



The Pumpkin Vine

February 2015

2014 Was a RECORD Year!

Mohammed Sadiq - State Record
Long Gourd 116.25"



Dale Thurber - State Record Tomato
4.670 lbs.



Ralph and Juana Laub - State Record
Field Pumpkin 164 lbs.



Matt McConkie - Giant Pumpkin 1817 lbs.

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SPRING SEMINAR

We are thrilled to announce that our Spring Seminar will be held on February 20th and 21st. Our sponsor for this year's seminar is Hee Haw Farms! Thank you for your generous support.

We will be joined by some of the world's best growers including:
Tim Mathison, former world record holder
Leonardo Urena, former GPC giant pumpkin Grower of the Year and long gourd world record holder.
Gary Miller, 2013 Half Moon Bay Champion

Don't miss this unique opportunity to be instructed by some of the brightest minds in the sport!

SCHEDULE

Location

Big Screen Event Center, 1353 West 760 North, Orem, UT 84057
(between the DMV and the Boy Scout offices on 8th North in Orem - west of the freeway)

Friday, February 20th at 6:00 - 11:00pm

Beginner's Seminar
Dinner, Meet 'n Greet, Games, Karaoke

Saturday, February 21st at 9:00am - 1:00pm

Advanced Seminar (all growers are invited)

- **Please RSVP** by emailing us at:
utahgiantpumpkingrowers@gmail.com.
Put "Seminar 2/20 or Seminar 2/21 RSVP" in the subject line with the # of people attending.
- This year's seminar will be video recorded and available to purchase for less than \$10. Take notes but don't stress too much when you can just watch it over and over. Please let us know you're interested in purchasing a copy by emailing:
utahgiantpumpkingrowers@gmail.com
- Please put (seminar recording) in the subject line. Include your name and address also. More details to come at the seminar. An email will also go out after the seminar with more details.

THANKS!

The UGPG would like to thank our good friend, Lee Perry, for his generosity in donating many lifting rings and towing straps to those who participated in our annual club seed auction on bigpumpkins.com. Ubgiants.com was a big part of making our seed auction a huge success. Lee and Dori will be at our seminars with rings to sell and demonstrate. Visit ubgiants.com for more details.



Tim Mathison



UGPG COMMITTEE

As you have likely heard, we are moving toward a Committee type of leadership for the Utah Giant Pumpkin Growers organization. This has many benefits which include spreading out the workload, and increasing the number of positions allowing more people to serve. **We would like to extend a heartfelt thanks to the outgoing Presidency for their countless hours of service and dedication.**

The 2015 Committee positions are:

Committee Head: Kyle Fox

Records & Website: Yvonne Israelsen, Travis Evans, Andrew Israelsen

Scales: Ben McRae

Forklift: Brian Davis, Bill Montalvo

Merchandise: Tyler Quigley

Seeds Club Distribution: David Bradley

Weigh Off Coordinator: Kyle Fox

Auction: Chad Black, Cliff Warren

Seminar: Foxes, Blacks and David Bradley

Newsletters: Matt McConkie, Cathy Bradley

Membership: Ed Dennis

Events Calendar: Craig Wilson

Treasurer: Ed Dennis

Sponsorship: Kyle Fox, Matt McConkie, Ross Bowman

Media: Lindsay Bench

Weigh Off Information Table: Stacey Black, Kristin Richardson, Heather Davis

Patch Tour: Ken Kolb

Weigh Off Awards Presenters: Carrie Fox, Chad & Stacey Black, Laurel Dennis

Photographers: Dan Farr, Kyle Clark, Richard Glassford

Weigh Off Volunteers: Craig Wilson, Ben McRae, Clint Nash, Andrew Israelsen, Tobias Peterson, Brian David, Kristin Richardson, Bill Montalvo, Laurel Dennis, Dale Thurber

Pumpkin Movers at Weigh Off: Gordon and Kyle Tanner, Tobias Peterson, Brian Davis, Jordan Rogers, Benjamin McRae

Weigh Off Judges: Carrie Fox, Chad Black, Andrew Israelsen, Mohamed Sadiq

*If you would like to serve on the committee,
please contact Kyle Fox at kylefox1@gmail.com*

*Is your contact information up to date?
Let us know if you have a new email or phone number.*

Check out the club facebook page - it's fun and powerful!
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/utahgiantpumpkingrowers/>



5 Tomato Tips

By Dale Thurber

1 SOIL - Lots of organic matter - feed those roots! Nearly all the world's top giant tomato growers are, or were, also giant pumpkin growers, and use essentially the same soil formulation for growing huge tomatoes.

2 GENETICS - Unlike pumpkins, we're dealing with several varieties of tomatoes with potential to push the upper limit; Select varieties and specific lines that have been proven to produce lots of megablossoms (fused blossoms) and multiple 5+ pounders.

3 PRUNING - Be aggressive! A single main stem, prune off all suckers and old leaves, and prune off all other small tomatoes and blossoms once you've selected the most promising tomato, which should result from the most impressive, massive megabloom on one of the early trusses. And top off terminal growth once the tomato starts growing well - the new world record was grown on a vine less than 3' tall!

4 CLIMATE - Tomatoes grow best when the temperature is between 70-85° F, so a combination of growing under

plastic (for May to mid-June and September until frost) for warmth, and under shade cloth during the heat of summer will help keep tomatoes growing quickly but not ripening too fast. Steady watering is a given - especially keep that top 2" of soil moist (but not soggy), as that zone is where the fine feeder roots take up a high percentage of calcium and other nutrients.

5 FOOD - Just as with pumpkins, vines that have produced 5+ lb. tomatoes have been fed a regular diet of Xtreme Gardening products, Dunkel's Tomato Turbo, Voodoo juice, compost teas, and other products - and absolutely don't forget the mycorrhizal fungi from the very beginning! Ten Pound Tomato here we come!



*Dale with his State Record
Winning Tomato*

<https://delectationoftomatoes.wordpress.com>

Grower Spotlight - Kyle and Kelly Clark

Kyle and Kelly Clark live in Highland, UT and have been active in the UGPG since 2011 where Kyle set a new State Record with a 130 lb. watermelon. A dentist by profession, when Kyle isn't pulling teeth, he's pulling weeds and growing giants in his patch. By 2012, Kyle was conducting extensive experiments with hydroponics and entered the giant pumpkin growing arena with a very impressive 934 lb. gourd. Watch for BIG things in the future from this energetic grower!



Field Pumpkin Growing

By Ralph and Juana Laub

To start with, only soak the seeds half of the time you soak regular giant pumpkin seeds as they are thinner and lighter. Next we waited about 2-3 weeks to plant them as they grow so fast and are not as large as the AG's. We germinated the seeds on April 24th and they went outside the first part of May. Then treat them like you do your AG, whenever you put something on your AG put the same thing on your field pumpkins. Also, bury vines the same etc...

When to pollinate was a big question for us. I asked many people and was given several answers, the most common was that they will grow for 30 days. Andy Wolf told us his biggest ones grew for 60 days. We tried several different times and found our biggest grew for almost 60 days, after that they just sat there and turned brighter orange.

Lastly they produce like crazy, we had one



vine where we buried the vines like the others until it was time to pollinate and then let the bees have at it. We ended up with 23 pumpkins on it around 30-40 lbs. The others we went out and cut the new females off 2-3x a week. One suggestion - wear a long sleeve shirt. In July and August that is pretty far from one's mind, but if you don't, you will look like you have been in a cat fight. I have never seen anything so pokey and scratchy. Hope this helps, looking forward to growing this year.

Ralph and Juana, congratulations on your State Record and thanks for the tips. We look forward to more BIG things out of your patch in 2015!

TestOut



NEW SPONSOR

The UGPG has been excited and honored to be supported by many loyal sponsors. Our newest sponsor is the TestOut Corporation located in Pleasant Grove, UT. TestOut provides online training and certifications for individuals and organizations looking to advance their skills and their careers. Not only does TestOut support our organization, they have a PASSION for pumpkins!

SOIL TILTH

The term soil tilth refers to the soil's general suitability to support plant growth, or more specifically to support root growth. Tilth is technically defined as the physical condition of soil as related to its ease of tillage, fitness of seedbed, and impedance to seedling emergence and root penetration.

A soil with good tilth has large pore spaces for adequate air infiltration and water movement. (Roots only grow where the soil tilth allows for adequate levels of soil oxygen.) It also holds a reasonable supply of water and nutrients.

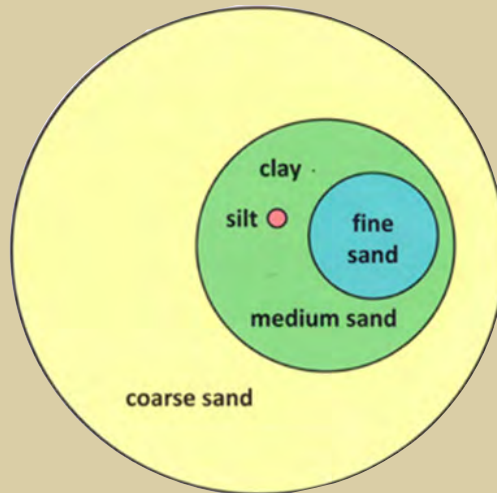


Figure 1. Comparative size of clay to coarse sand. If clay was the size of a dot on the page, silt and sand would be comparative in size. Clay is actually less than 0.002 mm (0.00008 inch) with coarse sand up to 1.0 mm (0.04 inch).

The limitations of clayey soils arise from a lack of large pores, thus restricting both water and air movement. Soils easily waterlog when water cannot move down through the soil profile. During irrigation or rain events, the limited large pore space in fine-textured soils quickly fills with water, reducing the roots' oxygen supply.

The best management practice for clayey soils is routine applications of organic matter and attention to fostering the activity of soil microorganisms and earthworms. As soil microorganisms decompose the organic matter, the tiny soil particles bind together into larger clumps or aggregates, increasing large pore space. This improvement takes place over a period of years. A single large application of organic matter does not do the trick. A gardener may start seeing improvement in soil conditions in a couple of years.

As the organic content increases, earthworms and soil microorganisms become more active; this over time improves soil tilth.

On clayey soils, also take extra care to minimize soil compaction. Soil compaction reduces the large pore space, restricting air and water movement through the soil, thus limiting root growth. Soil compaction is the primary factor limiting plant growth in landscape soils.

Authors: David Whiting (CSU Extension, retired) with Carl Wilson (CSU Extension, retired), Catherine Moravec (former CSU Extension Employee), and Jean Reeder, Ph.D. (USDA-ARS, retired).

FALL EVENT RECAP

THANKSGIVING POINT WEIGH-OFF

Despite the heavy rain, the crowd was energized which makes every weigh-off a success. The winner of the 2014 weigh off at Thanksgiving Point was Matt McConkie. Matt's pumpkin, grown from the 1985 Miller seed, smashed his previous state record by 131 pounds and came in 10% heavy to top it off. "Weigh" to go Matt! Congratulations on another successful pumpkin and your 3rd Utah State Record!! Mohamed Sadiq and Andrew Israelsen placed 2nd and 3rd weighing in at 1386.5 lbs and 1246.0 lbs. respectively. Cliff Warren's pumpkin won Howard Dill in all of it's wonderful orange glory. Congratulations everybody and thank you for making each year so successful.



Cliff Warren and his beauty!



PUMPKIN REGATTA

Charlie Clark CRUSHED the former World Record by rowing a 444 lb. pumpkin (grown by Kevin Mullenax) 100 yards. He was one of many determined competitors who gathered to race their pumpkins across the pond at Sugarhouse Park, during the 4th Annual Ginormous Pumpkin Regatta. Some successfully rowed the distance, some met a soggy demise, others though, discovered the regatta rash. Nice work to all.

PUMPKIN DROP

The 6th annual Pumpkin Drop was held at Hee Haw Farms and did not disappoint. There were tsunamis as two swimming pools were obliterated by pumpkins, a car flattened, a 4runner smashed, and an outhouse demolished. Many other things were destroyed on drop day including an organ, fridge, office furniture and truck shell as we all watched with excitement. Another highlight was the foaming pumpkin. Thanks to everybody who helped, donated, and worked hard to make this fun for everyone.



TWO UTAH WEIGH-OFFS IN 2015

As you all know, the Thanksgiving Point weigh-off is held on the last Saturday in September. This is a fantastic venue and we hope this tradition carries on for many years in the future. For 2015, the Thanksgiving Point weigh-off will be held on September 26th.

In addition to the Thanksgiving Point weigh-off, we fully anticipate adding another weigh-off in the Beehive State that will be in early October. Having multiple weigh-offs has many advantages, including allowing growers who would like to weigh more than one fruit as an official entry the possibility of doing so. This is very much the "norm" nationwide, as California has 4 GPC sanctioned events, Ohio 6, and Oregon 3. More details about this additional weigh-off will follow soon as the date is still being worked out with our sponsors.

Each grower can choose which weigh-off to attend. Per GPC rules, growers can enter both events but cannot bring the same pumpkin to both events. Both sites will be recognized by the UGPG and the GPC.



Q AND A WITH PUMPKIN LEGENDS, PETE & CINDI GLASIER

BY MATT MCCONKIE



Thank you for being willing to share your thoughts with us about your 2014 growing season. You have been very generous in sharing your time and knowledge with growers around the world. Please tell us a little bit about your pumpkin history, when did you start growing, and how has the hobby changed since you have started?

PETE: I was born and raised in Colorado and have been a farmer all my life. I started growing Halloween pumpkins around 1960. I got hooked on growing the giants in the 70's when I was thumbing through a seed catalog and noticed Atlantic Giant seeds for sale which could grow over 100 lb pumpkins. That was it! I got some seeds and grew maybe a 100 lb pumpkin. Then I decided to get seeds from the Man himself, Howard Dill. I had the virus for which there is no cure! When I started growing, the only means of communication was the telephone. I used to call Howard Dill on a regular basis with all kinds of questions and of course at the end of the season to see who grew the biggest pumpkin. There were only about three major weighoffs then.

CINDI: I worked for Pete on his farm in Denver selling pumpkins, produce, and greenhouse bedding plants. It was a magic place. We started dating and married in 1984. Pete has always supported me in my activities (racquetball, horseback riding, TENNIS) and I have supported him in pumpkin growing. As the years have gone by, I have helped more and more and the pumpkin obsession has grown on me too! Many things have changed since we started growing. There were only a

handful of growers in the USA when we started. There were only a handful of weigh offs in the USA. We were all using chemical fertilizers , Miracle Gro , etc! Now there are so many growers, weigh offs, seed lines, natural fertilizers, insecticides, and fungicides.

Congrats on joining the 1 ton club. This is quite an achievement. What changes did you make to your growing routine to make this possible?

In 2014, we sprayed much more often for bugs and disease than in past seasons. We started spraying BEFORE we saw any problems. Our first spray was May 29th. We sprayed 18 times over the season, rotating our sprays. We used Companion, Neem Oil, Bayer 3 in One, garlic spray, Daconil(ONCE),Sevin(ONCE).

We used a few new products in 2014 too. White Shark and Tarantula. We used AZOS with our Myco when burying vines in 2014. Who knows if any of this helped to go over 2000 lbs? Over the years, we have worked our soil adding over 100 yds of compost. We have ripped, tilled, dug planting holes, etc. Who knows if any of these things put us over 2000 lbs or if it was just the combination?

In recent years, California has become one of the best performing regions for giant pumpkins. What does your group do differently to achieve success?

We don't believe we do things much differently than other areas. In Napa, we can visit our fellow growers' patches and possibly pick up some good growing techniques. We can also use each others pollen if we choose to go that route. We have all been using RTI Mycor over the years. Most of us have used it in the Fall with our cover crop as well as in the Spring and throughout the Summer. We have a large number of growers in California especially in Napa and Sacramento areas. It is a large group that shares knowledge.

How far out do you pollinate, and how do you select the chosen fruit?

We usually pollinate 12 to 16 feet out. The chosen fruit is selected by shape, the angle to the vine and how it grows compared to the other candidates.

What are your ideal dates for seed germination

and pollination?

We like to start our seeds between April 15th and 20th. We like to pollinate between June 15th and 25th if possible, which doesn't always happen!

What do you do to alleviate vine stress near the pumpkin?

We turn the main 90 degrees at the pumpkin, run it out about 5 feet, then turn it back to its original direction. We also like to leave some slack in the main in the 5 feet after the pumpkin, so if the fruit grows against the trailing main, we can loosen it some. It helps a lot if the pumpkin has a nice long stem. We also like to leave the side vine at the pumpkin on, which is tricky, but most of the time we have got it done.

What do you believe are ideal daytime and nighttime temperatures for pumpkin growing and what do you do to warm or cool the plant?

We think around 75 to 80 in the day and around 60 at night is ideal. We use mini sprinklers to cool the plants. Each sprinkler puts out about 12 gallons per hour. When it gets hot, we run the sprinklers about 10 seconds on and 2 minutes off. We have hoop houses 7 by 10 feet to help the plants stay warm at transplant time.

Do you favor chemical feeding, organic feeding, or both?

We favor organic feeding and use little or no chemicals.

What do you think are the most important fertilizers for giant pumpkins?

We used essential, liquid seaweed , 3-18-18, feather meal and calcium. We think it is important that the nutrients in the soil are in good balance.

What is the key to strong late season growth?

In our opinion the key to late season growth is to have a healthy plant and a nice warm fall.

Thank you so much for being willing to give us some pointers. We greatly respect your opinions and wish you the very best in 2015. Thanks for granting us this interview and best of luck to all of you!

The Rise of the Giants Movie

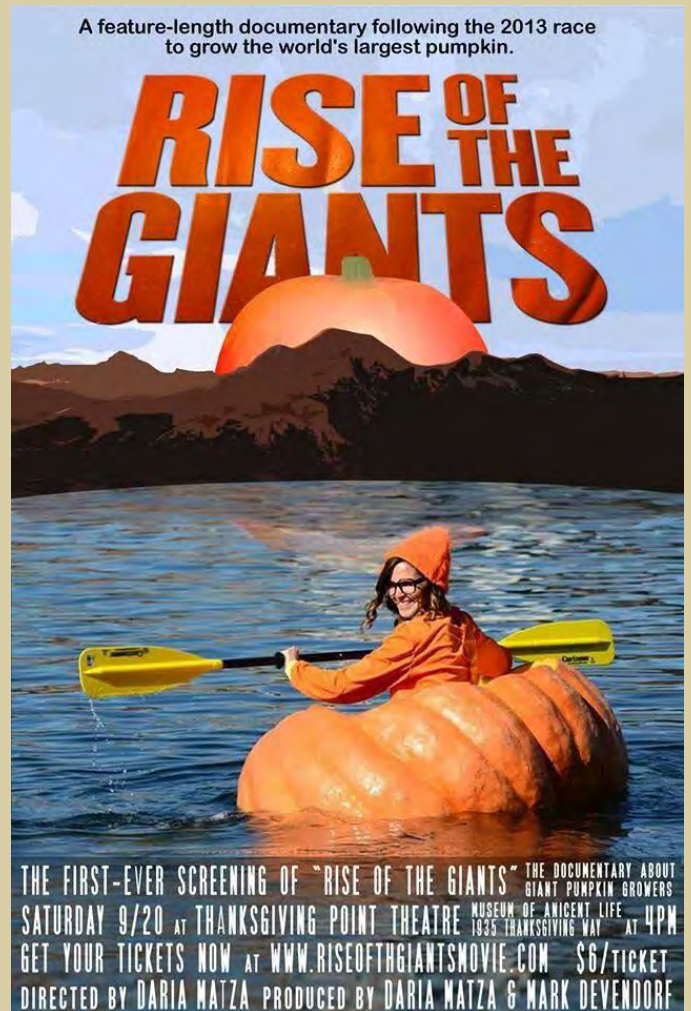
<http://www.riseofthegiantsmovie.com/>

What a fun season 2014 was with UGPG being a part of this awesome documentary!

Daria and Mark, a BIG BIG thank you from the UGPG for all your hard work in the patch and in the film room producing the story of the giant. Check out the store - it's open and has the film and some great merchandise. Daria will be at our Saturday seminar so give her a hug and maybe a kiss!

The Store:

<http://www.riseofthegiantsmovie.com/#!store/cg8u>



All Things YouTube

Kyle and Carrie Fox are launching a pumpkin growing Vlog (video blog). They will also be visiting a handful of our local growers to see what they are up to throughout the season.

Subscribe to: Kyle C. Fox

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCmGd3ZEvk8Af6wulYYad3Ag/videos>

Videos from the 2014 season

Floating down the Colorado river in a pumpkin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofUeb9yXti8>

The journey to California with the 1,817 lb Utah state record

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cXAWV4OIPcU>

Pumpkin drop at Hee Haw farms 2014

<https://vimeo.com/110664433>

Blow up the 1,817

<https://vimeo.com/110786700>