

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Apr. 5, 2013

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Release No. 13-039



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Postal Service Ushers in Spring with Vintage Seed Packets Commemorative Forever Stamps

OAKS, PA — Today, the U.S. Postal Service celebrated the arrival of spring by dedicating new Vintage Seed Packets Commemorative Forever stamps. These beautiful First-Class stamps, based on photographs of seed packets from a century ago, were dedicated at the Philadelphia National Stamp Exhibition.

“Seed packet art depicts the utmost in floral perfection,” said dedicating official and Postal Service Philadelphia Metropolitan District Manager Chu Falling Star. “At the turn of the early 1900s, packets like those displayed on the stamps encouraged Americans to create the perfect floral garden. The Postal Service’s release of these stamps reminds us about the beauty flowers add to our lives and signals the arrival of spring.”

Joining Falling Star at the ceremony was American First Day Cover Society Immediate Past President Chris Lazaroff; Philadelphia National Stamp Exhibition Chairman Stephen Washburne; J. Landreth Seed Company Owner Barbara Melera and Stamp Art Director/Designer Antonio Alcalá.

Created using chromolithography — a process that replaced hand-tinted lithographs and allowed for inexpensive multi-color prints — the illustrations originally graced the fronts of flower seed packets printed between 1910 and 1920.

Each of the 10 stamps depicts blossoms of one variety of flower — a trio of cosmos in delicate white, pink, and red; stalks of yellow, pink and coral digitalis; bright yellow primrose flowers with orange centers; a vibrant orange calendula; white, pink and blue aster blooms; two shades of pinks (dianthus), one pale, one dark; linum

blossoms in a rich red; white drifts of alyssum; clusters of phlox in red, pink and purple; and pale pink, subtle yellow, and muted orange-red zinnia flowers. To learn more about the stories behind the stamps, visit beyondtheperf.com.

Special first-day-of-issue sales are being held at the Macy's City Center Philadelphia store located in the John Wanamaker building on April 5 and 6. In addition to being a prominent businessman, Wanamaker was the nation's 38th Postmaster General (1889–1893).

The Vintage Seed Packets commemorative First-Class Mail Forever stamps are 46 cents each and offered as a double-sided booklet of 20 stamps, priced at \$9.20 per booklet.

Customers may purchase the Vintage Seed Packets stamps at usps.com/stamps, at 800-STAMP-24 (800-782-6724) and at Post Offices nationwide. Many of this year's other stamps may be viewed on Facebook at facebook.com/USPSStamps, via [Twitter @USPSstamps](https://twitter.com/USPSstamps) or at beyondtheperf.com/2013-preview.

First-Day-of-Issue Postmarks

Customers have 60 days to obtain the first-day-of-issue postmark by mail. They may purchase stamps at a local Post Office, The Postal Store at usps.com/stamps, or by calling 800-STAMP-24. Customers should affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes (to themselves or others) and place them in larger envelopes addressed to:

Vintage Seed Packets Stamp
Retail Manager
United States Postal Service
3190 S. 70th Street, Room 503
Philadelphia, PA 19153-9500

After applying the first-day-of-issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark up to a quantity of 50. For more than 50, customers must pay 5 cents each. All orders must be postmarked by June 5, 2013.

First-Day Covers

The Postal Service also offers first-day covers for new stamp issues and Postal Service stationery items postmarked with the official first-day-of-issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly *USA Philatelic* catalog, online at usps.com/stamps or by calling 800-782-6724. Customers may request a free catalog by calling 800-782-6724 or writing to:

United States Postal Service Catalog Request
PO Box 219014
Kansas City, MO 64121-9014

Philatelic Products

Four philatelic products are available for this stamp issue:

- 688510 [Vintage Seed Packets Digital Color Postmark Keepsake](#) — This collectible package includes a booklet of 20 Vintage Seed Packets Forever stamps and a #6 ¾ envelope bearing a randomly selected, affixed Vintage Seed Packets Forever stamp and a First-Day-of-Issue color postmark. The postmark design incorporates decorative elements and typography suggested by early 20th century seed packets, and includes the official date and location of the stamp issuance. \$10.95.
- 688516 [Vintage Seed Packets First-Day Covers](#) — This set of 10 First-Day Covers (#6 ¾ envelopes), each bears an affixed Vintage Seed Packets Forever stamp and an official First-Day-of-Issue postmark. Set of 10, \$9.
- 688521 [Vintage Seed Packets Digital Color Postmarks](#) — Blooming American garden flowers grace this set of 10 First-Day Covers (#6 ¾ envelopes), each bearing an affixed Vintage Seed Packets Forever stamp and a First-Day-of-Issue color postmark. Set of 10, \$16.10.
- 688523 [Vintage Seed Packets Notecards](#) — Richly-illustrated seed packets printed at the turn of the last century encouraged millions of Americans to dream of creating the perfect garden. This set of notecards showcases 10 images of American garden flowers that appeared on packets printed between 1910 and 1920. The set includes 10 notecards (blank inside) with envelopes and 10 Vintage Seed Packets Forever stamps. Set of 10, \$15.95.

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A self-supporting government enterprise, the U.S. Postal Service is the only delivery service that reaches every address in the nation: 152 million residences, businesses and Post Office Boxes. The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations. With more than 31,000 retail locations and the most frequently visited website in the federal government, usps.com, the Postal Service has annual revenue of more than \$65 billion and delivers nearly 40 percent of the world's mail. If it were a private-sector company, the U.S. Postal Service would rank 42nd in the 2012 Fortune 500. The Postal Service has been named the Most Trusted Government Agency for seven years and the fourth Most Trusted Business in the nation by the Ponemon Institute.

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