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TELUS
Spark*
SCIENCE CENTRE

Soil Camp Presents...

Seed Ball Making



Indigenous Youth Science Gathering

March 21st, 2025



Land Acknowledgement

In the spirit of respect, reciprocity and truth, we honour and acknowledge Moh'kinsstis, and the traditional Treaty 7 territory and oral practices of the Blackfoot confederacy: Siksika, Kainai, Piikani, as well as the Îyâxe Nakoda and Tsuut'ina nations. We acknowledge that this territory is home to the Métis Nation of Alberta Districts 5 and 6 within the historical Northwest Métis homeland. Finally, we acknowledge all Nations – Indigenous and non – who live, work and play on this land, and who honour and celebrate this territory. This sacred gathering place provides us with an opportunity to engage in and demonstrate leadership on reconciliation. Thank you for your enthusiasm and commitment to be here with us today on the lands of Treaty 7 territory.

The Soil Camp Story





Honoring Indigenous Plant Knowledge

- Certain plants hold deep cultural and ceremonial significance
- Ethical harvesting is essential—e.g., sage should not be pulled from the roots.
- The first harvest is always given back to the land in gratitude.
- Overpicking has serious consequences for ecosystems and cultural practices.
- Returning seeds ensures sustainability and respect for plant relatives.
- Planting is a spiritual act—offering tobacco acknowledges our relationship with the land.
- **"Indigenous people are scientists for generations."**



Culturally significant plants we are using today— What are the names of these plants in your languages?

“Chokecherry”



“Saskatoon Berry”



“Sage”



“Tobacco”





“Cultures of gratitude must also be cultures of reciprocity. Each person, human or no, is bound to every other in a reciprocal relationship. Just as all beings have a duty to me, I have a duty to them. If an animal gives its life to feed me, I am in turn bound to support its life. If I receive a stream’s gift of pure water, then I am responsible for returning a gift in kind. An integral part of a human’s education is to know those duties and how to perform them”

(Kimmerer, 2013, p. 115)





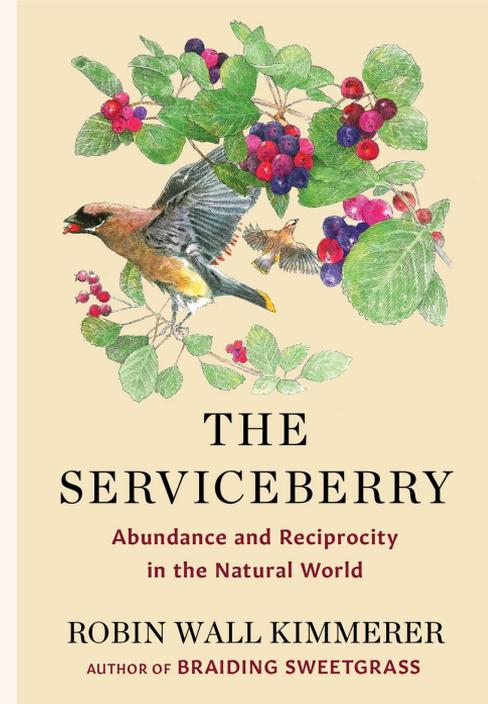
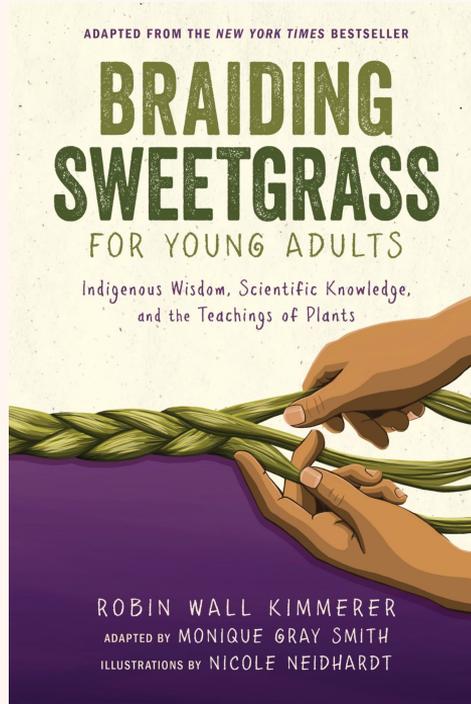
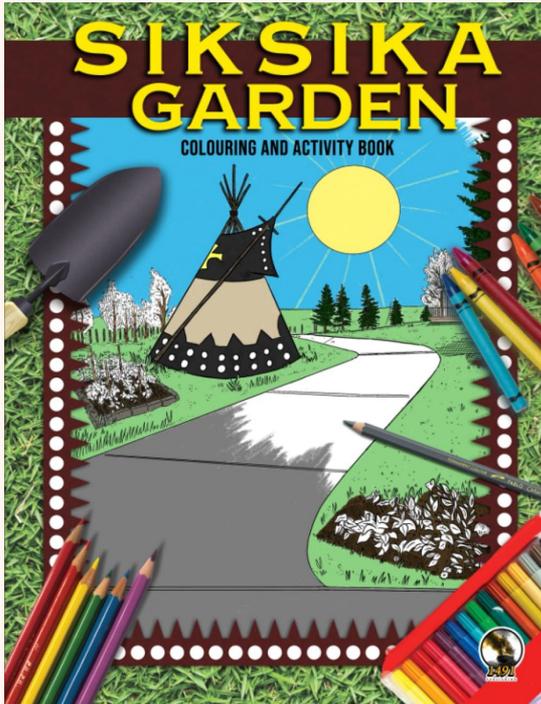
Thinking Together About Reciprocity



Giving back to the land through seed balls



Book Sharing



Wildflower Seeds - What are the names of these flowers in your languages?



“Blue Flax”



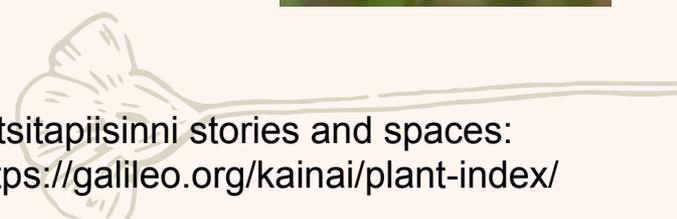
“Brown Eyed Susan”



“Annual Sunflower”



“Anemone”





What we are using today & Where it is coming from

01.

Natural Clay

We are using fine, air-floated clay sourced in **Alberta**. Using a small amount of warm water helps bind the dry clay mixture.

02.

Soil & Compost

Using both is great but not necessary. Try using a fine, organic, potting soil and a finely, sieved compost. We are using soil sourced from _____ and worm compost from **Miwa's worms!**





What we are using today & Where it is coming from

03.

Seeds

- Sage & Wildflower Mix from **ALCLA**
- Chokecherry and Saskatoon Berries from **Liana's Harvest**
- Blue Flax, Brown Eyed Susan, Annual Sunflower, Anemone from **Wild About Flowers**
- Anemone seeds from **Calgary Seed Library**

04

Tobacco

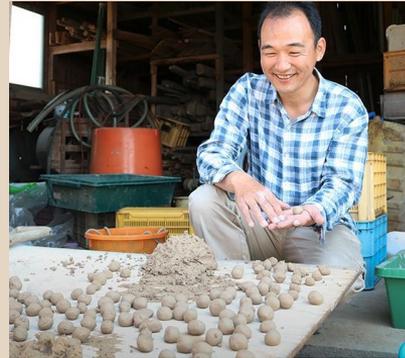
Ceremonial tobacco



Seed Ball History

It is said that seed ball is an ancient agriculture technique used in some Indigenous communities in “North America” - to give back to the land.

Globally, seed balls have been used as a method to honor the interactions between seeds, local ecology, and humans.



Retrieved from Masanobu Fukuoka natural farm website

Seed Ball Videos



Suggested steps (remember there is no right or wrong way of doing this!)



1.

Add water and clay

Mix together clay and water until it forms a paste

2.

Add in soil and compost

Mix in equal parts soil and compost. Keep mixing until you have a playdough like consistency.

3.

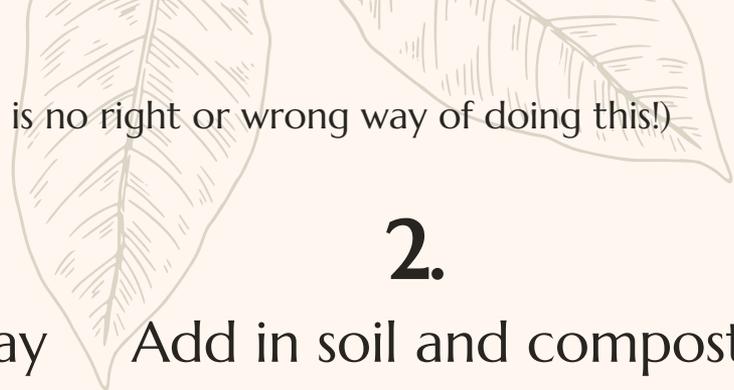
Form a nest shape and drop in seeds and tobacco

4.

Close up and form into a ball

5.

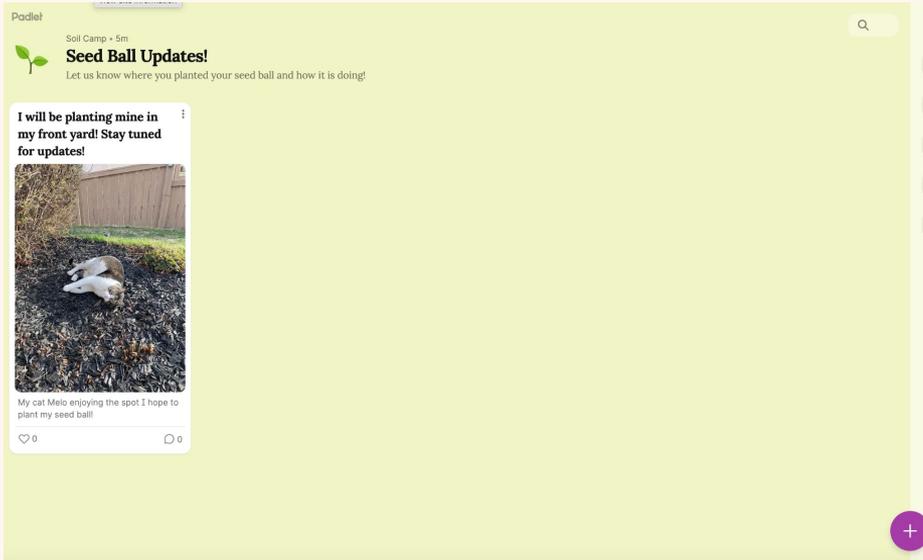
Dry until hard and plant on top of soil or compost!



Where do you think you will plant yours?

Keep us updated on the growth on Padlet if you like!

<https://padlet.com/soilcamp2021/seedballupdates>





Thanks!



Do you have any questions?



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