Think about the dandelion flower. Have you ever seen one that has turned white? Inside it are seeds. When wind blows on a white dandelion, its seeds float away.

Some of those seeds will fall on the ground. Soon, something will change in the place where the wind blew the seeds. New dandelion plants will grow there!

Fruits Have Seeds

By Linda Ruggieri



Fruits grow in different ways. Apples grow on trees. Grapes grow on vines. Blueberries grow on bushes.

All fruits have something special. Do you know what that is? Seeds! Some fruits have one seed. Others have many seeds.

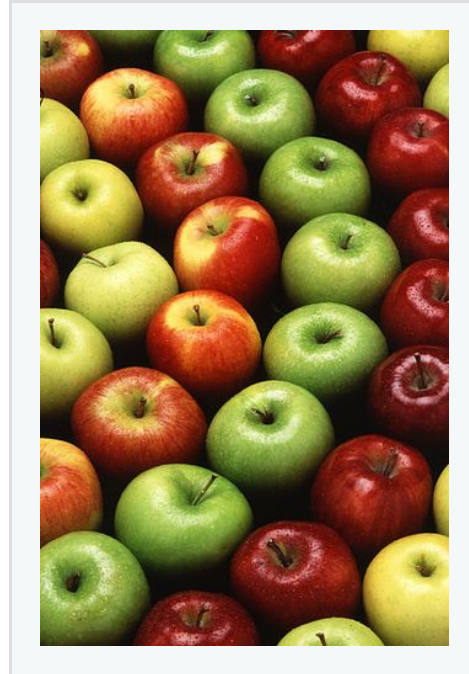
A peach has one seed. A coconut has one seed too. A pumpkin has many small seeds. A strawberry has many tiny seeds. They are on the outside of the fruit.

Seeds are important because they can grow into new plants.

What happens when seeds fall to the ground? Plants grow. Those plants will have stems, leaves, flowers, fruits—and more seeds.

A Man Who Liked Apples

By ReadWorks



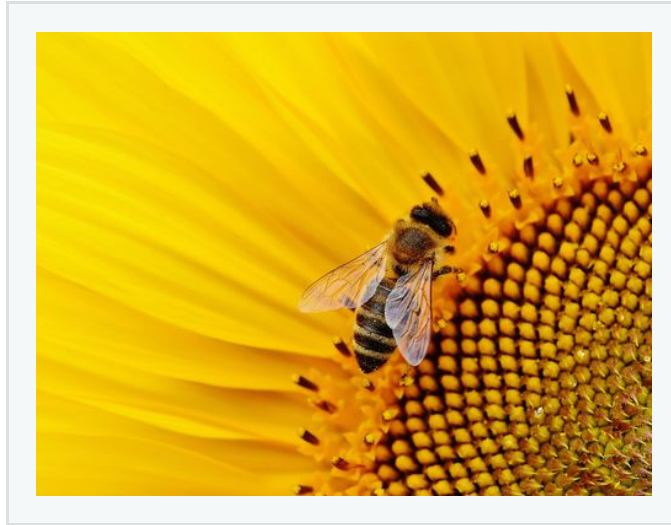
Meet a man who helped apples grow. He lived long ago. His name was John Chapman.

He liked to grow apples. He gave people apple seeds and small apple trees. Soon apple trees grew across the country.

Some people say he wore a tin pot on his head. They say he used it to collect berries to eat. Soon people called him Johnny Appleseed. That was a good name for a man who liked apples.

Seeds Need to Move

By Rachelle Kreisman



A plant starts life as a seed. When that seed grows into a plant, that plant makes new seeds. Those seeds, too, can grow and turn into more new plants.

But did you know that not every seed grows into a plant? To become a plant, a seed has to travel. That is because seeds need room to grow. A seed has to be far enough away from other plants so that it gets the sunlight and water it needs. If a seed falls to the ground too close to its parent plant, it may not grow.

Of course, wind can spread the seeds for many plants. But some plants depend on animals to move their seeds. Those seeds are called hitchhiker seeds. They travel on something else that moves!

Many hitchhiker seeds are prickly. They have tiny rows of hooks. The hooks can stick to fur or feathers. Hitchhiker seeds can travel for miles on an animal's body. Then they fall off or are removed. If they fall in a place that is good for growing, the seeds will grow into plants, too!

Farmers Grow Corn

By Susan LaBella



Valerie Everett (CC BY 2.0)

People have grown corn in America for hundreds of years. Native Americans planted and ate corn long ago. When the Pilgrims arrived, some Native Americans taught them how to grow it.

Today, the United States produces more corn than any other country. American farmers plant corn seeds in the spring when the weather is warm enough. If a farmer plants when the soil is too cold, the seeds will rot.

Corn needs plenty of space to grow. It has to have a lot of sunshine and the right amount of water. If farmers have good weather, they can pick their corn by September. If the weather is too dry or cold or stormy, the corn may not grow very well.

When it is ready, many farmers sell their corn. People buy corn to eat, of course. Some companies buy corn to feed farm animals. Other companies buy it to produce different foods or drinks. There are even companies that buy corn to make fuel for cars! That fuel is called ethanol.

When the growing season is over, farmers let their fields rest. In the spring, many farmers will plant corn again.