

**CITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION NO. 22-16**

**RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND, SUPPORTING SEED SAVING WITHIN THE CITY, SUPPORTING AND ENCOURAGING THE EFFORTS OF SEED LIBRARIES TO FACILITATE SHARING OF LOCALLY GROWN AND SAVED SEED, AND SUPPORTING ASSEMBLY BILL 1810 (AB 1810), THE CALIFORNIA SEED EXCHANGE DEMOCRACY ACT, WHICH ALLOWS FOR THE SHARING OF SEEDS BETWEEN INDIVIDUALS AND THROUGH SEED LIBRARIES WITHOUT COST OR GERMINATION TESTING**

---

**WHEREAS**, the City of Richmond wishes to promote access to healthy food for all citizens, and Article 25 of the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights recognizes that every person has the right to food; and

**WHEREAS**, seed libraries are nonprofit repositories of seed for the benefit of the public where free seed is distributed to promote seed sharing, provide increased access to healthy food, educate about seed saving skills, 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**, gardening is a healthy activity supporting food access and promoting physical activity; and

**WHEREAS**, humans have a history of sharing seeds that created and supported civilizations for over 10,000 years; and

**WHEREAS**, in the US, we have lost over 90% of the vegetable varieties grown 100 years ago; and the three largest seed companies control over 50% of the market share in commercial seeds; and

**WHEREAS**, the current industrial model of agriculture relies on a few, patented varieties of seeds to produce the majority of the food in our food system, putting our food system at considerable risk; and

**WHEREAS**, seed libraries and seed sharing have been able to preserve fruit and vegetable varieties that have historical and cultural significance to communities; and

**WHEREAS**, many locally adapted varieties are only available through seed libraries and not through commercial seed companies; and

**WHEREAS**, local seeds adapted to local soils and climate make our bio-regional food system more resilient; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Richmond supports strategies to strengthen community food assets, including community gardens, seed banks, seed libraries, community kitchens and community-supported agriculture farms; and

**WHEREAS**, the official legislative purpose of the California Seed Law is to protect consumers who purchase seed from inadequately or illegally labeled seed and to promote fair competition; and

**WHEREAS**, the sharing of seeds between individuals or facilitated by seed libraries is a voluntary, community-based activity that does not take place within a marketplace and does not involve a commercial transaction; and

**WHEREAS**, seed libraries do not "sell" seeds, as that term is commonly defined, nor are the members of seed libraries "customers"; and

**WHEREAS**, there are nearly 50 seed libraries in California and at least one seed library in Richmond, and the Richmond Grows seed library located at the Richmond Public Library has disbursed thousands of seed packets to hundreds of library patrons over the past five years; and

**WHEREAS**, the seed libraries offer seed saving classes to educate members on best practices for saving seed and water conservation, the seed libraries protect our food supply and the seed libraries play an important role in strengthening our communities' access to healthy food; and

**WHEREAS**, seed libraries and seed sharing facilitate access to healthy, locally grown food in food deserts where little may be available and many members of the community cannot afford to meet their family's food budget; and

**WHEREAS**, seed sharing enables people to grow and feed wholesome food to their families, and by saving seed they can ensure their food supply in the future; and

**WHEREAS**, seed libraries and seed sharing protect and encourage seeds that have cultural and historical significance; and

**WHEREAS**, there are over 450 seed libraries in the United States with the longest one being in operation for over 15 years.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City of Richmond supports and encourages the ongoing 10,000 year legacy of seed sharing between community members without legal barriers of labeling fees and germination testing; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the City Council of the City of Richmond supports and encourages the efforts of seed libraries to facilitate sharing of locally grown and saved seed; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the City of Richmond supports the work of our seed libraries in working with educators and community organizations to support seed saving, educate community members about the value of seed sharing, develop best practices to grow seed saving skills, and encourage voluntary and accurate seed labeling; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the City of Richmond supports Assembly Bill 1810 (AB 1810), The California Seed Exchange Democracy Act, that supports 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; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the City Council directs staff to send a letter to AB 1810's sponsor and the City of Richmond's state representatives communicating the city's support for AB 1810.

\*\*\*\*\*

I certify that the foregoing resolution was passed and adopted by the Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting thereof held March 1, 2016, by the following vote:

AYES: Councilmembers Bates, Beckles, McLaughlin, Myrick, Pimplé, Vice Mayor Martinez, and Mayor Butt.

NOES: None.

ABSTENTIONS: None.

ABSENT: None.

PAMELA CHRISTIAN  
CLERK OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND  
(SEAL)

Approved:

TOM BUTT  
Mayor

Approved as to form:

BRUCE GOODMILLER  
City Attorney

State of California            }  
County of Contra Costa        : ss.  
City of Richmond               }

I certify that the foregoing is a true copy of **Resolution No. 22-16**, finally passed and adopted by the City Council of the City of Richmond at a regular meeting held on March 1, 2016.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Pamela Christian, Clerk of the City of Richmond