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### **Simpson Library Works with Department of Agriculture to Comply with 2004 Seed Act**

CARLISLE, PA – The Cumberland County Library System’s Joseph T. Simpson Public Library in Mechanicsburg announced today that in order to comply with Pennsylvania’s 2004 Seed Act that instead of accepting and storing harvested seeds from library users that it will host Seed Swap events for library users and will only make seeds available from commercial seed companies in the future.

In early June, Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture officials notified the Simpson Public Library that while it was not selling seeds, the library must comply with the 2004 Seed Act which regulates the selling and distribution of seeds. In addition to licensing seed distributors, the 2004 Seed Act requires that distributors only offer seeds that are tested using ‘AOSA Rules for Testing Seed’ and are labeled with each seed variety’s germination test dates, sell by dates, lot numbers, seed types, etc.

Sue Erdman, Director of the Simpson Library, said that since the library is not able to provide testing services for seeds harvested by its library users that the library would not be able to accept harvested seeds as it had originally planned.

“While we were disappointed that we could no longer accept harvested seeds, we understood the Department of Agriculture’s concerns about possible infringement of seed patents, the spread of invasive plants and disease or cross-pollination,” Erdman said. “We are pleased that Department of Agriculture officials worked with us to allow us to host seed swap events. This means that we can continue working with the community to promote home gardening and the preservation of heirloom seed varieties.”

As for the 2015 growing season, Rebecca Swanger, Adult Services Librarian and Volunteer Coordinator at the Simpson Library, said that the library plans to obtain donated commercial seed varieties for the Simpson Public Library’s Seed Library, and to continue offering educational books, DVDs and programs about gardening and harvesting seeds.

Simpson Public Library’s Seed Library was launched in April 2014 as a joint program with the Cumberland County Commission for Women. About 60 people have registered to be part of the Seed Library.

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