



Legislation Text

File #: RES 15-322, **Version:** 1

Encouraging local sharing of garden seeds, and supporting changes to Minnesota law to allow seed sharing libraries.

Whereas, seed libraries are a nonprofit repository of seed for the benefit of the public where free seed is distributed to promote seed sharing, provide increased access to healthy food, strengthen local food security, improve the health of our community members, preserve and promote our local biodiversity, celebrate local varieties that are important to our community's cultural heritage and provide seed that is locally adapted to local soils and climate; and

Whereas, Growing West Side began operating a seed library in 2014 hosted by the Riverview Public Library; and

Whereas, residents of Saint Paul and Minnesota have long engaged in interpersonal seed sharing; and

Whereas the Minnesota Department of Agriculture has informed the public that seed libraries are in violation of the Minnesota Seed Law (2014 Minn. Stat. §§21.80 et. seq.), the purpose of which is to protect consumers who purchase seed from inadequately or illegally labeled seed and to promote fair competition; and

Whereas, seed libraries and community-based seed sharers do not "sell" seeds, as that term is commonly defined, nor are the members of seed libraries "customers"; and

Whereas, the sharing of seeds between individuals is a voluntary non-commercial activity; and

Whereas, strict compliance with the Minnesota Seed Law, as currently written, could result in the closure of seed libraries and prevent citizen gardeners, schools, and community organizations from engaging in interpersonal seed sharing; and

Whereas, the City Council wishes to (1) encourage sharing locally grown and saved seed within the City of Saint Paul, and (2) support efforts to change the Minnesota Seed Law to expressly exempt seed libraries and interpersonal seed sharing from regulation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of Saint Paul supports and encourages seed sharing between community members without legal barriers of labeling fees, permitting, and germination testing; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council of Saint Paul supports and encourages the efforts in Saint Paul to facilitate non-commercial sharing of locally grown and saved seed in a community-based setting such as a library; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council of Saint Paul calls on our legislators to change the Minnesota Seed Law to support the sharing of seeds between individuals and through seed libraries by removing application of any labeling, testing, and permitting requirements to interpersonal or seed library seed sharing.

