

ABSTRACT

Project Name:

Park[ing] Day - Take Seeds, Leave Stories

Location:

Minneapolis, MN, USA

Entry Category:

Communications

Description of Project:

At the edge of the mighty Mississippi, in the middle of a vibrant urban core, a Park(ing) Day “parklet” was created to communicate the powerful characteristics of food and share personal stories. The artful, abstract installation was designed to offer seeds to visitors to take home and plant in their gardens. In return, patrons were asked to leave stories, in the form of handwritten notes, about their food traditions, memories, or general observations.

NARRATIVE

Context

The Mississippi River has always been a connector of people and food. For millennia, the river served as an important meeting ground and network for the Indigenous people of Turtle Island (North America). Minneapolis was founded at Owamniyomni (St. Anthony Falls) because its power could be harnessed to energize the mills that brought wealth and immigrants to the city. The Park(ing) Day project site (Stone Arch Parking Lot) was selected because of the relationship to the river, the falls, and the history of food in the city and landscape.

Concept

For Park(ing) Day, we were instantly inspired to share the amazing traits of native plants and food. This topic resonates deeply with us as landscape architects and is increasingly important as families and communities grapple with access to food and soaring costs. People are aware of the ornamental traits of plants, from foliage to flowers, but so many overlook the nourishing and nurturing aspects of what grows around us. We focused specifically on a palette native to Minnesota, with plants that aren't grown in vegetable gardens or available at the grocery store.

With the help of allied business partners, we curated and packaged a palette of native seeds to raise awareness of all the amazing edible and medicinal plants that make their homes with us in this city. The simple act of freely giving these seeds to passersby drew attention to the importance of the growing world, which is often dismissed in the hustle-and-bustle of the city. The seeds that visitors took home to plant in their gardens expands the parklet beyond its modest space and temporary timeline.

During brainstorming sessions and scribbles in our sketchbooks, we developed an idea to communicate this topic. Inspired by the land, we represented terrain as a geometric abstraction. To do this, we arranged cardboard tubes to form a dynamic pattern. To display the seeds, we were inspired by the idea of planted and growing from the earth, we cut holes in the sides of the tubes). In these holes, we wrapped seed packets in colorful tissue paper to represent the many ornamental and nourishing aspects of the plants. To top-off the installation, we incorporated potted plants in every other tube. This softened and animated the overall composition.

NARRATIVE (Continued)

We also achieved our goal of “zero waste,” thanks to the imaginative spirit of the local community. The installation was disassembled and all of the tubes and materials were donated to community members: a small business owner, a theater set designer, and a non-profit rabbit rescue gathered the tubes to repurpose and reconstruct.

Communication

Our primary goal was to interact with people. Through digital postings, printed material, and the use of color and form on-site, we engaged with those that strolled by. We drew people to the space with the use of form, color, signage, and activity. Participation in public spaces is paramount, whether it is a temporary parking stall or a large-scale urban park. As the iconic urbanist William Whyte once stated about public spaces, ““What attracts people most, it would appear, is other people.” Intrigued visitors interacted with the installation and learned about plants and food. The concept “Take seeds, leave stories” was a simple, yet meaningful way to educate. Hopefully the seeds taken from our parklet have been planted across the city and will begin to sprout in the coming weeks—yielding nourishment and opportunities to share new stories and sow new memories.

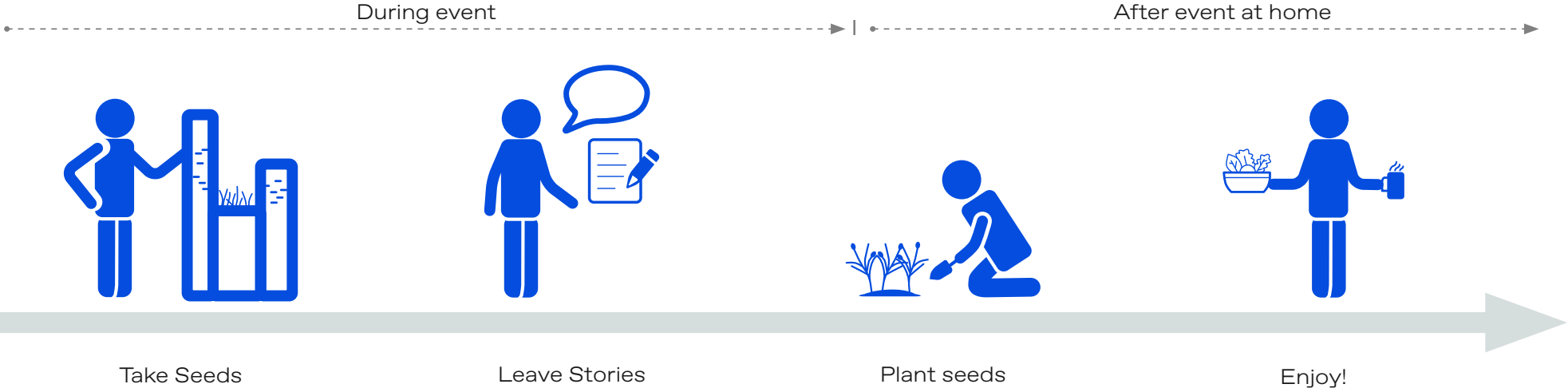
MISSISSIPPI RIVER



SITE

DOWNTOWN MINNEAPOLIS

ENGAGEMENT DIAGRAM

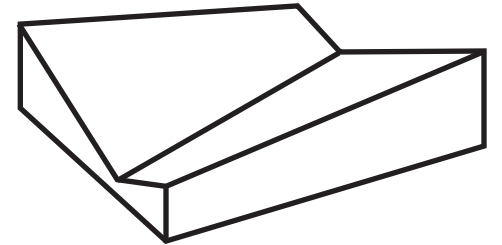




RENDERING



PRECEDENT IMAGERY



FORM ABSTRACTION
"FOLDED TERRAIN"



TUBE DETAIL STUDY

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNICATIONS POSTER



SOCIAL, ACADEMIC, AND WEB ENGAGEMENT



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA



ASLA
MINNESOTA

Park(ing) Day

[Stone Arch Parking Lot \(map\)](#)
[Google Calendar](#) · [ICS](#)

Rescheduled for September 24-25

The Park(ing) Day observance will be held on Saturday, September 24 and Sunday, September 25. This public design installation encompasses the spirit of both Park(ing) Day (officially observed September 16-18) and World Car Free Day (September 22).

Join design professionals and artists as they explore how a simple parking space, roughly 10 ft. x 20 ft., can be transformed into an interactive experience within the urban fabric. So much of our world—flowers, trees, the food we eat—starts out as a humble seed. The seeds of a specific region have an outsized impact on our diets, health, culture, and lore. Let's celebrate the unique journey of each person's experience with nature. Please take some seeds to grow in your own space and share a personal memory of how seeds (or what they turn into) have impacted your life.

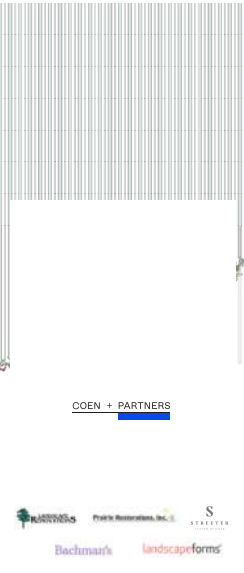
Part of a global, public, participatory art project, Park(ing) Day first began in 2005 and it continues to engage people in the discussion of how cities are built and how they serve the people that live there. For additional information, previous years' projects: <https://www.myparkingday.org/>

[View Event →](#)

PRINTED MATERIAL



Mississippi River is a connector and a lifeway for this land and our homes. For millennia the river served as an important meeting ground and network for the Indigenous people of Turtle Island (North America). Minneapolis was founded at Owamniyomi (St. Anthony Falls) because its power could be harnessed to power the mills that brought wealth and immigrants to the city. The river has long connected this land to the food systems of the country; at one point Minneapolis was known as the "Flour Milling Capital of the World." We are here in this parklet, connected to the river, the falls, and the history of food in this city and landscape.



Take Seeds, Leave Stories

In recognition of
Parking] Day
& World Car-Free Day
2022

So much of our world—flowers, trees, the food we eat—starts out as a humble seed. The seeds of a specific region have an outsized impact on our diets, health, culture, and lore.

Let's celebrate the unique journey of each person's experience with nature. Please take some seeds to grow in your own space and share a personal memory of how seeds (or what they turn into) have impacted your life.

Stone Arch Parking Lot, 100 W River Pkwy.
Minneapolis, MN 55401
September 24 - 25



TRI-FOLD PAMPHLET - FRONT

What's In The Seed Mix

Please plant your seed mix in pots, and provide appropriate warmth and moisture. Transplant the seedling to your garden, and enjoy the aesthetic and the edible parts they offer!

Typical Uses:



Bee Balm
Monarda didyma
Wahpé Waštémma

Edible Parts: All above ground parts
Tips: It is best to pick the flowers when they are newly opened. Both the leaves and blooms can be eaten fresh or cooked.



Blue Giant Hyssop
Agastache foeniculum
wahpé yatháps

Edible Parts: Leaves, flowers
Tips: Harvest leaves as needed before it flowers. Pick flowers when the blooms are 3/4 open. Gather flowers in the morning when the dew has dried.



Purple coneflower
Echinacea purpurea
ízhápe hí, unglákápi

Edible Parts: Leaves, roots and flower petals
Tips: All parts of the plant have been used in tinctures or other medicinal methods.

What Else Is Edible



Mint
Mentha spp.
Chéyaka

Edible Parts: Leaves and flower heads
Tips: Soothes indigestion, settles upset stomachs. Delicious when mixed with raspberry or blueberry.



Prairie Coneflower
Ratibida columnifera
asámpi iyátke

Edible Parts: Leaves and flower heads
Tips: Leaves and stalks tea used for stomach ache. Flower tea used for headache. Boiled leaves and stems used as wash for snakebite and poison ivy.



White Sage
Artemisia ludoviciana
pézhí hótá wápe blaskáská

Edible Parts: Seeds and leaves
Tips: Burn it to release fragrance smoke is the most well-known use. The seed has been mixed with cereals such as oats, toasted then ground into a fine powder and eaten dry.



Yarrow
Achillea millefolium
thásoj phezíta

Edible Parts: Leaves, flowers
Tips: It can be dried and used as a spice. Fresh flowers and leaves are great for salads, soups, and stews. Leaves smelt spicy fragrance when ready.

The Wild Ones



Sheep Sorrel
Rumex acetosella

Edible Parts: Leaves, roots
Tips: Use it as an unusual addition to salads, or stir fry the roots along with peppers and onions.



Sweet Goldenrod
Solidago odora
channúnga hí preptécéla

Edible Parts: Leaves, flowers
Tips: Dried leaves make a sweet and aromatic tea. An infusion of dried leaves, flowers, and stems is used to treat stomachaches.



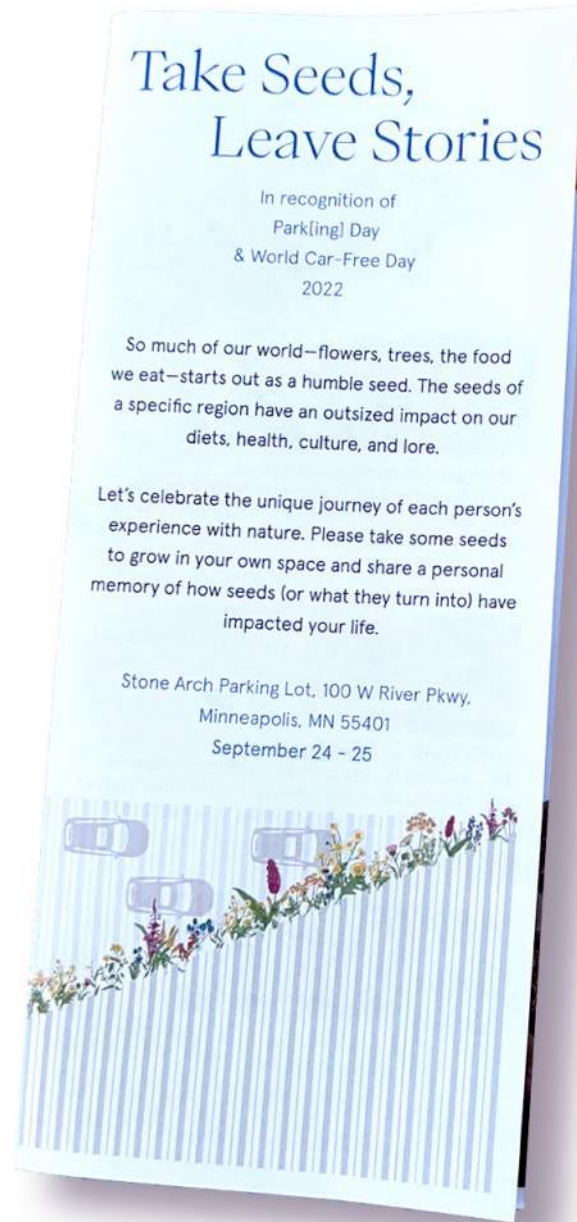
Pineapple Weed
Matricaria discoides
skuyómna

Edible Parts: Leaves, flowers
Tips: When picking, go for the flowers that are more yellow than green. If the color of flower heads is tan to brown, it's ready, gently squeeze them to get seeds.



Red Clover
Trifolium pratense
blayé zínká thachán

Edible Parts: Nearly all parts are edible
Tips: Leaves, seeds and flowers are widely preferred, the blossoms have a sweet, bean-like flavor. It can be eaten raw as a garnish in salads and other dishes.



TRI-FOLD PAMPHLET - INSIDE



GOLD
MEDAL
FLOUR

Pay Station
←

MENARDS
CONCRETE FORMING TUBE
8"
PARKING / DA

Leave Stories
Take Seeds

MENARDS
CONCRETE FORMING TUBE
8"

MENARDS
CONCRETE FORMING TUBE
8"

MENARDS
CONCRETE FORMING TUBE
8"

MENARDS
CONCRETE FORMING TUBE
8"

MENARDS
CONCRETE FORMING TUBE
8"



GOLD
MOUNTAIN
JACOB
RUSSELL

Pay Station
←

MEYARDS
CONCRETE FORMING TUBES

8"

8"

8"

8"

8"

8"

8"

8"

8"

8"

8"

8"

8"

8"

8"

8"









SEED DISPLAY



8"
NOMINAL
INSIDE DIAMETER
+/- 1/2"



MANARD
TE FORM

FOUR (4) FEET OF TUBE HEIGHT

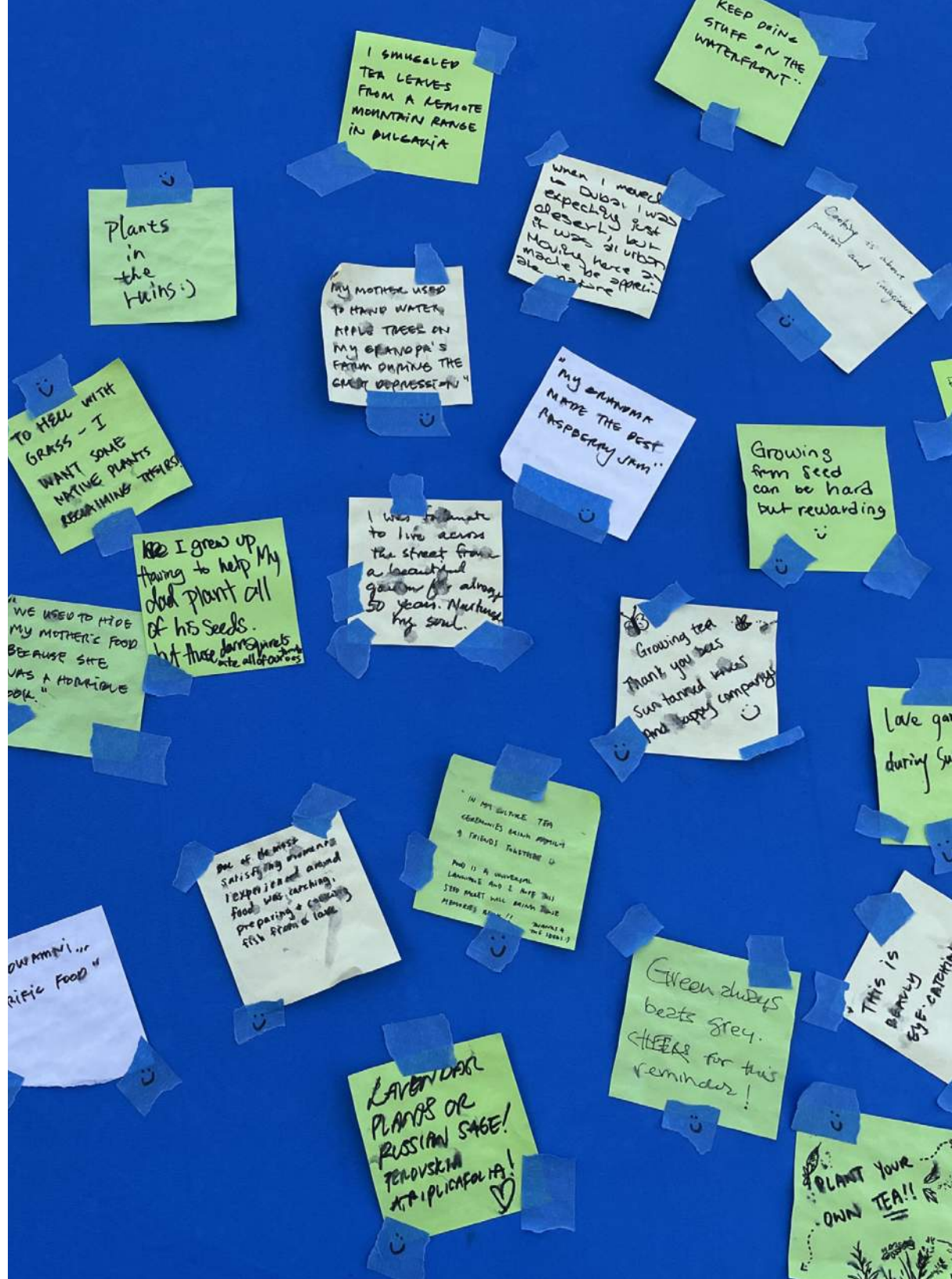
8" DIA	10" DIA	12" DIA	16" DIA
4	5	6	8
3	4	6	8

BELOW GROUND USE ONLY

ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION
CONSTRUCTION
PROPERTIES
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION







LEAVE STORIES

Plants in the hills :)

I SMUGGLED TEA LEAVES FROM A REMOTE MOUNTAIN RANGE IN BULGARIA

KEEP DOING STUFF ON THE WATERFRONT

When I moved to Dubai I was expecting just a city, but it was so vibrant. I've made the most of it.

Coaching is about passion and inspiration

MY MOTHER USED TO CHASE WATER APPLS TREES ON MY GRANDPA'S FARM DURING THE GREAT DEPRESSION

"MY GRANDMA MADE THE BEST RASPBERRY JAM"

Growing from seed can be hard but rewarding

TO HELL WITH GRASS - I WANT SOME NATIVE PLANTS RECLAIMING THEIRS!

I grew up having to help my dad plant all of his seeds. but these days I've turned into a professional

I was fortunate to live across the street from a beautiful garden for almost 50 years. Nurtured my soul.

"WE USED TO HIDE MY MOTHER'S FOOD BECAUSE SHE WAS A HORRIBLE COOK."

Growing tea. Thank you bees. Sun-banned knees. And happy company!

Love garden during summer

"IN MY CULTURE TEA CEREMONIES BRING PEOPLE & FRIENDS TOGETHER"

One of the most satisfying moments I experienced around food was catching, preparing & eating fish from a lake.

"DUMMII... RIFIC FOOD"

Green always beats grey. CHECK for this reminder!

THIS IS BEARLY EYE-CATCHING

LAVENDER PLANTS OR RUSSIAN SAGE! TENDERSKA TRAPICAFOLIA!

PLANT YOUR OWN TEA!!

TRANSCRIPTIONS FROM VISITOR NOTES:

“ This is really eye-catching / My grandma made the best raspberry jam / I was fortunate enough to live across the street from a beautiful garden for almost 50 years...it nurtured my soul / Love lavender plants or Russian sage! / [Green always beats grey. Cheers for this reminder!](#) / Sage is used for drink and medicinal use in Pakistan. / [Growth is never linear](#) / It's just so beautiful! / I smuggled tea leaves from a remote mountain range in Bulgaria / My mother used to hand-water apple trees on my grandpa's farm during The Great Depression / We used to hide food from my mother because she was such a horrible cook / I love plants! / Plants and nature is extremely grounding and healing...they provide a gentle space / When I moved to Dubai I was expecting just desert, but it was all urban. Moving here was a miracle...be appreciative of nature / First I was upset that a fungus was taking over my squash plant and eating it slowly then I realized...it's the circle of life / We need to keep mother Earth happy and healthy / [Thanks for opening up my eyes. Fantastic installation...very apropos and enlightening](#) / I always love family holiday dinners / Hoping to turn part of my yard to native plants. Lawn is not eco-friendly / My dog likes to eat grass / Growing tea, thank you bees, sun-tanned knees, and happy company / In my culture, tea ceremonies bring family and friends together / Food is a universal language and I hope this seed packet will bring those memories back / Thanks for the seeds! / Mint...for mint juleps / Growing plants from seed is one of the greatest joys / Must have flowers, always / Enjoying gardening with my grandparents / Plant more pollinators! / One year we made jack-o-lanterns from watermelon that weren't ripe and apples from the store / Seeds have many uses / I love the idea of this installation...it's promoting green. Awesome! / We love to attract the bees and butterflies / I had blue jays that ate my tomatoes / Cooking is about passion and imagination / Keep doing stuff like this on the waterfront / Love seeds and all the lovely fruits they give us in the summer / [To hell with grass...I want some native plant reclaiming theirs!](#) / Plants in the ruins / I grew up having to help my dad plant all of his seeds, but those darn squirrels at all of our tomatoes / Growing from seed can be hard but rewarding / So sad that we live in a condo, otherwise I would bring these seeds home / I love gardening during a sunny day! / One of the most satisfying moments I experienced around food was catching, preparing, and cooking fish from a lake / [This looks like an art installation](#) ”