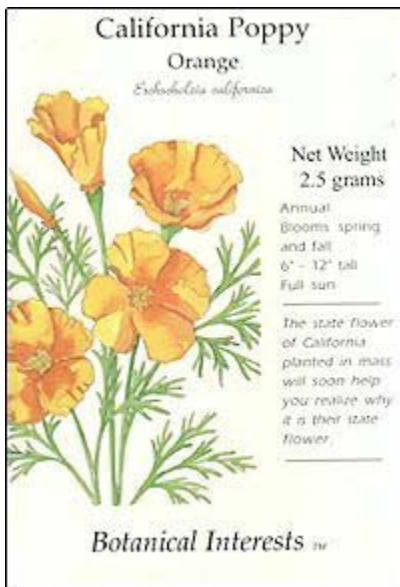


Tracy Poppy Project



Have you ever driven on a springtime day when the grass is green and the sky is blue and seen hillsides blanketed with California Poppies?

Help us make Tracy beautiful by planting California Poppy seeds at your school, in your yard, or throwing the seeds along a country road on the outskirts of the city. Each year if we plant more and more Poppy seeds, soon there will be beautiful California Poppies all around Tracy each spring.

The California Poppy is the State Flower. Its scientific name is *Eschscholzia californica*. The California Poppy is a native plant to our state. A native plant means it was grown in California before European settlers arrived and evolved to survive in the State's relatively arid (dry), mild (not cold) climate. In fact, the California Poppy, also called the Golden Poppy, was first recorded in 1815 when a Russian sailing expedition spotted the golden blankets of flowers

along the northern California coast. The California Poppy is named after a member of this expedition, Dr. Johann Friedrich Eschscholtz.

The California Poppy's bright orange color is a classic symbol for our Golden State when it covers a field or hillside. The California Poppy can be a perennial plant or an annual plant. A perennial plant is one that will grow and flower each year without having to replant or reseed. In the mild climate around Tracy the California Poppy can be a perennial plant. An annual plant will only grow for one season, and then has to be replanted. In colder climates the poppy is an annual plant.

As a wildflower, the California Poppy gets water only from the winter and spring rains. When the rains stop in April or May, the Poppy plant will dry up. But its roots will remain in the ground. Then when the rains arrive again the next year, the poppy will again grow and bloom. The Poppy also 'self-sows' which means that it can produce seeds that land nearby and will germinate and bloom the next year with the annual rains.

As our state flower, it is illegal to pick or destroy California Poppies that grow on public property or roadsides. With permission, you can pick poppies planted on private property or in your own yard. But because they do not last long as cut flowers, it is best to enjoy them in yards and fields.

With your help, we can celebrate our state flower and make Tracy bloom with California Poppies each spring.

**TRAQC Educational Foundation, PO Box 721, Tracy, CA 95378
CT – 119082, EIN – 68-0470312
www.traqc-foundation.org, tef@starband.net**

How to receive your free California Poppy seeds:

As part of the Tracy Poppy Project, 4th and 5th grade teachers in TUSD and JSD can receive a free packet of California Poppy seeds to distribute to students in their class. Requests for this winter season 2009 must be received by **December 10, 2008**. Seed packets will be distributed on a first come first serve basis while supplies last. As agreed to by the teacher or parent, students can plant the seeds at school, at home, or toss them along a country road.

To request a free packet of California Poppy seeds for your class and project classroom materials, email the TRAQC Educational Foundation at tef@starband.net. For questions call Mercy Silveira, 830-3275 ext.1504, or Celeste Garamendi, 914-0792. We will try to distribute them prior to the holiday vacation so that they can be planted before year end.

California Poppy Seed Program Requirements

Who is eligible? - 4th and 5th grades teachers/classes in TUSD and JSD

What do you get? - Free packet of seeds for class to plant

When must you apply? - Requests must be received by **December 10, 2008**

How do you apply? - Email tef@starband.net with teacher name, school, grade, # students phone number

For questions? - Call Mercy Silveira, 830-3275 ext.1504, or Celeste Garamendi, 914-0792

The Tracy Poppy Project is part of the TRAQC Educational Foundation's Tracy Nature Program designed to promote greater understand among our youth of our natural environment in and around Tracy. The Tracy Poppy Project is modeled after the California Poppy Project©. Please go to www.traqc-foundation.org for more information about the Foundation.

**TRAQC Educational Foundation, PO Box 721, Tracy, CA 95378
CT – 119082, EIN – 68-0470312
www.traqc-foundation.org, tef@starband.net**

Tracy Poppy Project **Planting Instructions**

Winter is a good time to “plant” the poppy seeds so that the flower will bloom in the spring. The California Poppy will grow as a wildflower in the spring. It can also be planted in gardens and if watered regularly it will bloom from spring into the fall.

If planted in the winter, the winter rains will germinate the seeds and help the flowers grow. If there isn't much rain, the seeds will need to be watered.

You can plant your California Poppy seeds in an inside or outside container or an outside in a garden or flower bed. Or you can just through the seeds on the ground alongside the road.

To plant in a container or a garden:

1. Plant your seeds in a mostly sunny place if outside. If you plant your seeds in a container that is inside, be certain that it will get sunlight each day.
2. Prepare soil by removing weeds, leavers other debris and cultivating (spading/turning/raking/watering) to loosen the soil and so that it is dampened.
3. Spread seeds roughly evenly over prepared soil where you want your flower bed. You or students can just sprinkle the seeds using your hands over the prepared soil area. Or you can also give each student a few seeds (about a ¼ teaspoon for each student) to place together in little mounds spread over the prepared soil area for or individual containers.
4. Press seeds into soil about 1/8 - ¼ inch so that they are slightly covered with soil.
5. Keep soil slightly moist until seedlings germinate and are established. Then water regularly every few days.

To plant as a wildflower:

1. Like in nature, just scatter the seeds in a field or along a country road during winter after the rains have started. Hopefully, the seeds will germinate and grow in the spring with the annual rainy season. But just like in nature, it depends on the rains and where the seeds land.

Remember, you need permission to go onto someone else's property and never leave any garbage or debris by the road.

TRAQC Educational Foundation, PO Box 721, Tracy, CA 95378
CT – 119082, EIN – 68-0470312
www.traqc-foundation.org, tef@starband.net

