

SEED
SAVING

The process of saving seeds from crops, plants, flowers and trees has been used by farmers and growers all over the world, for thousands of years. However, more recently, big businesses have been threatening traditional methods of saving seeds all over the world.

Traditionally farmers grow crops such as tomatoes, kale, potatoes, squash, onions and so on.

Some of these crops would be grown for food and some crops would be held back and allowed to form seeds. Farmers then process these seeds and store them away for the next year, whereby the seeds would be sown to grow the next years crop. This cycle of growing, sowing, harvesting and seed saving sustains farmers, year on year.

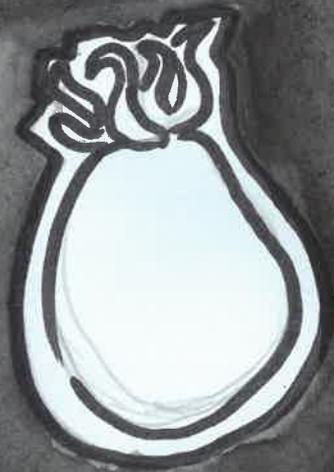
However, big companies have begun to change the DNA of seeds. They did this to create seeds that could grow bigger crops, or crops that were more resistant to insects that ate the crops. But in changing the DNA of the seeds, big companies could claim ownership of the seeds.

So when the farmers bought the big companies seeds, the big companies made it illegal for the farmers to save their seeds for the following year.

For example, if the farmers grew tomatoes using the seeds from big businesses, then it was illegal to save their tomato seeds for the following year.

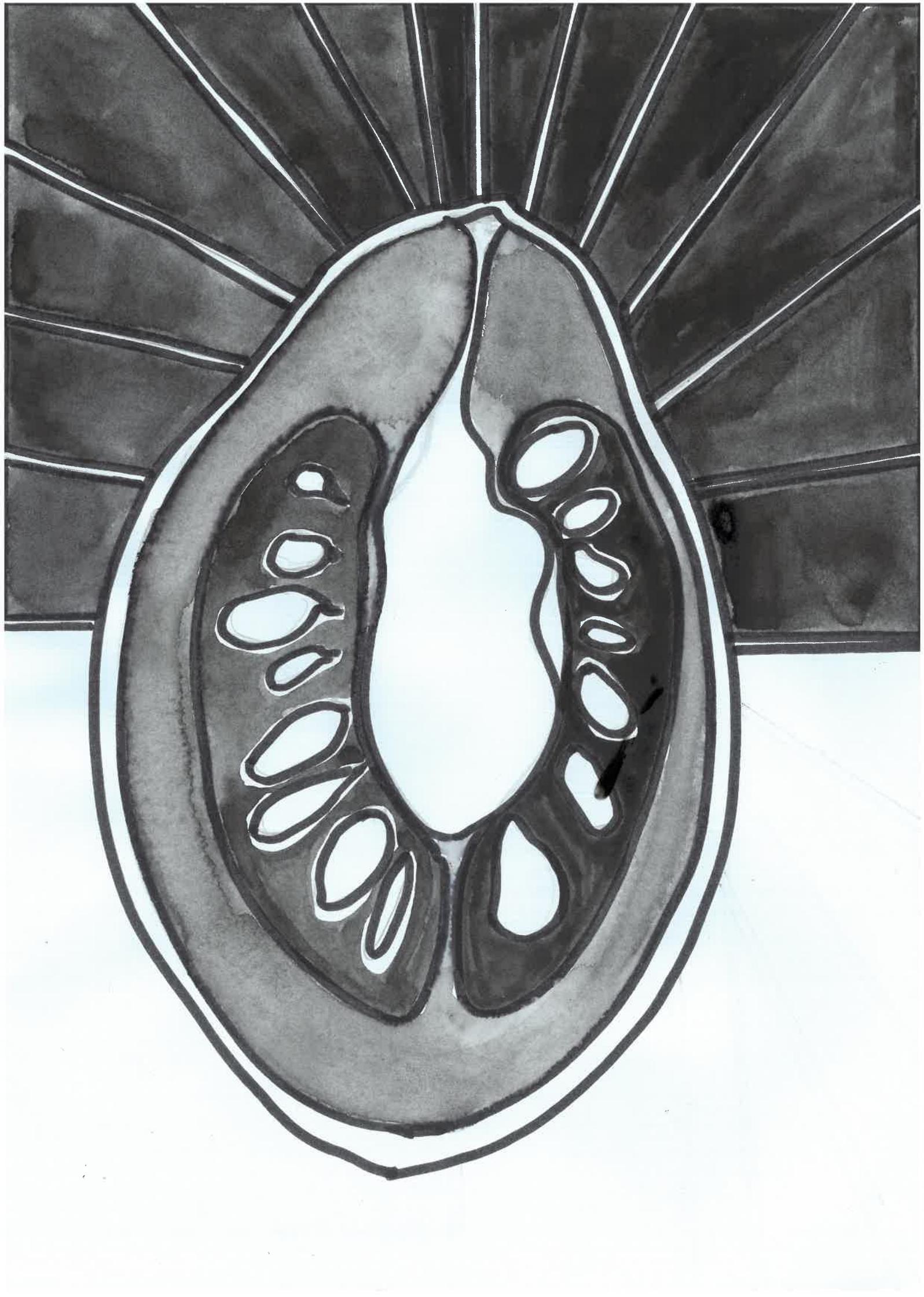
However, farmers all over the world are resisting big business and together are fighting to protect the seeds that they have been saving for generations.

Today, we are going to be learning how to save seeds from tomatoes that have been grown in Helmsdale, in the poly-tunnels at the Helmsdale Kitchen Gardens, next door to your school.



**TOMATO
SEED**







In order to save tomato seeds we need to have ripe tomatoes that are either yellow or red. Once our fruit is ripe the first step in saving their seeds is:

1. Remove the seeds, juice and pulp (all the mushy bit) and put into a jar.

2. Leave the mixture to ferment for 2-3 days in a warm place - stirring once per day. You don't need to cover the jar.



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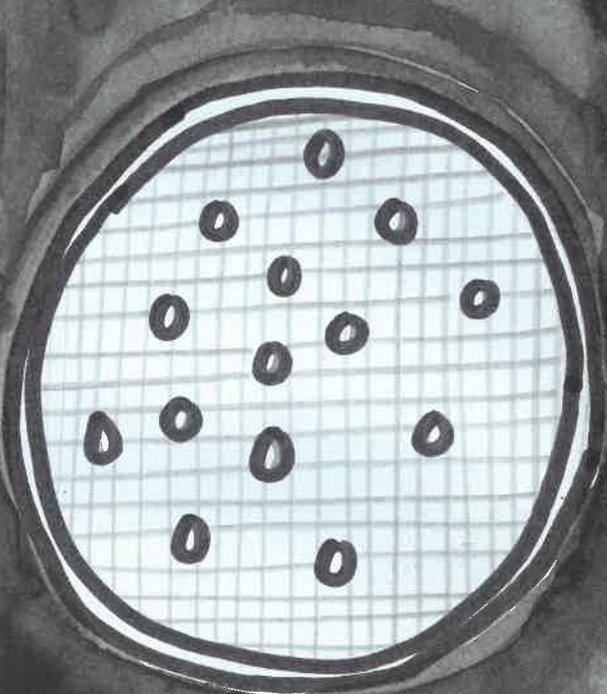


3. Top up the jar with fresh water and give it a good shake

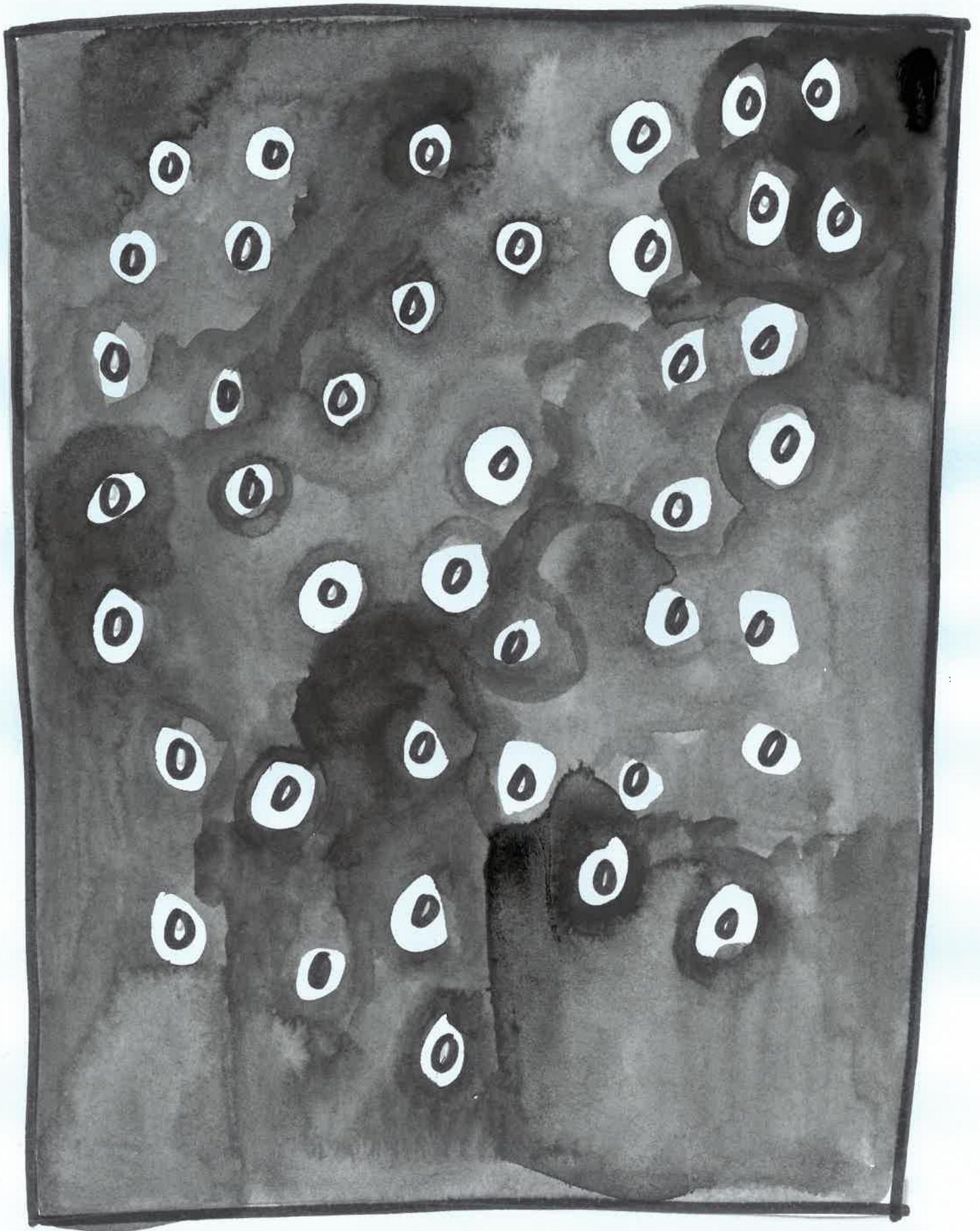
Pour off the pulp making sure not to pour the seeds out too - the good ones should sink!



4. Top up with fresh water again, and repeat this process until the water is really clean



5. Tip the seeds out into a sieve and then spread them out to dry in a single layer on the orange fabric provided.



Once your seeds are very very dry you can place them in a sealed jar and pop them away in a cupboard till the spring! Don't forget to label what is in the jar though- in this case it will be tomatoes!