

# UTAH GIANT PUMPKIN GROWERS

## *The Pumpkin Vine*

Sept. 2007

VOL III ISSUE III

I've had several inquires about the weigh off date, lifting tarps and selling pumpkins.

The UGPG weigh off is Saturday Oct 13<sup>th</sup> at Rockin'E Country Store in Woods Cross. Registration starts at 8 am, judging is at 11 and the weigh off starts at noon. I'm sorry if the last newsletter caused any confusion on the date. Remember to bring your pumpkins on a pallet. You can see information on other weigh offs and activities on our web site: [www.utahpumpkingrowers.com](http://www.utahpumpkingrowers.com)

You can purchase a lifting tarp either of the following web sites:

<http://www.howarddill.com/tarp.html> or <http://www.pandpseed.com/>

You can also make one fairly using a basic tarp, grommet kit, pvc and rope:



I've lifted a 520 lb pumpkin with the tarp shown in the pictures. It was only 2 layers thick. But all around the perimeter was doubled (4 layers) for the handles. The handles were strained with the weight of the pumpkin but it worked.

There is no exact method that I know of to make them its more trial and error. If I had to make new ones over again I would buy a 8 x 10 ft and fold it in half twice for (4 layers), so you end up with a 4 x 5, for pumpkins 600 lbs or less.

I think a 5 x 5 or 5 x 6 or 6 x 6 with 6 layers would handle up to 700-800 lbs. For weights above 800 lbs. I'd go with 8 layers and 6 x 6 or 6 x 7 or 7 x 7. You can buy grommet kits at Walmart. The handles are 1/2 inch PVC pipe about 6 in long. Some people don't make handles they just roll up the sides of the tarp. As a minimum you

want one person for each 100 lbs of pumpkin, and the more handles the better. Remember the larger the pumpkin the more difficult it is to handle.



I know Kenny lifted his 1104 lb. pumpkin last year with a 6 x 6 tarp but it was a lot of work. I had my tarp made at Kirkhams (springbar tents) in SLC. It is a 7 x 7 ft tarp with handles. I knew someone that worked there. I asked if they would be interested in offering tarps for other growers. They were not interested in doing this at that time, in 2004. The UGPG can work on this in the future. I know there are several canvas shops around, maybe we can find one that would be willing to make them for us.

However you lift and move your pumpkin please be safe. Be sure to secure your pumpkins to your truck or trailer. If you have to stop quickly with your pumpkin, it becomes a moving object. I've seen pictures of broken windows and smashed/dented truck cabs where people didn't tie down their pumpkins.

How much can I sell my pumpkin for? The honest answer is "what ever you can get for it". Around the country typically they sell for 50 cents/lb up to 600 lbs., 6xx for 60 cents/lb. 7xx for 70 cents/lb, etc. But a buyer will probably have sticker shock if he sees an \$800 tag on a 900 lb pumpkin. The truth is buyers have no idea how difficult it is to grow a giant pumpkin, especially in Utah. So tell them. Then explain that there aren't very many large pumpkins grown in the area. (ie. Supply vs. Demand) But even after explaining you might have to bargain with them or work with them over a few years to bring up the price to where it should be. If we stick together on this it will grow in the long run. Of course if you want to sell one cheap or donate one for a good cause then that's fine. Places that might be interesting in buying your pumpkin are nurseries, corn mazes, grocery stores, dentists, orthodontists, banks, car/truck dealer, corporate party, etc. (for guess a weight contest) and any other with a Halloween related event.

Thanks to all of those who let us visit their patch on our recent patch tour. It looks like we'll see some big pumpkins at the weigh off this year and several new Personal Bests. Hope to see you at the weigh off with a monster pumpkin!

Gordon Tanner  
UGPG President

ps: look for a story in the Deseret News on Giant Pumpkins & the State Fair this week & here's a on line story: <http://online.wsj.com/public/article/SB118860052482715050.html>