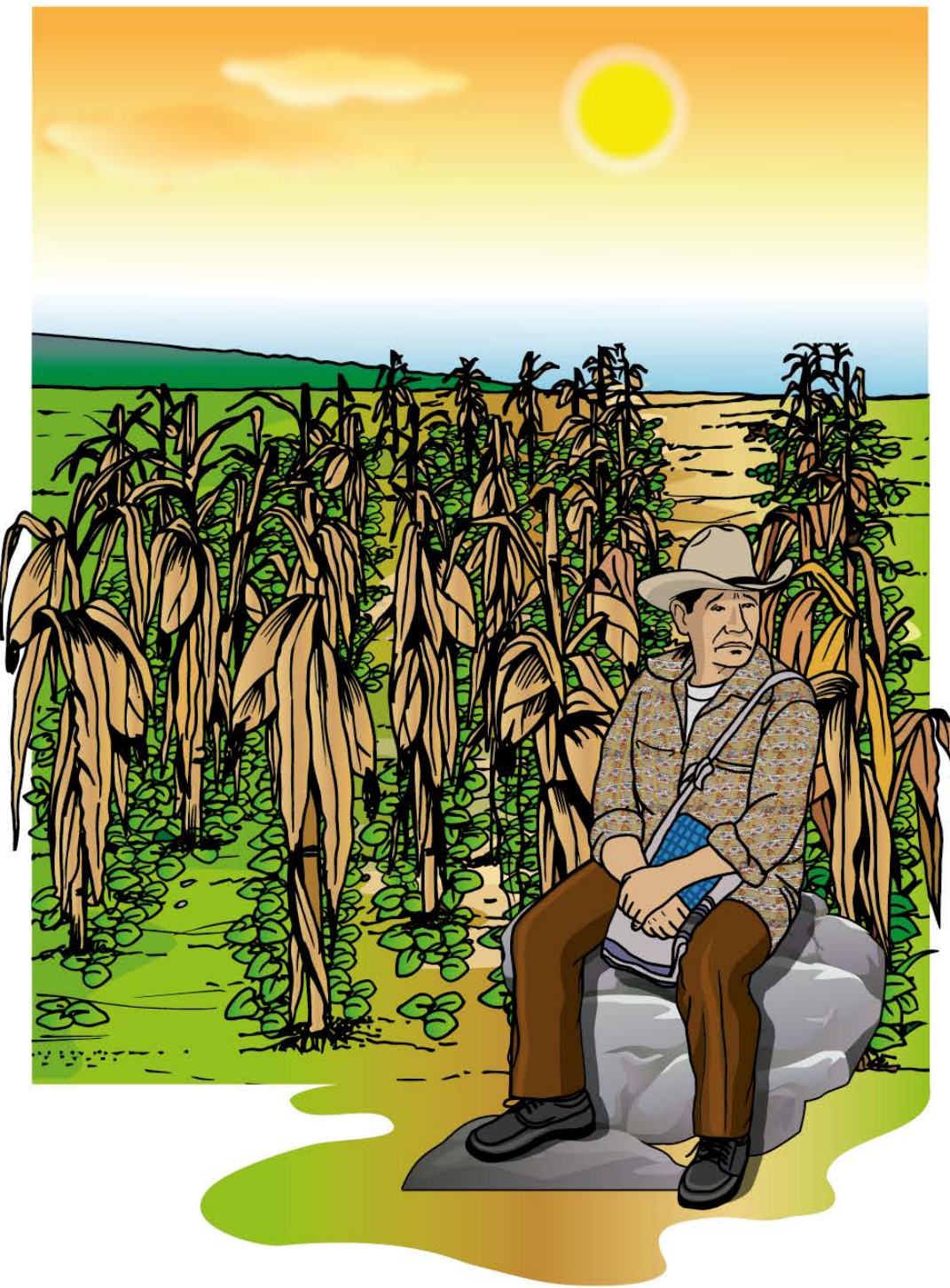


Purpose of a seed bank

- Coping with climate change caused by irregular rainfall.



- Serves as an emergency seed supply when farmers lack seeds due to bad harvests or crop destruction as a result of floods, droughts, plagues or disease.
- Individual savings in terms of purchasing seed storage materials.
- Keeping quality supplies for various planting cycles.



How does a seed bank work?

- The community must organize itself, naming the 5 members of the seed bank Board of Directors and agreeing on all the regulations of the bank.
- A seed bank is just like any other bank: it needs people who deposit money and clients to lend the money to, except that in this case, instead of money it's seeds. For each pound, arroba (11.5 kg) or quintal (46 kg) that is lent, the partner must return twice the amount.
- There are guidelines that regulate the seed bank. The Board of Directors or partners meet regularly in case work must be done in a garden or in case training must be given.

What do you need to start a seed bank?

- A safe warehouse, with no humidity.
- One or several silos if you're going to keep large quantities of the same seed.
- Barrels (plastic is best) with airtight sealing.
- Earthenware jugs with lids or plastic buckets with lids.
- Tools.



Seed care and keeping

How to cure the seeds in an environmentally friendly way?

There are several natural products to cure seeds, especially bean seed:

- Cow manure ashes
- Lime
- Beanstalks
- Mashed garlic (one head of garlic per quintal)
- Chilli
- Neem leaves
- Lemongrass leaves



- According to farmers' opinion, the best results for bean seeds are achieved with garlic, chilli, and beanstalks.
- If you're going to cure the seed with ash, the grain must be very dry. You can't do this if you want to sell it for human consumption, because the ash makes it harden.
- If you're going to cure with ground chilli, you must protect your hands and eyes.
- If you want to cure with lemongrass leaves, you must let the cut leaves dry for 2 or 3 days before use.



Recommendations

1. Choose native seeds that are adapted to the area, the soil and the climate.
2. Always keep a supply of the local native varieties.
3. Do not keep the seeds for longer than a year. It's better to sell them, even if it's for consumption.

Humidity test:

1. Dry coarse salt in a skillet.
2. Place in a glass container.
3. Add the seeds and mix with the salt, shaking the glass.
4. If the salt sticks to the grains or the glass, the seeds are still too damp and must continue to dry.

