

## Seeds of a Warm-Weather Carrot to Try

Tim Motis

While supplies last, we are making available 'B8524' carrot seed that we are trialing at ECHO, and that you may wish to experiment with as well. The seed was sent to ECHO by Dr. Philipp Simon, a USDA carrot breeder at the University of Wisconsin. In correspondence with Tim Motis, Dr. Simon wrote, "We have identified a seed supply of a carrot that I think will be applicable in warmer climates. We have an adequate supply to provide 100 packets of carrot B8524, which has good quality and nematode resistance in our evaluations."

Carrots are normally biennial (life cycle completed the second year after planting seeds) and require a period of cold temperatures (vernalization) for flowering and subsequent seed production to occur. So any variety that readily sets seed in a single growing season in warm climates would be of interest to those working with small farmers in the tropics, especially those with little access to seeds beyond what they can save themselves. When asked if B8524 sets seed within a single growing season (as does the 'Uberlandia' variety ECHO has and continues to supply), Dr. Simon replied, "I think the carrots should seed as readily as Uberlandia. The answer to this question is where we can really use your input and observations. This is becoming a much larger question for much of my carrot breeding program now, so your feedback will be very valuable."



Figure 3: Carrot seed. Photo by Tim Motis

We encourage our network members to request a complementary packet of B8524. We also suggest that you request a packet of 'Uberlandia' so that you can compare it to B8524. 'Uberlandia' readily produces seed, but the shape of the carrot is quite variable. If you request and grow out either or both varieties, please let

us know your results (email [echo@echonet.org](mailto:echo@echonet.org) and write Attn: Seed Bank Manager in your email). Along with a description of the climate, your comments on overall crop vigor, carrot shape and taste, as well as observations on flowering/seed production would be especially helpful. With each mailing of B8524 carrot seed, we will also send an evaluation form that Dr. Simon provided. We will compile the results for Dr. Simon, to better enable him to develop lines of carrots suited to the tropics.

Although this line of carrot is noted for its ability to grow in warm weather, it is still advisable to plant the seeds during the cooler part of year if you are located close to the equator. Remember that carrot is a cross-pollinated crop, so two varieties growing close together and flowering at the same time will cross. Depending on your purposes, this may not be a bad thing. In this case, for instance, an 'Uberlandia' and B8524 cross could result in an improved line of 'Uberlandia'.

Dr. Simon sent some hints for growing carrots. You can read them in the online Supplement.