

# Grower's Vine

Special 10th Anniversary Edition  
Giant Vegetable Growers of Ontario

GVGO Summer Newsletter 2014

Volume 2 Issue 4



Thanks to all BigPumpkins.com,  
GPC & Commonwealth Members



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# Editor Notes



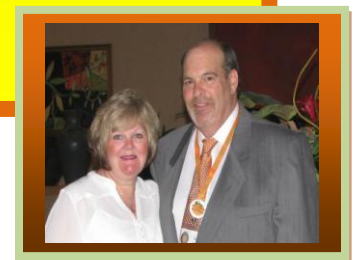
**Calcium** is best supplied to the plant via the root zone. Growers who simply foliar feed Ca to plants are ignoring the fact that Ca is not mobile in the plant. Thus this type of supplement does nothing to resolve low Ca in the fruit. Ca must be drenched to ensure BES and underweight pumpkins are avoided.

Welcome to the summer 2014 edition of the GVGO newsletter. This is our second summer's season look at the coming fall progeny. From disconcerting summer weather patterns to soil issues that cause plant problems and sticky surfactants we hope you'll find the many Tips & Solutions inside valuable. This issue is once again packed full of growing tips to help you get your over the chart fruit, intact and transported to the scales.

*The GVGO continues to be the most trusted source for giant vegetable growers in the Commonwealth. Our vision endures the friendships, knowledge and growing experiences shared by all growers reaching members throughout the world.*

The secrets to growing the great pumpkin and humongous vegetables are revealed inside. Follow these steps to grow your own monster fruit.

Russ & Shannon



## Time to Renew

**Sign up NOW or renew your 2015 GVGO membership today by Paypal.**

### **GVGO Fund Raising goal for 2015**

This fall > GVGO will once again host auctions please donate your seeds generously.

Bring them with you on the patch tour.

Solubility of micro nutrients is a very important fact in growing bigger fruit and vegetables. Standard soil tests do not determine solubility they determined what is actually in the soil. A & L can do a soil solubility test

# Organo Silicone Surfactants

## Adjuvants (*sticker/spreaders*)

Nonionic surfactants are adjuvants that reduce surface tension of water on plant leaves. These types of surfactants are the most commonly used adjuvant in the horticulture industry.



When used properly, they are plant safe and remain stable on the leaf for extended periods. Organo-silicone surfactants were first developed in the 1970's. Several years ago, their use as spray adjuvants on plants was discovered. They are excellent leaf penetrators with superior rain-fastness properties. They are recommended for

**Kahuna's Keys:** There is plenty of hard copy, peer reviewed evidence that silicone based surfactants will work wonders for growers. That is a fact.

use with most foliar sprays and considerably enhance the topical effectiveness of foliar sprays.

Organo-silicones are so efficient at spreading materials, that they have been known to enter plant stomata - organs not normally penetrated by other surfactants.

Some silicone types seal the stoma, allowing them to act as anti-transpirants that control runaway respiration, especially under warm and sunny growing conditions.

Organo-silicones promote uptake into the stoma cells. They also reduce the surface tension and allow everything from micronutrients to fungicides to enter the leaf stomata. They promote uptake due the enhanced penetration properties of spray materials that remains on the leaf surface (epidermis).

They have tremendous wetting abilities. So good they may also allow bacteria and fungi to more easily invade plants (via stomata).

Rotation with other surfactants is required to realize the full benefits sprays.



Soil Test Reports: soil pH and buffer pH

## What is Buffer Capacity?

Buffer capacity is simply a laboratory measurement of the soils ability to resist pH changes when an acidifying compound is added to it. Soils that have a higher CEC will require higher amounts of acids to effect a change in pH. Hence they have a higher buffer capacity.





## CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE

By Phil Joynson &  
Russ Landry

From the Office of *Phil*



Remember that old joke... How can you tell when a farmer is dead? He stops complaining!

### ***He stops complaining!***

I'm afraid that the growers in Ontario fall into that same category. After the worst winter we've had in decades, we were looking forward to a long hot summer but Mother Nature had different plans. A cool spring followed by a cool summer has growth weights far behind the usual pace. As I type this its 30 degrees the nights have warmed up nicely too. Hopefully we'll see some nice pumpkins this fall after all.

As you may remember if you attend the GVGO seminar, we decided to forgo the regular patch tour this year and simply hold two BBQ's at fellow GVGO grower's homes. The idea being, that there would be less travel time driving between patches and more time to network and enjoy ourselves.

### ***A few short things to mention***

It was also decided to hold two events at different locals at different dates to accommodate more GVGO growers. Sometimes our patch tour falls on a date when some growers simply can't make it due to previous obligations or the drive is too far from the grower's home. Hopefully you can

make it to at least one of these events. The GVGO BBQ's will be held at the following dates...

**August 9<sup>th</sup>** at Nathan and Jen Veitch and Greg Montgomery's in Port Carling. We get to see two patches as Greg lives right across the road.

**August 23** at Mike and Cindy Demars patch in Wallaceburg.

For directions and starting times, please consult the details in this newsletter. A big thank-you goes out to our hosts as this really is a lot of work for those who make these things happen.

## Bring a Friend

I look forward to meeting the usual suspects as well as new GVGO members. Please feel free to bring a guest with you and get somebody else hooked on our hobby. BTW, it's always a good idea to bring a folding chair or two.

See you soon.

## *Time to Renew*

Visit us at

# gvgo.ca

From the Office of *Russ*



*Plant Sinks - a sink is any actively developing or growing part of the plant. They include roots, shoots, leaves or fruit.*

Popularity continues to swell by leaps and bounds as the GVGO & GPC are now expanding into Bracebridge with a new official weigh-off site.

Our own GVGO membership is continuing to hold fast and strong.

Looking forward to helping you and the GVGO thrive at a fall weigh-off.

Wishing you,

Good luck & Good Growing

Sincerely, Russ

Finally it's over, Vine burying season has left us behind and hopefully your weak back is suddenly gaining renewed strength. Regardless of the weather outside, along with the unsettled temperatures, the gardeners patch is often a safe haven. Growers can retreat and relax at this time of year.

The frequent foliar sprays only take a few moments in time and only briefly interrupt the grower's outline shaped, easy chair indentations.

It's once again time for reflection and study as all this Kirking about wastes time. The skill of each grower continues to mount as the GVGO continues to foster learning for new and educated gardeners.

### ***Kirking about wastes time***

We are often found at this time of year resting on the plants crown of this leisurely pursuit. The growth potential of your fruit is not yet limited as the powdery mildew challenge lies a few weeks ahead.

The pumpkin growing and giant vegetable hobby (sport) will indeed take us and the GVGO much further in the very near future. The strength of the hobby in is still extremely sound at the current time.



## **GVGO Memberships**

Run from January 1st - December 31st  
Pay it now, to get the annual seed giveaway and the most informative growers newsletter.

by: PayPal, email money transfer or mail

PayPal to: [vgvogrowers@gmail.com](mailto:vgvogrowers@gmail.com)

Email Direct Transfer To: [vgvogrowers@gmail.com](mailto:vgvogrowers@gmail.com)

Mail To: C/O Jane Hunt, GVGO Treasurer  
4376 Hwy 35 N  
Cameron, Ontario  
Canada  
K0M 1G0

**Single...\$30...Family...\$40...out of province...\$30 US or CAD**

- Full Voting Privileges, with eligibility to hold office. (Ontario Residents Only)
- Entry into club seminars & meetings
- 10% discount on soil analysis from [A&L Canada Labs](#) in London, Ontario
- Seed giveaway (++ seeds in every pack)
- 3 Newsletters
- Entry into patch tours
- GVGO Championship Largest Pumpkin

**Add to Cart**

# Giant Vegetable Growers of Ontario

Visit [gvgo](#) on [facebook](#).



<https://www.facebook.com/pages/GVGO/140780926101331>

Editors: Nathan & Jennifer Veitch



The Heavy Weight Champ



of the world

JOIN US THE WEEKEND BEFORE THANKSGIVING

Port Elgin's Award Winning  
**Pumpkinfest**  
[www.pumpkinfest.org](http://www.pumpkinfest.org)

**FAMILY FUN  
SECOND TO NONE!**

**Saturday October 4 and  
Sunday October 5, 2014**

- Cinderella's Classic Car Show
- Giant Vegetable Weigh Off
- NEW! Local Food Focus

Check us out on Facebook!

**1-800-387-3456**

# DAP

D = Day  
A = After  
P = Pollination

**Pumpkin seed viability,  
generally 45 DAP is needed  
for seeds to survive.**





# New\* GPC



## Bracebridge Fall Fair

### Weigh-off

Aug, 9th patch tour update and review on  
page 32

# OM %

## Organic Matters

Naturally OM content of soil in most farmers fields is from 3 to 5 % in most areas. Often this is higher in boggy types of marsh soils like Ontario's Holland marsh.

**In general, the more organic matter in the soil, the higher the CEC.**

### Cation Exchange Capacity

is the measure how much nutrients soils can hold

CEC is highly dependent upon soil texture and the amount or percentage of organic matter.

## Did You Know?

**The GVGO.ca message boards have 640 regular users!  
Thanks to all our members.**

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# Mineral Junction

## Boron (B)

### Deficiency problems

- inhibition of cell expansion;
- death of meristem (new shoots);
- reduced fertility of seeds;

# Nature's Fury

By: Russ Landry

What a difference the weather plays in all of our outdoor efforts. A bright warm sunny day brings out the best in all of us until a few benign clouds form and claps of thunder roll into your town.



No matter how you prepare we are all exposed to the challenges that Mother Nature may throw our way. Several times each spring and summer we are faced with the never ending uncertainty of fluctuating weather patterns that may bring extreme conditions. The daunting challenge for growers is to protect the plants when the weather conditions are moderate and stay out of the patches during the stormy times. Working to protect your patches from the danger that lurks overhead can reduce the pitfalls of growing Atlantic Giant Pumpkins. Of course there are times when no amount of preparation can save even the hardest of pumpkin patches.

## Stormy times

This summer yet again Ontario has been battered by fierce whirl winds that destroyed a neighborhood near the Barrie area. The Angus F2 tornado of 2014 tore through a subdivision causing high property damage but fortunately little injury to residents. First responders were horrified as local hospitals went into external emergency disaster modes. Remarkably they received no patients.

Recently was the 29th anniversary of the Barrie tornado which ripped the city apart with a fury not seen since the F4 Windsor twister in the forties. The Barrie storm was also a devastating F4 that roared from the sky like a freight train out of control. Eight killed, 155 injured, 300 homes destroyed and \$ 500 million (2014 dollars) property damage left in its wake. We live in Canada's Tornado alley. From May to September we are exposed to the worst that Mother Nature can sometimes provide.

**Each year on average there are 12 Tornadoes in Ontario. Most are rated F1 or F2.**

There are steps growers can take to reduce the risk to life but property and plant damage will continue to occur from time to time in most areas of the province.

Severe thunder storms with high winds and hail are a fact of life in all regions of Southern Ontario. They can appear suddenly and are much more common than the rotating wind damaging vortex's they sometimes produce. They pack damaging winds, heavy rains and hail. Storms such as these are spawned by convective forces that still largely remain a mystery to science. Hail and wind are the two most damaging factors that can eliminate a grower's chances of a large progeny. Several steps can be taken by the grower to limit the damage caused by the results of a dark cloud on a hot summer's day.



Modern radar is the grower's best friend during such times. A robust internet connection is all that is required. Severe storms are tracked in all areas of Ontario in real time, by visiting the provinces many web sites that provide data to *Environment Canada*.

Two of my favorites are the Ontario Weather Page (<http://www.ontarioweather.com>) and the US site [www.intellicast.com](http://www.intellicast.com). These pages help the grower to quickly discern the severity and risk of such storms.

Doppler radar is used in the province and has greatly enhanced the warning times of approaching storms. The enhanced radar is able to detect heavy rain, strong winds, wind direction, storm speed and direction of travel, hail and even storm rotation. Many local pumpkin growers are now using this internet technology to fortify their patches

Weather stations located in patches are another resource that is often overlooked. They can be used to record barometric trends, current wind direction, wind speeds, temperatures and rainfall levels. Many remote wireless units operate from 30 to 300 feet away and offer indoor stations that can be quickly checked during changeable conditions. Units can be purchased for



under one hundred dollars and provide a great base level warning system that the grower can rely on in uncertain weather conditions.

***Weather stations located in patch***



Protection from hail by erecting overhead netting has worked well for many growers. Hail in our region is less common than the strong winds that often are experienced in storm warning areas. Wind breaks made of fencing or natural shrubs are best used to shield against straight line and downburst winds of an approaching storm front. Corn, sunflowers and buckwheat work well as wind breaks with very good results. If you are not prepared the likelihood of at least some type of plant damage is nearly one hundred percent.

Moderate wind damage can range from a few vines being pulled and uprooted to leaves bent and broken. This stress can set a plant back a few days or more. Hail will shred the leaves into tattered shards and can completely destroy a plant in a few seconds. Damage

Rain damage is often a factor. Rainfall of 2" per hour is very common in most severe thunder storms. Several areas each year record storm rainfall totals that far exceed these levels. Drainage channels or small ditches can be dug to reduce the impact of the downpour. Heavy rains and poor drainage can result in flooding and reduce the oxygen in your soils. Diseased and air starved roots are a leading cause of poor fruit sizes. Tile can be installed in the patch to quickly direct the ground water away from the patches subterranean levels.

***2" per hour is very common***

The Severe Thunder Storm is just one of the many limiting factors that can reduce your September fruit weights. There are many other setbacks that occur during the summer months but none more devastating or sudden as the windy downpour during the heat of the day. Chances are high that at some point during the summer high winds and hail will play havoc with you plants. Don't be left with your fruit in the patch come this October.

Brake the winds before they break your plant



**Hail Damaged Leaf**



**BP - GPC Leader Board**

1,522.3	Tim Harris	New Zealand	1622 Young x 1811 Graham	420 OTT	1,528.0
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# GVGO BBQ & Patch Tour

Wallaceburg, ON.

August 23, 2014.

12pm

We'd like to meet at the home of Craig Balkwell by noon and go from there. That should make it easier if anyone further away decides to come.

## Directions

Take 401 to exit 109 > Hwy 21 North (Ridgetown)

Follow 21 through Dresden to Hwy. 78 (McCreary Line)

Turn left (west) to Wallaceburg

Follow to the Kimball Side Road.

*(If you get to the hospital you've gone too far)*

Turn right on Kimball (North) and drive to Langstaff Line

Turn left on Langstaff (west) and follow until St. Clair Parkway.

( road dead ends at the park.)

Turn right on St. Clair Parkway for a short distance to Craig Balkwell's  
30079 St. Clair Parkway.

Back on St. Clair Parkway going south and follow it to Dufferin Ave.

( dead end by the golf course)

Turn left on Dufferin (east) and follow to Ash St.

Right on Ash

Then right onto Irwin

to: **Mike DeMars' Home @**

**24 Irwin Drive.**



The Blue Water Growers and Throwers weigh off is September 27th, 2014. Always the same, there's a Spudzooka competition, pumpkin' chunkin', pumpkin decorating for the kids and of course the weigh off. Sorry you must be pre registered in May to be part of the weigh off.  
(Hopefully we can change this next year)



# GVGO Top Ten List

## Summer of 2014

**By: Phil Joynson**

Instead of a traditional *top 10 list*, I thought I'd put together a list of idioms commonly used by the members of the GVGO. You veteran growers probably know most of these but we have to keep the new members updated on GVGO lingo...

**“Kirking the tape”:** *This was named after our former GVGO president and all around nice guy Kirk Chenier. This is the practice of fiddling with the tape to get a bigger measurement. I'm not too sure how Kirk got nailed for this as we all do it!*

**“Moron”:** *This is the guy who figures it's always better to put “More on”. Again, we all go through this in our learning curve as a grower. Be careful where you use this term as it can cause hurt feelings if someone takes this term incorrectly.*

**“Electric blue go-go juice (EBGGJ)”:** *Any water soluble fertilizer. These are usually a neon blue colour.*

**“Smurf handed”:** *This is a condition cause by getting “Electric blue go-go juice” on your hands combined with water. This can also be used as a point of ridicule by certain veteran growers who avoid such products.*

**“Orange orphan”:** *The unfortunate children of dedicated pumpkin growers.*

**“Thumpers”:** *People that insist on slapping your pumpkin. I've no idea what Intel they derive from this action.*

**“Melon monkeys”:** *These are children that climb all over your pumpkin at the weigh off. There is also a term for the parents that let their kids do this but I can't print that term in a public forum.*

**“Brown socking”:** *Working in the patch. Unless you wear rubber boots or are bare footed, you're familiar with this condition.*

**“Blossom grin”:** *Also known a BES (blossom end split). Many a grower has gone into the patch in the morning and has seen this sickly sight of the pumpkin smiling up at the unlucky grower.*



**“Jenny Craiging”**: Your pumpkin losing weight. This happens after it’s picked.

**“J & Bing”**: *Inexplicably stopping what you’re doing to go get a beer. This can happen at the most unexpected times. Named after one of our more infamous growing duos.*

**“On the Hunt”** : *Either having a great pumpkin growing or complaining and denying a big pumpkin’s existence and showing up with a monster on weigh off day. Named after another infamous growing duo.*

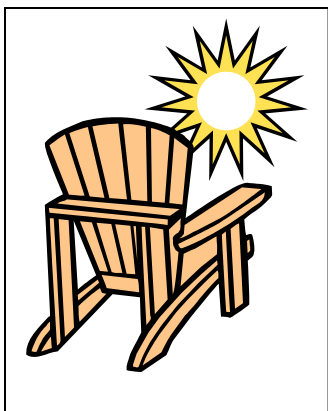
**“Flashing the Apple”**: *These are the crazy SOB’s that hang out of their car window at high speeds to use their cell phones to take a picture of your pumpkin on the high-way. Usually they do this while sitting on your blind spot and you’re not aware of them until you see a flash.*

**“Otter (Ottering)”**: *From OTT of measuring a pumpkin. An Otter can be that guy who measures every day or you can do the Ottering at the weigh-off for the GPC informational record.*

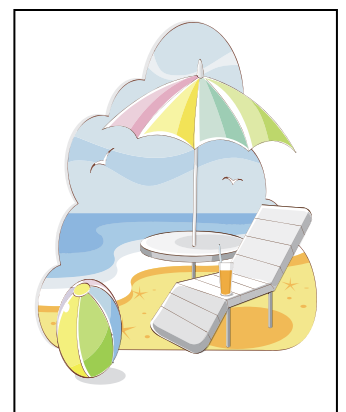
OK, now that we all have a grasp of the GVGO in-speak,  
> Let’s see if you can understand these next few sentences...

**After a tough summer of “Brown socking”, dodging the “Blossom grins” and whining from the “Orange orphans”, I ended up with my best pumpkin ever. I laid on the “EBGGJ” and got caught “Smurf handed” by a fellow grower who accused me of being a “Moron”. He knew I was “On the Hunt” but promised not to say anything, so we took a “J&B” break after he did a bit of “Ottering”. Things really slowed down in September and I ended up “Kirking the tape” regularly. The day of the weigh-off, I hoped my pumpkin didn’t “Jenny Craig” too much on the trip to the weigh-off site. My pumpkin suffered a bit from the “Thumpers’ and “Melon monkeys” but held together and I set a new personal best. On the way home I almost had two car accidents caused by dummies “Flashing the Apple”.**

## GVGO



Phosphite, drenches mixed with Fulvic acid, Ca and K supplemented with Mg and Mn help to foster fruit development and provide finishing maturity and weight gain while holding off powdery mildew.



## Plant Protection

# Wind Breaks

Installing a windbreak in the garden can lead to big improvements in pumpkin sizes.

**Garden** plots can greatly benefit from a properly designed windbreak. Pumpkin plants will produce better when they are situated out of breezy areas. Plants will have improved fruit sink quality because of less wind whipping and leaf drying.

For a pumpkin patch, the most significant effect of a windbreak is an enhanced microclimate, that usually results in increased humidity and temperature stability.

## Types of Windbreaks

1. Perennial living hardwood windbreaks such as Trees, Cedars and Shrub hedge plantings are easy to plant and sustain but don't give full protection for at least a few years.
2. Annual living windbreaks are natural barriers planted early in the growing season. They are usually sunflower, corn or sorghum & Sudan type grasses. They provide a secondary benefit as a cover crop and are deep rooted. Others include Annual rye grasses and buckwheat that grow from 3 to 4 feet or more in height.
3. Temporary windbreaks made from fabrics, plastics or burlap cloths are very easy to install and remove each season.
4. Manmade windbreaks wood type fences provide immediate shelter. They are more costly and difficult to install and are usually permanent.

### Quick tip:

2 x 2 stakes driven into the ground provide support for temporary fabric fencing.



## Windbreak Guidelines

1. Customarily windbreaks are placed at right angles to the dominate wind direction. The pumpkin patch windbreak should be as long as the patch it is shielding.
2. Protection distance is proportional to windbreak height. Typically, every one foot in height gives approximately eight feet of downwind protection
3. Moderately dense (50% to 80%) windbreaks work best. Low-densities don't slow the wind enough, while higher-density breaks cause additional leeward or



# Whats in your trench?

## *A deep dig into vine burying techniques*

By Joe Ailts, June 2014

By virtue of their stems growing horizontally giant pumpkin plants exhibit the unique feature of root formation at their leaf nodes. Formally called “adventitious roots”, this system facilitates water and nutrient transport as well as anchoring the plant to the ground. Giant pumpkin growers have recognized this and incorporated techniques to encourage adventitious root growth for decades. The practice of vine burying is commonly recognized as an essential tactic for competitive success. At its core, vine burying hypothetically contributes to a simple path of logic: more roots=more water/nutrients = bigger pumpkins. Beyond this big picture idea, however, growers are fine tuning vine burying tactics to maximize root development, enhance anchoring, and minimize disease risk. This article will explore some of the ideas used to supercharge the adventitious root system.

### *Adventitious roots form at each leaf node*



As with many practices employed in giant pumpkin patches, there’s no “right way” to execute vine burial and adventitious root encouragement. What you will read below are tactics employed based on intuition and creativity. Unfortunately, the grower’s community at large does not know if these techniques directly contribute to greater success in the patch, but it can be reasonably concluded that they do not lead to any significant disadvantage. Thus, if there is potential to contribute to greater success based on logic and intuition, and little risk is associated with the practices, then one may choose to employ these techniques.

In its most simple form, vine burying entails covering each leaf node with soil, providing the adventitious roots with an environment where they can grow and prosper. In the absence of vine burying,

adventitious roots will form, however there’s no guarantee that root will reach the soil surface and continue proliferating, this especially true if dry conditions prevail where the developing root tip desiccates before reaching the soil surface.

To ensure a more favorable rooting environment, many growers dig a shallow trench in which each vine grows along. Soil is then piled on top of the vine and leaf nodes, effectively filling in the trench. In many patches, only leaves and leaf stalks may be visible above ground.

### *Properly buried vines result in only leaves and leaf stalks visible above ground*



Within this practice of vine burial exists the opportunity for creativity and fine-tuning. In our effort to maximize every patch variable, with the intent to maximize every potential pound on the scale, growers have employed tactics that go well beyond the simple act of piling dirt over the vine. Two strategies emerge as means to enhance the local environment for adventitious roots. The first pertains to the media used to cover the vines, the second to the application of additives directly to the leaf node/root zone.

In regards to the media used to cover the vines, numerous combinations exist. The most basic option is to simply use garden soil in close proximity to the plant. The soil removed when creating the trench can be reapplied over the top of the growing vine. Additional vine burying considerations include aged manures, compost, worm castings, and even enriched potting mixes. Some or all of these can be mixed in pre-formed piles or in wheelbarrows and then applied to the vines. The underlying premise is that these media types contain nutrients and/or other elements that confer a benefit to the plant greater than what the native soil can. Water percolating through these enriched mediums may deliver a more



fertile nutrient mix to the developing adventitious root system. Soil additives (discussed in more detail later) can be incorporated into media mixes and applied in the vine burying process. For illustration purposes, the following recipe may be considered: in a wheelbarrow, mix 2 parts garden soil, 1 part enriched potting mix, 1 part worm castings. Mix well and apply with a shovel, coffee can, etc. Again, there's no right or wrong combination here. Any benefit realized is ultimately a function of your soil fertility and a host of other considerations.

The second strategy used to fine tune vine burying is the application of a "trench mix". This entails applying a dry powder mixture directly to the leaf node before it is buried. The premise is based on localized delivery of nutrients and other agents to enhance adventitious root growth and plant health. Perhaps the most common example of trench mix application is the use of a granular mycorrhizal fungi (GMF) product. Top competitive growers have, for a decade or more, added 1 tbs of GMF to each leaf node prior to burying. While the evidence is not yet conclusive, the conventional belief is that this practice increases the colonization of the beneficial fungi to the adventitious root beyond what soil provides. While GMF is likely the most common trench mix additive, below is a list of other agents that can be added to trench mixes:

#### **Powdered/granular Biologicals (beneficial microorganisms)**

- Trichoderma (e.g. Rootshield biological fungicide)
- Streptomyces (e.g. Actinovate biological fungicide)
- Azosporillum (e.g. Azos nitrogen fixing bacteria)

#### **Powdered/granular soil conditioners**

- Humic acid
- Gypsum

#### **Powdered/granular plant nutrients & growth factors**

- N-P-K fertilizer combinations
- Timed release plant nutrient products (e.g. Osmocote)
- Fish/seaweed powder

Trench mixes can be pre-mixed and stored with some caveats. Biological products should not be premixed, as humidity, moisture, and combining with other biologicals may decrease their activity.

Ideally, biologicals should be stored in refrigerator/freezer until used. Soil conditioners and plant nutrients can be pre-mixed and stored for ease of use.

#### ***A trench mix of beneficial microorganisms, soil conditioners, and plant nutrients are applied directly to the leaf node before being buried***

It is again important to emphasize that there's no ideal combination of trench mix for all patches. And further, there's no conclusive evidence that any of these agents will provide direct benefit when applied to leaf nodes. Soil fertility, disease conditions, and many other factors dictate the infinitely complex soil environment. However, if you have a known disease presence or nutrient deficiency, designing a trench mix to address those issues is something to consider. How much to apply is also a major variable. A teaspoon, a tablespoon, a shovel full? No one knows. The point is to illuminate options at your disposal and then use the suggestions to determine what is right for your patch.

In summary, vine burying is a foundational patch tactic for enhancing patch success. Because giant pumpkin plants form adventitious roots at each leaf node; growers can capitalize on this opportunity to locally deliver a wide spectrum of beneficial microorganisms, soil conditioners, and plant nutrients to the developing root system.

Have a question on this topic? Head over to the forums on the GVGO web site or at BigPumpkins.com and post it to the message boards. And if you haven't already, join your local giant pumpkin club and visit a competitive patch to see these techniques in action.

**The Trench Mix Heard in Orlando**  
4 parts Myco  
2 parts Trichoderma  
1 parts Azos



**GVGO Memberships** run from January 1st, 2013 - December 31st, 2014.



## Wiki Links

The **squash vine borer** is a species of moth. The adult is a flying insect pest that attacks wild and cultivated varieties of pumpkin & squash. The moth is often mistaken for a bee or wasp because of its bright orange scales. The females typically lay their eggs at the base of leaf stalks, and the caterpillars develop and feed inside the stalk, eventually killing the leaf. They soon migrate to the main stem, and with enough feeding damage to the frassed stem, the entire plant may die.



[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Squash\\_vine\\_borer](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Squash_vine_borer)

**Frass** > is saw dust like shavings resulting from borers digging into pumpkin vines

## Rhizosphere

The garden **rhizosphere** is the thin layer, 18 to 24 inches deep of top soil that is jammed packed full of microorganisms.

The rhizosphere is home to the plethora of many bacteria, fungi, protozoa and nematodes that feed on each other or on the organic matter, plant cells, proteins and the sugars (exudates) released by roots to attract them.

## Southern Ontario

by: Rocco Brewer

### A Cool Summer in Ontario

# August in the Patch

The end to the harshest winter in modern times left in its wake a very short-lived and chilly spring. As the hoop house heating bills piled up waiting to be paid. Pollination time has come, gone and left very quickly this year. Prime time is now and growers are greedily soaking up the sun's rays faster than a colony of honey bees heading home at sundown. The 2014 summers late June and early July weather although a bit cool was perfect for pollinating. While the cool nights have ushered in slow fruit growth the bright summers sun brings out a thoroughly enjoyed nice dark farmers tan on the grower.

Although we've all done so much more this year to prepare for the developing progeny to come there just never seems to be enough time to get it all done. The chores are endless and the vine burying was so tiresome with the extra work of trenching and spreading and pinching and staking. Well it is easy to say it's a lot of hard back aching work. Guess that most growers easily shed some of extra girth at this time of year. Tending the flock of plants up to this point in time has been an exercise of faith. Physical exercise is the best benefit to a grower's waist line. However the reduction in soil redistributing duties that occurs each August is a welcome benefit to the weary grower's disheveled and deeply calloused encrusted, grimy hands.

Ah, but the best is rather a lofty goal for a grower of the burgeoning giants in the patch. The next few days will surely decide the grower's fate. Will the plants develop health problems? Will the growth rate pick up and can the will and

determination of the grower hold firm? Will the froth of a foamer develop on the main and will the frass of the red thorax vine borer come forth?

# It's a cool, cool summer!

Watering by overhead or drip together we are floundering toward the holy grail of purely perceived and misplaced pumpkin pleasurement. Expectations are so high and fruit growth is often sluggish and so doubtful. The clock begins to move slower at this time of year. The drenches lead to canopy sprays which lead to growers hoping and praying for a heavy day at the scale.

We arrive at the fruits half life in the dog days of August, somewhere between day 40 or 50. This seems to take forever and ever. Let us measure away as dreams of becoming a heavy hitter lurk off in the future hidden in the fog of father time. Which one to keep, which one to cull, how fast will it grow? That is the question we all face. The clock with each tick and tock draws us nearer to the fate of the final selection.

# Half Life is Day 42

Powdery Mildew and a myriad of maladies stand in the grower's way. Proactively we protect our plants from the hidden and ever present soil borne concerns. The pests fly about and find their final resting place amongst the leaves. The sinks continue on as the growth pace slows into Septembers briskly cool evenings.

The last stand in the grower's war chest is now firmly debated. Resting in the balance of an October's weigh-off scale is yet another month of toil. Is the fruit truly worthy of a reamay super growth structure? Will it be heavy or will be light? The growers cry from afar is heard; another 300 pounds more is yet to be had.

Consoled and deflated the blob of orange and yellow has fallen short of the mark. But alas little has changed as there is always next year to come.

## GVGO

## GVGO STICKY - Leaks

Late Breaking News,

### Scientific Name:

## *Rhizoctonia Solani*

> *Rhizoctonia* was introduced in 1815 by French mycologist [Augustine Pyramus de Candolle](#) for plant pathogenic fungi that produces hyphae. "Rhizoctonia" means "root killer" is a parasitic fungus that causes root rot. [Rhizoctonia solani](#) causes a wide range of commercially significant plant diseases. It is one of the fungi responsible for belly rot of cucumber, and many other pathogenic conditions.



## AMINO ACID CHELATES

Amino acids act as chelators when they react with positively charged metal atoms, like calcium, and the other micro nutrients. They make great delivery agents for growers.







## World Wide Giant Growers

**Now with 143 members worldwide.**

Contest entry is closed for the 2014 summer season. 25 people have joined the **Bubba Challenge. \$1,900.00 total purse for this class!**

Newly added is the Golden Bubba tooth award for the 1st place winner, 2nd place silver tooth award & 3rd bronze Bubba tooth award. Last but not least 4th place will get the new donkey tooth award.

I haven't totally designed the medals yet, but I'm confident they will love them. Thanks to Ron Barker for this great idea.

All the veggies are planted and growing at Bubbas. The Worldwidegiantgrowers.com makes a video every 2-3 weeks showing the progress in Bubbas patch. Please watch our latest video on YouTube at "**Bubbas Secret garden**" and will feature a special **GVGO** thanks. The videos are a 12 part series ending at the scales. It's a Hoot!

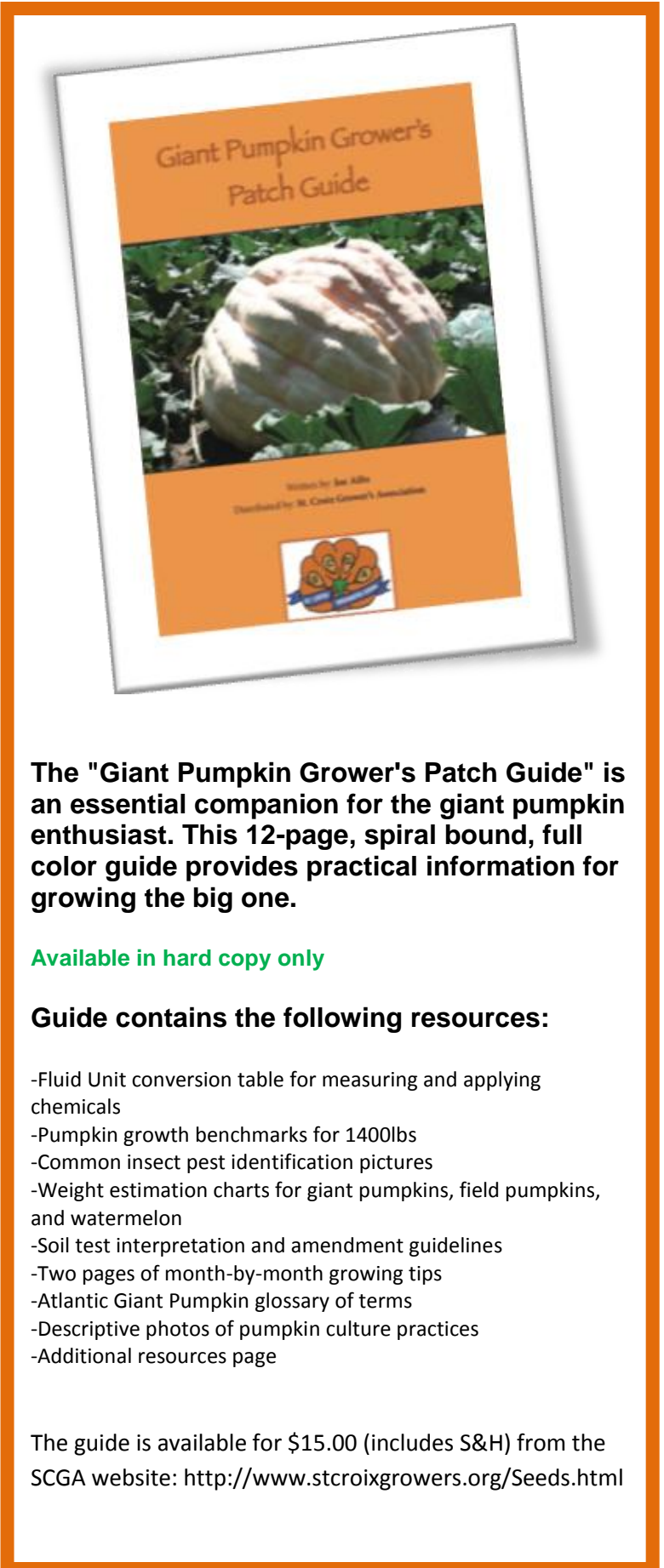
[http://worldwidegiantgrowers.com/Bubbas\\_Secret\\_Garden\\_.html](http://worldwidegiantgrowers.com/Bubbas_Secret_Garden_.html)

Have a great summer!  
See ya at the scales.  
Thank Ya Very much!

WWGG  
103 W. Sherman St,  
Holly, Mi. USA.  
48442  
[widegiantgrowers.com](http://widegiantgrowers.com) (WWGG).

Please send questions to:  
[Mark@worldwidegiantgrowers.com](mailto:Mark@worldwidegiantgrowers.com)

Thanks have a Great 2014.  
Mark Clementz.



**The "Giant Pumpkin Grower's Patch Guide" is an essential companion for the giant pumpkin enthusiast. This 12-page, spiral bound, full color guide provides practical information for growing the big one.**

**Available in hard copy only**

**Guide contains the following resources:**

- Fluid Unit conversion table for measuring and applying chemicals
- Pumpkin growth benchmarks for 1400lbs
- Common insect pest identification pictures
- Weight estimation charts for giant pumpkins, field pumpkins, and watermelon
- Soil test interpretation and amendment guidelines
- Two pages of month-by-month growing tips
- Atlantic Giant Pumpkin glossary of terms
- Descriptive photos of pumpkin culture practices
- Additional resources page

The guide is available for \$15.00 (includes S&H) from the SCGA website: <http://www.stcroixgrowers.org/Seeds.html>

# Port Elgin Pumpkinfest Update

## Pumpkinfest 2014!

October 4th & 5th

Looking out at this beautiful 30 degree day it is hard to recollect the ferocious season that was the Spring of 2014! Also hard to fathom is the last correspondence was written while our area was still snow covered.

The Spring gvgo networking and educational seminar. It was fantastic to see such a good turnout in March and I can see that the enthusiasm for growing the giants is still as present as ever. The Pumpkinfest executive would like to take the opportunity to once again thank the GVGO and their membership for allowing us a time slot at the spring seminar to formally present the orange jacket and large trophy to the grower of the largest pumpkin from the previous season. Unfortunately, our orange jacket winner for the 2013 year, Tim Mathison, was unable to travel to receive his jacket in person but Dave McCallum and Doug Court were excited to accept the jacket and trophy on his behalf.

Some of you saw and/or maybe heard about the damage that the large trophy (Stewy) received while crossing the border back into Canada. I have been watching "Border Security" diligently but have yet to see any footage of the Canada Customs agents rough-handling our coveted prize. That being said, I am happy to report that the trophy is currently in the GTA receiving a total make-over so it will be better than new for the 2014 winner.



Although I touched on most of the prize structure changes in the last newsletter, I'd like to take the opportunity to remind you about the new Master Grower award that we have added to our Saturday weigh-off. I hope lots of you are growing all the giant veggies to be eligible for this new award.

Also remember that a new "Junior" grower award has been added for Sunday and we have also put money up for 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> for the Tri-County award.

Information and the complete prize structures can be found below and by visiting [www.pumpkinfest.org](http://www.pumpkinfest.org) then clicking on Giant Vegetables.

Our summer marketing piece has hit the shelves and is receiving a great reception. Site records held by Chris Lyons, Jim and Kelsey Bryson, Joel Jarvis, John Butler/Art Johnston, Jane & Phil Hunt, Marv Mitchell, Rick Smith and Bert Veens have all received honorable mention in this marketing piece. If you would like some copies for your local tourist information centers, let us know and we'll get some to you either by mail or by delivering them to you personally at the upcoming Patch Socials. For anyone that knows talented artists (young and old), this marketing piece also contains all the information about our new art contest that we are launching for 2014.

Other exciting news about this year's event includes the addition of an Interactive Hockey Experience presented by Top-Shot Hockey (the independent games contractor to the Hockey Hall of Fame) and our new Petals' Culinary Pavilion. The Master Carvers will also return in 2014 after missing our festival last year. Visit our website for all the most up-to-date information.





# WEIGH-OFF PRIZE STRUCTURE

## Saturday Weigh-Off... Saturday October 4, 2014

## GPC Weigh Off

Category	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	11th through to 20th	
<b>Class 1 Vegetables - Registration is \$30 - no matter how many categories are entered</b>												
Heaviest Pumpkin	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$1,000	\$500	\$300	\$250	\$200	\$175	\$150	\$125	\$100 each	
3 Bonus draws of \$500 for the 1000+ lb pumpkins/squash weighed in! 1st place pumpkin and 1st place squash are not eligible and you can only win one bonus prize												
Heaviest Squash	\$2,000	\$500	\$400	\$250	\$200	GPC Squash rules dictate: 100% green, grey, blue and/or combination. Stripes allowed, no blotches. All others will be deemed a pumpkin.						
Heaviest Watermelon	\$200	\$100	\$75	\$50	\$25	Howard Dill Award \$100 Closest to Hidden Weight (Pumpkin) \$200						
Longest Gourd	\$200	\$100	\$75	\$50	\$25							
Heaviest Field Pumpkin	\$100	\$75	\$50	Additional \$500 for any New World Record Vegetable in Class 1! Prize to be paid after the completion of all 2014 weigh-offs and it is determined that this entry is the official standing World Record								
Heaviest Cabbage	\$100	\$75	\$50									
Heaviest Tomato	\$100	\$75	\$50									

**Class 2 Vegetables - Registration is \$15 if Class 1 Registration has not been previously paid**

Tallest Sunflower	\$50	\$35	\$20
Tallest Cornstalk	\$50	\$35	\$20
GVO Featured Veggie Rutabaga	\$50	\$35	\$20
Other Heaviest/ Longest/ Most Unusual Vegetable*	\$50	\$35	\$20

\*It is important to remember that the other heaviest/ longest/ most unusual vegetable is awarded at the judges' discretion and the most spectacular entry will be awarded first prize

**NEW THIS YEAR! MASTER GROWER AWARD! \$400.00**  
To be eligible at least 5 of the Class One Categories must be entered. Scoring will be determined by placings of entries in relation to other competitors within this category. Because this prize will involve some calculation, the winner will be notified and a cheque will be mailed to them after the 2014 event has completed.

Port Elgin Pumpkinfest 559 Goderich Street, Port Elgin, ON. N0H 2C4  
www.pumpkinfest.org 1-800-387-3456 Fax: 519-389-3725  
This prize structure is subject to change. Visit www.pumpkinfest.org for rules & regulations. All monies are in Canadian Funds



# WEIGH-OFF PRIZE STRUCTURE

## Sunday Weigh-Off... Sunday October 5, 2014

## Non-GPC Weigh Off

Category	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th	10th	*1st place Bonus Prize	
<b>Class 1 Vegetables - Registration is \$30 - no matter how many categories are entered</b>												
Heaviest Pumpkin	\$1000*	\$500	\$300	\$200	\$100	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	A customizable Saugeen Shores gift package redeemable in the summer of 2015 - \$500 value	
Heaviest Squash	\$500	\$300	\$200	\$100	\$50	100% green, grey, blue and/or combination. Stripes allowed, no blotches. All others will be deemed a pumpkin.						
Heaviest Watermelon	\$200	\$100	\$75	BONUS DRAW = \$200 for all Class One Vegetable Entrants								Closest to Hidden Weight = \$200 for Pumpkin and Squash entrants
Longest Gourd	\$200	\$100	\$75									
Heaviest Field Pumpkin	\$100	\$75	\$50	Additional \$500 for any New World Record Vegetable in Class 1! Prize to be paid after the completion of all 2014 weigh-offs and it is determined that this entry is the official standing World Record								
Heaviest Cabbage	\$100	\$75	\$50									
Heaviest Tomato	\$100	\$75	\$50									

**Class 2 Vegetables - Registration is \$15 if Class 1 Registration has not been previously paid**

Tallest Sunflower	\$50	\$35	\$20
Tallest Cornstalk	\$50	\$35	\$20
Biggest Sunflower Face	\$50	\$35	\$20
Other Heaviest/ Longest/ Most Unusual Vegetable*	\$50	\$35	\$20

\*It is important to remember that the other heaviest/ longest/ most unusual vegetable is awarded at the judges' discretion and the most spectacular entry will be awarded first prize.

### IMPORTANT NOTE:

Saturday, 2014 Port Elgin Pumpkinfest entries will not be eligible for re-weighs but specimens weighed earlier at a different weigh-off site will be allowed.

**SPECIAL SUNDAY AWARDS**

**FRED WUERTH MEMORIAL TRI-COUNTY GROWERS AWARD**  
(Awarded to the growers from the Tri-County Area - Bruce/Grey/Huron - with the largest pumpkins)

1st place La-Z-Boy Rocker Recliner donated by Little's Furniture, Port Elgin

2nd place \$200      3rd place \$100

**JUNIOR GROWER BONUS**  
(Awarded to any giant pumpkin/squash grower 21 years and younger)

1st place \$150  
2nd place \$100

**BEST AVERAGE SATURDAY/SUNDAY = \$200**  
(Awarded to the best average weight of a pumpkin/squash Saturday entry and a pumpkin/squash Sunday entry)

**NOVICE GROWER BONUS = \$200**  
(Awarded to the largest pumpkin grown by someone with 3 years or less experience growing)

Port Elgin Pumpkinfest 559 Goderich Street, Port Elgin, ON. N0H 2C4 www.pumpkinfest.org 1-800-387-3456 Fax: 519-389-3725  
This prize structure is subject to change. Visit www.pumpkinfest.org for all rules & regulations. All monies are in Canadian Funds.



# Erin Giant Pumpkin Growers



- Learn How To Grow
- Have "Tons" of Fun
- Compete For Great Prizes
- More Than Just Pumpkins
- Connect on Facebook
- Check Out The Website

[www.ErinGiantPumpkinGrowers.weebly.com](http://www.ErinGiantPumpkinGrowers.weebly.com)

[www.ErinGiantPumpkinGrowers.weebly.com](http://www.ErinGiantPumpkinGrowers.weebly.com)

## GIANT PUMPKIN WEIGH OFF RULES

1. Judging will take place Thursday, October 9th at 7PM in the main show barn. Enter grounds from Centre Street.
2. Unloading and registration starts at 5PM and entries will be received up until 7PM. All pumpkins must be loaded on a pallet and situated in such a way to allow a forklift to easily unload on site.
3. One pumpkin per exhibitor.
4. A \$20 registration fee per competitor allows entry into the Giant Pumpkin and Giant Vegetable class.
5. **GPC (Great Pumpkin Commonwealth)** rules and judging will be followed. Complete rules at [www.greatpumpkincommonwealth.com](http://www.greatpumpkincommonwealth.com)
6. The top 5 pumpkins **MUST** be left at the fair for display or prize money will be forfeited. All competitors are encouraged to leave their pumpkins at the fair to show off your results. Pumpkins can be picked up on Monday, October 14th between 4:30PM & 6PM unless other arrangements have been made. There will be a secure, roped-off area provided for displaying the pumpkins.

## GIANT VEGETABLE WEIGH OFF RULES

1. Rules 1, 2,4, and 5 of the Giant Pumpkin Weigh Off apply
2. This class is open to the following vegetables that are judged by weight; Giant squash, tomato, field pumpkin, cabbage, watermelon, cantaloupe, carrot, parsnip, beet, marrow, bushel gourd, pear gourd, kohlrabi, Swede/rutabaga.
3. To allow all types of vegetables to compete on an even basis in one class we have given a score of 100 points to various weights of each vegetable, Each vegetable will be weighed and given a score based on that weight with the highest SCORE being the winner (not necessarily the heaviest weight).
4. Judging rules for vegetables not covered by the GPC will follow the rules for judging from the EGVGA (European Giant Vegetable Growers Association) [www.egvga.eu](http://www.egvga.eu)
5. Exhibitors may submit more than one TYPE of vegetable in this class (to receive an official weight) but

only the one scoring the highest points will be eligible for prize money.

6. The weight required for a score of 100 points for each vegetable will be as follows;

Squash - 1100 lbs...Tomato - 5 lbs...Field Pumpkin - 100 lbs...Cabbage - 80 lbs...Watermelon - 175 lbs...Cantaloupe - 40 lbs.  
 Carrot & Parsnip - 10 lbs...Beet - 20 lbs...Marrow - 80 lbs...Bushel Gourd - 160 lbs...Kohlrabi - 40 lbs...Swede/Rutabaga - 60 lbs.  
 Onion - 5 lbs...Pear Gourd - 130 lbs.

### GIANT VEGETABLE SCORING

For example a Squash weighing 975 pounds would receive a score of 88.6 and a tomato weighing 4.90 pounds would receive a score of 98 and be declared the winner. Formula used is (weight of your vegetable X 100) divided by the 100 score weight from the table above = score given to your vegetable.

### ERIN PRIZE MONEY - GIANT PUMPKIN WEIGH-OFF

1st = \$1500, 2nd = \$1000, 3rd = \$500, 4th = \$200, 5th = \$100, 6th = \$50, 7th-10th = \$25, 11th-20th = \$20  
 Trophies for top 20 and Medals for all Personal Bests  
 Grand Champion Trophy donated by Ken Keeler Electric  
 Other Trophies and Medals donated by Shepherd Lawn Care

### ERIN PRIZE MONEY - GIANT VEGETABLE WEIGH-OFF

1st \$500, 2nd \$250, 3rd \$125, 4th \$50, 5th \$25

Trophies for top 5  
 Grand Champion Trophy donated by Mark Wilsons,  
 Better Used Cars  
 Other Trophies donated by Shepherd Lawn Care

\*GPC plaques, rosettes, and awards in addition to the above.

# GVGO

## Weather & Giant Vegetable Growers

**Sometimes when talking to a grower it's a bit like asking a Star Fish for directions.**

**One just never knows which way to turn or what the weather has been like or will be in the near future!**



# East Coast

by: Dawn Northrup

## Hurricane Arthur

### Smashes the Maritimes, Destroys pumpkin patches!

After a long cold bleak winter, the East Coast was wishing for an early spring but our hopes were shattered as Mother Nature decided to give us a cold, wet spring. A weather bomb hit the Maritimes the end of March and we even had snow lingering into April. I heard of some growers snow-blowing their patches in hopes of getting on the ground sooner!

Folks on the Canadian East Coast celebrated Canada Day (July 1st) while baking in intense heat and humidity. The high temperatures made it very difficult for pollinations. Some of the newer leaves got scalded to a blacken crisp by the hot blazing sun. This is the second year that we have had this happen.



The plants just started chugging along nicely in July when very unusual weather happened during prime time pollination. **Hurricane Arthur** slammed the Maritimes! Arthur uprooted trees and downed power lines all across the Maritimes. More than 200,000 customers lost their power in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Winds gusted up to 120km/h. Torrential downpours caused flooding in many communities, with some areas seeing more than 100mm in just a few hours.

#### Flags: What they mean

	<b>Small-craft advisory</b> Winds: 18-33 knots 28-38 mph
	<b>Gale warning</b> Winds: 34-47 knots 39-54 mph
	<b>Storm warning</b> Winds: 48-63 knots 55-73 mph
	<b>Hurricane warning</b> Winds: 64+ knots 74+ mph



It was close to two weeks before some people had their power restored. Windbreaks did not slow Arthur down. He blew them around like a breeze blowing on newspaper!

Many growers were wondering if Arthur was going to give them the rest of their summer off! After the storm had past, growers were very anxious to check out their patches. They saw a lot of broken leaves. Pumpkin plants looked like a porcupine with just pieces of stems sticking up. Some growers lost plants completely. We escaped the power outages but did not escape the high winds and 4 inches of rain. People driving by during the storm thought we were absolutely crazy as they saw us outside trying to keep Arthur from blowing our fence onto the patch and shredding our plants. Our efforts were futile all we ended up doing was getting soaked!

*The ripple effects of post-tropical storm Arthur is still being felt across the Maritimes. In the Annapolis Valley, Arthur brought fire blight which has scorched up to 80 per cent of some apple orchards. Fire blight is a bacterial infection, named for its ability to leave apple trees looking as if they had been set ablaze.*



I wish all growers the best of luck and hope you get a new personal best! See you at the scales.

**GVGO**

# The Compensation Point

by: Russ Landry

Growers often marvel at the resilience of the Atlantic Giant Pumpkin in its ability to regenerate growth after a calamity. Strong summer thunder storms with high winds and hail can quickly destroy plants. Regenerated canopy growth is fairly quick response that can occur after plant injury or shut down of the primary sink. The plant begins to send out new shoots in an effort to procreate before the sun falls below the equator. Regenerated growth is the result of excess photosynthesis created in the leaves. This article addresses a little understood principle about how plants function and reproduce when the days begin to get much shorter in September and beyond to nearly harvest time.

**Compensation point of plants:** *is the rate of carbon dioxide uptake by a photosynthesizing plant that is exactly balanced by the rate of carbon dioxide release in respiration and photorespiration*

Often growers will wonder what is the exact chemistry of our plants is in the early September and October fall days. Our modern applications of compost teas, kelp and fungicides provide for vigorous and vibrant canopies at this time of year. We have learned over time to extend the range and viability of the plant but still with such health the results often wain at such a steadying pace. At this time of year the day grows shorter as light intensity and photosynthesis begins to decrease, sink storage often becomes less dominate. The weaker sink storage often directs some plants to begin to produce new shoots around the crown. Meristematic tissue of the AGP is found at the leaf nodes, buds and growing tips of roots in plants. Its main function is to begin growth of new cells in young seedlings at the tips of roots and shoots. New growth is accomplished by using excess carbohydrate products from photosynthesis that would normally have been transported to the sink.

This new growth is sometimes welcomed by growers who are eager to see a sparse plant begin to fill in by late August. The new growth signals a change in the plant and it is the grower's key to the beginning of senescence or death of the plant is soon at hand. Sink growth at this time is restricted rather quickly as daily inch gains in fruit sizes slow down due to narrowing of the Phloem river in the stems.

Growth naturally begins to taper off with the decrease in light the plant is receiving.

Normally in the summer days the plant produces more food than it uses during respiration. As fall approaches the rate of photosynthesis begins to match the rate of respiration until no new growth of any kind occurs. This point is known as the **compensation point** or simply the point in time when inputs of the plant match the outputs of respiration.

At the compensation point, the rate of photosynthesis is balanced to the rate of respiration so that the plant is neither consuming nor building the size of the sink. Ideally, the plant needs to be photosynthesizing at a rate much greater then its respiration rate so that extra energy (in the form of sugars) will be produced that can be used for growth and reproduction in the form of sink storage. The compensation point is sometimes reached in the summer when hot temperatures spike up the respiration rate to harmful levels that can sometimes cause Dill Rings, Rib Splits and BES and Foaming stumps.

The problem growers are most often faced with in the chilled days of September is whether to leave this new regenerative growth on the plant and or let it continue to grow. The true value of this growth is however relative to the needs of your plant. For each plant has its own unique compensation point. It is what sets apart a proven 2009 Wallace from a backup seed. Any plant that is at or nearing its compensation point is not producing enough extra photosynthate (sugars) which it can store in the sink and utilize during the nighttime for respiration. Consuming this sugary commodity in regenerative growth is not an effective strategy for increasing the size of a fruit. No matter what most sinks become weaker at this time of the season due in part to lowering photosynthesis and respiration needs of the plant. In the days leading up to the compensation point it is often more beneficial to remove all new growth quickly as the ever decreasing photosynthate by products are rationed amongst the many rivers of these large plants. It is therefore easy to understand that any new growth is further slowing down your sink.

Preventing new regenerative growth is always a challenge in that it never seems to occur in reachable areas of the plant canopy. Its removal is however vital in keeping your burgeoning monster pumpkin on a growth curve that tapers off rather than plunging.



# Western Report

By: Don Crews

For pumpkin growers everywhere, the weather means the difference between a great year and an average one. The west spring here was cold. May felt like April, June was cold and wet. This doesn't mean as much to us in the prairies because we have to use some sort of cold frame or greenhouses all the way into June but it would have been nice to have some sunshine! I'm a little behind compared to the best years but still on track.

## *May felt like April*

July has been a different story entirely. The rains have given us about 25 mm a week and it's been sunny and warm, high 20's Celsius and lows about 15. Of course we've had a few thunderstorms to go with that but that's liquid nitrogen falling from the sky. The gardens have caught up and the sunflowers are reaching for the sky.



Don's Green House

There are a few good field pumpkins growing in the garden. Presently the fruits are only 10 days old but plants are healthy and moist. My soil is still suffering from the extremes of the winter but it has somewhat better structure now. The next 20 days are critical, and the weather forecast is all sun!

I'm lucky enough to be growing seeds out of the last 2 world record pumpkins. The 2009 Wallace is in the big greenhouse. It is throwing a beautifully shaped fruit. Growing on a good pace the plant is everything that you would hope from a world class seed. Of course it's still early to proclaim it a contender for the weigh off.

## **2009 Wallace beautifully shaped**

The 2032 Mathison is growing in the patch in a cheapo PVC hoop house. Yes, it's growing much better than the 2009 at this time. The hoop house is only ten percent of the cost. For the price of a few pieces of PVC pipe about 30 feet of general purpose poly and an exhaust fan, anyone could grow 1000 pounders here in a well constructed hoop house.

My 1081 Crews is in the back patch and is doing well but not as great as it's performed in the other two patches during previous years. Good way to figure out which patch is the best. This one doesn't get quite as much sunlight.

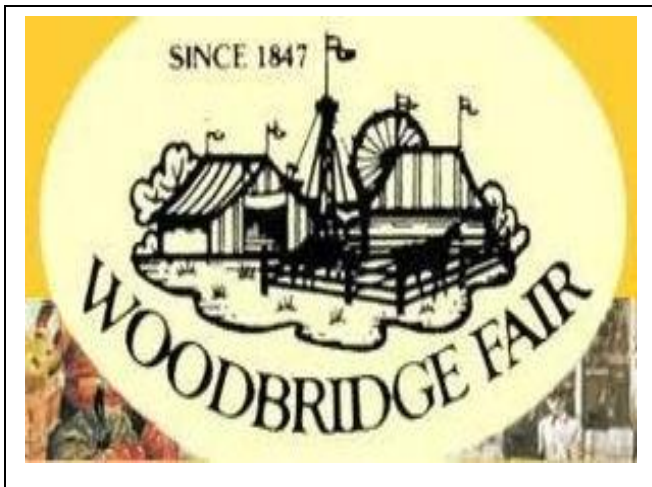
On a sad note, **Barry Wood** passed away in an auto accident. Barry was the Smoky Lake weigh off organizer and one of the founders of the weigh off. He was the heart and soul of the event and we will all miss him greatly.



President, Smoky Lake Pumpkin Growers

**WOOD, Barry.** On May 31, 2014 Mr. Barry Wood of Bellis passed away at the age of 62 years. He is survived by his loving wife of 32 years, Karen; one daughter and two sons, Stephanie (Christopher Rudge) Wood, Derrick (Danielle) Wood and Devan (Terri White) Wood; two sisters and one brother, Barbara (Barry) Ward, David (Diane) Wood and Mary Lynn (Ron) Bell; mother-in-law, Kay Calvert; two sisters-in-law, Colleen Russ and Anne-Marie Russ; numerous nieces and nephews. He was predeceased by his brother, Robert Wood; daughter, Christina Wood; parents, James and Marion Wood; father-in-law, Alex Russ; brother-in-law, Randy Russ; and nephew, Jamie Warzin. Memorial Service Wednesday, June 11 at 11:00 a.m. at Smoky Lake Complex, Smoky Lake. Cremation has taken place.

If desired, donations may be made to Canadian Diabetes Association c/o 5626 - 51 Street, St. Paul, AB T0A 3A1.

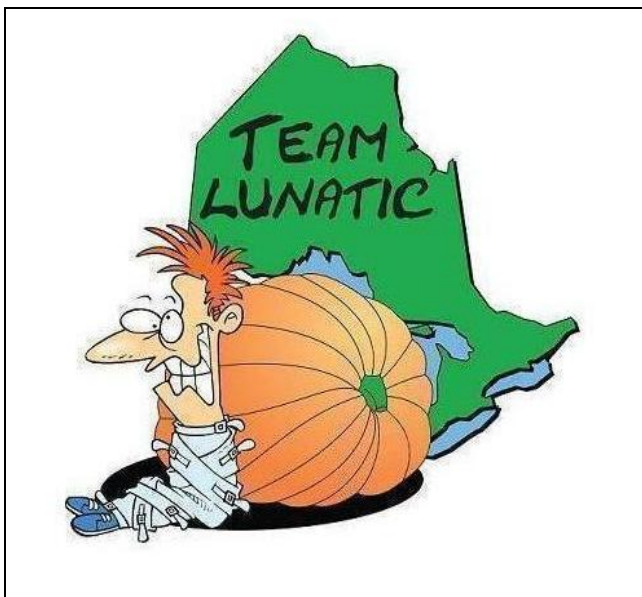


## The future looks good!!

by: Bryan Mailey

At one point several years ago, the Woodbridge Fair weigh-off looked to be in jeopardy, which was a shame as it one of longest running GPC events in the province. Growers united and with generous donations for a prize structure primarily from Frank Catapano, the event went ahead as scheduled.

The following year Team Lunatic got involved to help raise the prize structure by running an online seed auction. For the past several years many generous growers have donated seeds for the auctions and we have been able to maintain a substantial donation for several years now. This contribution has been matched by the Fair which has helped to bring the total prize package to just over \$6,000.



As seeds run out, and the amount of auctions continues to grow, the ability to raise money becomes a bigger challenge every year. This has been brought to the attention of the Fair Board over the past few years at General and Executive meetings in hopes that they would be the primary contributor for the prize structure.

*More than \$6,000 in prizes*

At the most recent General meeting, there was a very positive appreciation of the Giant Pumpkin weigh-off and a consensus to keep the event as a big part of the Woodbridge Fair for the foreseeable future. The Fair Board is always looking for entertainment value for the weekend and the past several years have proven that there is value in having the weigh-off, thanks to a big effort by the growers.

The prize structure for this year will be at least \$6,000 again, and may even grow depending on the Fair Board contribution and sponsorship. A few growers will be in attendance at the next executive meeting to continue to promote the event and help solidify a dedication from the Fair Board to continue to grow the event and prize structure.

Thanks to all the growers for supporting this premier event.... good luck to you all and we hope to see you on the Thanksgiving weekend in Woodbridge!!

### Tomato Weight Gain CC Growth

1.0 to 1.5 lb.	= 2.15 in. CC
2.0 to 2.5 lb.	= 1.45 in. CC
3.0 to 3.5 lb.	= 1.13 in. CC
4.0 to 4.5 lb.	= 0.94 in. CC
5.0 to 5.5 lb.	= 0.82 in. CC
6.0 to 6.5 lb.	= 0.73 in. CC
7.0 to 7.5 lb.	= 0.66 in. CC
8.0 to 8.5 lb.	= 0.61 in. CC

# Weighoff Dates



**Saturday September 13, 2014**  
**Bracebridge Fair. (ON.)**  
<http://www.bracebridgefair.com>

**Sunday, September 21, 2014**  
**Festival Provinciale de la Citrouille Geante de Neguac (NB)**

**Saturday, September 27, 2014**  
**AVGVG Glad Gardens (NS)**

**Saturday, September 27, 2014**  
**Hugli's Blueberry Ranch Weigh-off (ON)**

**Saturday, September 27, 2014**  
**Gentilly (QC)**

**Saturday, October 4, 2014**  
**Windsor-West Hants Pumpkin Festival (ON)**

**Saturday, October 4, 2014**  
**Port Elgin Pumpkinfest (ON)**

**Thursday, October 9, 2014**  
**Erin Fall Fair Giant Pumpkin Weighoff (ON)**

**Saturday, October 11, 2014**  
**Millville Pumpkin Festival (NS)**

**Saturday, October 11, 2014**  
**Woodbridge Fair International Giant Pumpkin Weigh-off (ON)**

**Saturday, October 18, 2014**  
**Prince Edward County Pumpkinfest (ON)**

## **Non-GPC Weigh-Off Sites**

**BlueWater Growers & Throwers – Sept 27, 2014 [bwgt.ca](http://bwgt.ca)**

**Norfolk County Fair, Simco weigh off -Oct. 7, 2014**

**Port Elgin Pumpkinfest (Sunday) Sun, October 5, 2014**

**Keene Pumpkin Fest – October 25, 2014 [www.thekeenepumpkinfestival.com](http://www.thekeenepumpkinfestival.com)**

**Royal Winter Fair November 8, 2014 [www.royalfair.org](http://www.royalfair.org)**



# Europe, from the Netherlands

by: Brad Wursten



There's no shortage of **1,000 pound pumpkins** in Europe this year, and we are only in the second half of July. On July 16 there was a 1000 pounder already in France. And that was on day 40. And day 40 is in large parts of central and northern Europe the day when you can multiply that weight by two to figure out your end weight, plus/minus the percentage heavy/light to the charts. Here's hoping this one makes it to the scales in one piece.

## Lots of 1,000 Pounders

The Dutch and the Germans have been at war for centuries. Parts of Germany have belonged to the Dutch, though more often it was the other way around. The two countries just missed each other at the soccer world cup (Germany won, Holland was third), but the battle continues in the fields and the greenhouses as the Dutch want their European squash and long gourd records back. The balance is in favour of the Germans. They have at least ten times the number of growers and a better climate, but the Dutch are a tough bunch that held the squash record from 2007 till 2011 and the long gourd record from 2011 to 2012 before German growers took both over. Time will tell.

The **Europeans** dominated the tomato scene last year, claiming seven of the top ten places. Till now it has been quiet over here, which is usually a good sign. It often means somebody is hiding a big one. Actually, the only GPC category the Europeans are failing to cash in on is field pumpkins. I have a bunch going. All GVGO seeds of course (85 Eaton, 121.5 MacKenzie, 128 Lyons, 134 Wursten). All look promising. I know a few other Dutch growers have some going too. Let's hope more people here make a go for it.

## Europe had 7 of the top 10 Maters in 2013

The first weigh-offs start in September (Finland) and the last in early November (Belgium). It is going to be an exciting next few months. And if the rumours are right, I wouldn't be surprised if several European records and maybe even a world record or two will fall.

### A GVGO Seed?

This recent gvgo top secret 2014 super spy photo is supplied by the

"Unknown Euro grower"

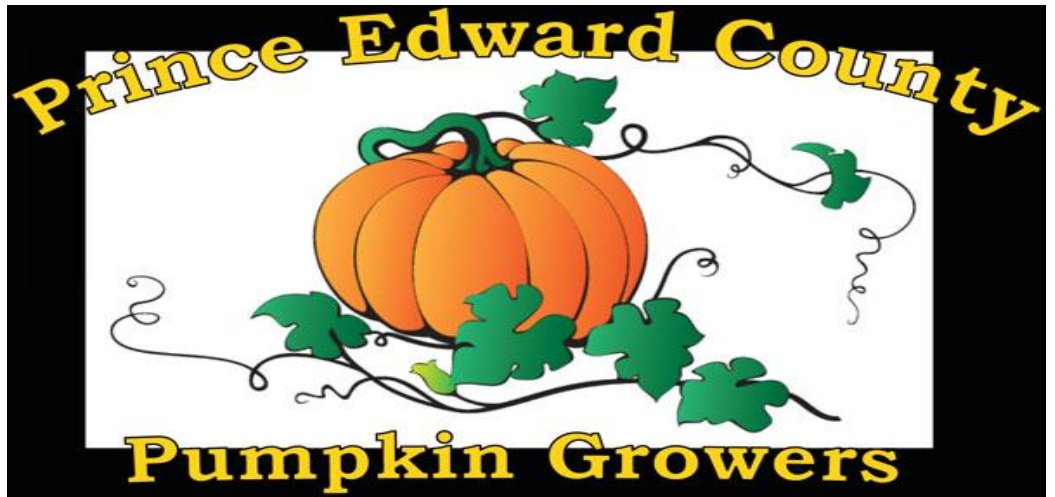
This fruit has the largest green day 40 measurements ever recorded for a giant European squash.

Over 700 lbs in late July



**Prince Edward County  
Pumpkinfest**

**Sat. October 18, 2014.**



Sponsored by Prince Edward County Pumpkin Growers  
and Prince Edward County Pumpkinfest Committee

Rutabaga	\$ TBD,
First Heaviest Pumpkin	\$1000, 500, 250, 150, 100, 75
Seventh to Tenth Heaviest Pumpkin	\$50
Eleventh to Fifteenth Heaviest Pumpkin	\$25
<b>Bill Greer Memorial Prize</b> , Heaviest Pumpkin Grown in Prince Edward County	\$250, 200, 100
Howard Dill Award (Nicest looking Pumpkin over 600 lbs.)	\$100
4 H Award Heaviest Pumpkin grown by a 4 H member	\$50
Giant Field Pumpkin	1st \$100, 2nd \$75, 3rd \$50, 4th \$25, 5th \$20
Heaviest Squash	1st \$250, 150, 100, 75, 50
Heaviest Cabbage	1st \$75, 50, 25
Long Gourd	1st \$100, 75, 50, 25, 20
Tallest Sunflower	1st \$50, 25, 15
Giant Watermelon	1st \$100, 75, 50, 25, 20
Giant Tomato	1st \$50, 25, 15
<b>Total Prize Money</b>	<b>\$4840</b>

Membership fee is \$20.00 per year and allows you to enter a maximum of one vegetable in each category. Second entries will be weighed for official weights/ measurements and will be recorded as "Exhibition". Second entries are not eligible for prize money. PEC 4-H members will be considered honorary members and are not required to pay the annual membership fee.

Upon entering a pumpkin or squash, the grower agrees to donate a minimum of 100 seeds from each of the winning entries if requested for the annual fundraising seed sale.

Giant Pumpkin Weighoff: **John Vincent**  
email: [j.vincent@explornet.ca](mailto:j.vincent@explornet.ca)

### Female Flower Lobes > Pollination

The number of segments in a female flower are called stigma.  
Giant Pumpkins usually have 3 to 5 pairs of stigma.

Pre and post stimulation (similar to a honey bee) of stigma by vibrating ensures good pollination of the flower



# GPC Rules

## Article 1

### Weigh-off sites & clubs/groups

5) The GPC requires each of its sanctioned weigh-off sites be open to all growers who wish to participate. Each site may have their own registration fee as long as these fees are equal for all growers wishing to enter. Each site may have their prize payout structure as they choose as long as the main prizes are available to all growers entered in their weigh-off. The main prize structure shall be defined as the majority of the money and prizes available for all competing growers. Sites may, at their own discretion, offer additional regional bonuses not to exceed the value of the main prize structure.

A) The GPC rules will be strictly enforced for weights, fruit soundness, certification of scales, and color as stated herein.

B) Each site will be responsible for providing no less than 3 and no more than 5 judges.

This is the first year growers have been able to cross a 2,000 pounder with different 2,000 pound pumpkin.

## The 4k Cross

C) Judges for a weigh-off will consist of any combination of the following: club/grower representative, site coordinator, site representative, and two experienced growers.

D) All judges' decisions are final. All judges will be responsible to have a complete knowledge of all rules and how to implement them fairly. It will be necessary to have a current copy of the rules present at each site in public view so anyone may reference them.

E) If any Judge has his/her entry in question or cannot be present the day of the weigh-off, they will be excused from the Judges panel and another will be appointed in their place from the above mentioned guidelines.



### All Aboard March 2015

Mar 1	Depart Fort Lauderdale
Mar 2	Princess Cays
Mar 3	sea day
Mar 4	St Thomas
Mar 5	St Maarten
Mar 6	sea day
Mar 7	sea day
Mar 8	Fort Lauderdale

## PUMPKIN CRUISE IV

For info Contact: Joan Gibson 330.222.2215  
ptcounselor@msn.com www.gibsonstravel.com

**Pumpkin Cruise IV  
coming in 2015!**





# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## GVGO

We continue to actively seek proven seed donations for this coming falls 2014 auction season.

Donations can be brought with you to the patch tour. Chris Lyons or Peter Burdon will be happy to include them in the coming GVGO fall auction events.

## Seeds for SALE!

Seed sales on the web site will resume in October. Watch the 2015 seed sale take place on the messages boards this fall.

PayPal to [vgogrowers@gmail.com](mailto:vgogrowers@gmail.com)

Email Direct transfer to [vgogrowers@gmail.com](mailto:vgogrowers@gmail.com)

or by mail with check.

Please list seed description with payment to:

C/O Jane Hunt, Treasurer  
4376 Hwy 35 N  
Cameron, ON. Canada.  
K0M 1G0

Please add \$5 for shipping & handling to each order

**MALIC ACID** may induce the stomata of plant leaves to open wider which will increase the plants uptake of carbon dioxide to increase growth rates.

The Secret to finding a ripe watermelon is by looking at the bottom. When ripe the bottom color will change from white to a yellowish tint. You can do this in the grocery store with other types of melons.

**Chris Lyons and Peter Burdon**, are the sole representatives for the proven seed collecting for the club auctions and fund raising events. The GVGO role is a primary contact resource for all of the world's top growers. We wish them all the success they can muster. Proven seeds are becoming the new gold standard to the GVGO. A good clutch of seeds will help keep our membership costs low. Good luck guys!

**John Metesa**, takes over from Pat Watson as the Western Ontario Rep. John has been a long time grower and for the past two years has organized and hosted the spring seminar in Breslau near Kitchener, ON. John assumes his new role as a full voting executive member.

**Jeff Johnson**, has taken over the keys to the GVGO web site. Please welcome Jeff as our new Information Technology Officer.

Already Jeff has made a few changes to the web site. He has plans for a revamp of the site in the coming months.

Thanks to all our club volunteers we couldn't do it without you!

**GVGO**.ca

# The Next Best Thing

By: Russ Landry

Sometimes, there is neither time nor budget to be the best grower you can be. But, when time is against you or funds are low, there are ways to ensure pumpkin growth does not suffer so much.

**Problem:** Your soil is devoid of life. Bacteria and Fungi are depleted. You can't get afford to bolster the soil with costly fungi inoculants or bacteria concoctions for awhile. What can you do?

## The Next Best Thing:

Return to nature; try using earth worms and **Vermicompost** casting teas to complete the flora in your pumpkin patch. Earthworms benefit gardens by further enhancing the soil in the most natural manner possible. They dig and burrow their way about the soil creating channels and air passages that help the earth to retain aerobic conditions below the surface.



Red Wigglers are the most special type of compost loving critter alive. They are worth their weight gold in the compost heap. These slippery and slimy creatures provide the grower with a tremendous opportunity to use their bacteria laden excrement. Formulations of teas can be used as

foliar sprays or drenched on plant rooting zones to replenish the soil.

## Red Wigglers

Getting earthworms to enjoy your garden habitat is a very lengthy chore and would require reams of organic matter. For them to set up camp permanently in your garden soil is simply not feasible. Red Wigglers like compost and fresh organic matter and plenty of it. The best way to use them for benefit is to make a hearty brew of worm tea from their castings.

## Worm castings

Worm castings are now widely available as the vermin-composting craze has earnestly begun in North America. Castings are usually suspended in water, mixed with sugars and air brewed for a day or two. Bubbled to an aerobic froth home brewed tea can literally team with bacteria that provide nutrients. These watery teas become filled with microorganisms that plants love and thrive in. Teas can be diluted and eagerly applied to the plants leaves and root zones. They leave behind a plethora of beneficial products that are readily absorbed and taken up by the plants root systems.

## Tomaters



Coming soon to the webs GPC virtual weigh-off.

This **SUPER MEGA, MEGA** bloom fruit is a **Chris Lyons** special seed and is certain to be a challenger to Gordon Grahams nearly 30 year record. Let's all root for Chris and hope he brings the huge **Red Monster Mater World Record to Ontario.**

Good Luck Chris!!!!



## Bracebridge Fall Fair & Horse Show

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

Thank you, all members who attended the Patch Tour (Aug. 9th) up in Muskoka. How lucky that we had such a glorious day! With summer as busy as it is the Montgomery's and the Veitch's were thrilled to have everyone in attendance. A pleasure to listen and learn from the best of the best and to chat with those who can appreciate the time and effort involved this passion that keeps growing!!!



Aside from the patch tour we have been diligently working with the Bracebridge Agricultural Society Fall Fair and Horse Show to host again this year another Giant Vegetable Weigh Off. **This year we are GPC sanctioned!** We have increased the categories and competition payouts.



Greg Montgomery's 2032 Mathison  
950 pounds on August 9th,

take advantage of the earliest weigh-off in Ontario. Whether they are having a challenging time of holding their fruit or have a ripe tomato they would like to compete with at Fair. If any members are interested in volunteering their time to help with Weigh-Off we are in need of helping hands in organizing an event of this size.

We wish everyone continued success with their patches and look forward to seeing everyone at the Fair!

Jenn & Nate

### Atlantic Giant Pumpkins

1st - 500, 200, 100

4 thru 10th, 50.00 Each

### Giant Squash

1st = 200, 100 & 50

### Field Pumpkin

1st - 100, 75 & 50

### Tall Sunflower

1st - 150, 30 & 10

### Heaviest Tomato

1st - 150, 30 & 10

### Long Gourd

1st - 100, 75 50

### Rutabaga, Watermelon, All Other Category

Weigh in only, recognized by GPC and GVGO

### Heaviest Atlantic Giant Pumpkin grown in Muskoka!!

Prize and trophy

Charlie Brown award - Lightest Atlantic Giant Pumpkin!!

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Major contributors to the gvgo newsletter:

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Sally Hunt & Brad Wursten, Rocco Brewer  
& Russ Landry.**

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