

# UTAH GIANT PUMPKIN GROWERS

## *The Pumpkin Vine*

JUNE 2005

VOL I ISSUE I

Welcome to the Utah Giant Pumpkin Growers, UGPG. We are excited to have a new grower's organization dedicated to helping giant pumpkin growers in the Utah area. THANK YOU for signing on and supporting our group.

The goals of the UGPG are to:

- 1) Promote the hobby of growing giant pumpkins in and around the Utah area.
- 2) Set up weigh-offs where members can get their pumpkins officially weighed.
- 3) Share pumpkin growing knowledge and gain pumpkin growing friends.

The benefits of being a member are:

- 1) Belonging to an organized group so we can meet and exchange growing information and seeds, also discussing ways to improve the UGPG including but not limited to improving information exchange and weigh-off support.
- 2) Receiving 2 to 3 Newsletters per year that will help you to improve your growing skills and providing information on what is going on with the UGPG.
- 3) Meeting new friends, gaining access to the best growers in the area who can help you to grow a monster pumpkin in your patch and having fun while doing it.
- 4) Free entrance to UGPG sponsored weigh-offs featuring cash and other prizes. You and your pumpkin could be on TV or in the newspaper. (with out being a criminal)

How did we get started? In February 2005 several giant pumpkin grower got together and formed the UGPG.

The founding members are:

Kenny Blair - Bountiful  
Kevin Card - Highland - Sponsorship coordinator  
Ross & Shirley Fullmer - Salt Lake City  
Andrew Israelsen - Taylorsville -Vice President  
Jim Larkins - Salt Lake City  
Scott Nelson - West Valley City  
Bruce Orchard - Bountiful  
Gordon Tanner - Kaysville - President  
Ray Tolman - Bountiful - Membership/Sponsorship Co.  
Brent Wolfley - Layton

And are newest members are:

David Anderson- Salt Lake City  
Mitch Eiting- Bountiful  
John Fanos- Mt. View, Wyo.  
Gary Fisher- Lindon  
Gary Fullmer- Sandy  
Roger Lindsay- Bountiful  
James Marsden- South Jordan  
George Peterson- Bountiful  
Rob Rawson- Kaysville  
Gary Smith- Bountiful  
Larry Tavener- Ogden  
Carol Williams- Sandy

### HOW TO GROW

If you have not received the "how to grow" article that we passed out at the Thanksgiving Point seminar and you would like a copy, contact Gordon Tanner or Kevin Card and they will email or snail mail you a copy. You can find their contact information on page 4.

### NEW ON THE WEIGH OFF FRONT

Great news is here for the UGPG, we have established a new weigh-off for 2005! The weigh off will be at Gardner Village in West Jordan on Sat. Oct 8<sup>th</sup>. More details will be made available later. But we wanted to let everyone know about the weigh off so you can mark that date on your calendars. Check out <http://www.gardnervillage.com/>

## BUILDING GOOD SOIL

It has been said that the things you need to grow a giant pumpkin are Good Soil, Good Seed and a little Good Luck. If you belong to the UGPG then we can help you to get good seeds. The harder you work the better luck you will have. Getting good soil is a harder thing to accomplish but doing so will be the most important thing you can do to help you in your quest to grow a giant. No matter what kind of soil you have the key thing you need to do is add ORGANIC MATTER, OM for short. What is OM? OM is basically any matter that was once living that you add to your soil to improve it.

**What is the best type of OM to use?** The kind that you can get for free, is the best answer, because you'll want a lot of it. Peat, Compost, Leaves and Manures are typically the OM that giant pumpkin growers use when amending their soil. Gordon Tanner of Kaysville added 54 cubic yards of horse manure to his 2,200 sq. ft. patch in 2003 before growing his 906 lb Utah state record pumpkin in 2004. Several top growers in the world, including Dan Carlson of Iowa who grew a 1432 lb pumpkin in 2004, add huge amounts manure leaves to their patches every fall. Add some then till it in. Then repeat. If you add a foot of manure to your patch and your tiller only goes down 8 inches then you'll only fluff up your manure. OM is the key because it breaks down and turns into humus. And humus is where your plant roots get their nutrients. Remember that fertilizer is not a substitute for good soil and Organic Matter is the key to obtaining good soil.

Fertilizers can help subsidize your soils nutrients but in the long run you want to obtain good soil. Dan Carlson hasn't any granular fertilizers at all in his patch for several years. Manure is a great source of OM but it contains salts which can build up over time. If you get too much salts in your soil then it will become toxic. One way to lower salts in your soil is to water it a lot. The salts will drain away, but so will some of the nutrients. So if you have a new patch, adding lots of manure won't hurt it but as time goes on you should consider switching to compost or leaves which don't add the salts. In conclusion, adding large amount of Organic Matter every year is the best way to improve your soil.

## INTERNET LINKS ON GIANT PUMPKINS

The following links should be helpful to you to learn more about giant pumpkins.

<http://www.bigpumpkins.com>

<http://www.backyardgardener.com/pumpkins.html>

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

<http://jozepumpkins.homestead.com/articles.html>

<http://www.homestead.com/henryholman/pumpkins.html>

<http://www.aggc.org/NonMembersMenu.asp>

<http://www.ipga.ws/>

<http://www.umass.edu/plsoils/soiltest/>

<http://www.umass.edu/plsoils/soiltest/interp1.htm>

And more pumpkin links can be found at:

<http://www.bigpumpkins.com/Links.asp>

## MORE INTERNET NEWS

The UGPG hopes to have a web site up sometime in July. If we have someone in the group that knows web page design, we could use your help. Please contact Gordon Tanner if you are willing to help.

## WHAT ABOUT BUGS?

Here in Utah we are lucky because we don't have the really mean bugs like they do in the Mid West or on the East Coast but we do have SQUASH BUGS. Squash bugs or stink bugs can ruin your whole season if not controlled. What you want to do is buy a granular product that has "Imidacloprid" as the active ingredient (products Admire, Bandit, Condifor, Gaucho, Marathon, Merit, Premier, Premise, Provado, Submerge, and Zenith all contain imidacloprid as the active ingredient) Imidacloprid is a systemic, chloro-nicotinyl insecticide with soil, seed and foliar uses for the control of sucking insects, including rice hoppers, aphids, thrips, whiteflies, termites, turf insects, soil insects and some beetles.

The most common in our area is a granular Grub-X type product with Merit, which can be found at Wal-mart, IFA or other similar stores. At the beginning of each month spread 1/4 to 1/2 cup of around the base of each plant and water it in well.

Also use liquid or powder Sevin on and around your plant if you see squash bugs. Be careful and follow the direction on the label of the product that you use. Use the low end dose or even less because Sevin can damage the new growth on your plants. Only spray in the early morning or late evening to avoid leaf burn. If you see squash bugs on your plants you want to pick them off, kill them, and put them in the trash. Dead bugs left in the patch attract others to the area. Andrew Israelsen plants a zucchini plant near his pumpkin plants because the squash bugs are attracted to it first.

## WHAT ABOUT DISEASE?

We get several different pumpkin diseases here in Utah. Powdery Mildew, PM, is probably the most common, but pumpkins are also susceptible to other various fungi and viruses. To help prevent Verticillium & Fusarium wilt, if possible, grow in areas where you have not grown vine crops, tomatoes or potatoes.

Once PM starts it is hard to stop. But if you don't try it will attack your whole plant. Use systemic Myclobutanil (Eagle or Nova are the pro versions) or Propiconazole (Banner Maxx or Spectator). These 2 offer the best curative properties if you use them diligently. There is a consumer version of Myclobutanil you can buy at garden centers or you might find it online somewhere. [www.pumpkinsupply.com](http://www.pumpkinsupply.com) or [www.Rosemania.com](http://www.Rosemania.com) has Banner Maxx. A contact fungicide like Daconil should still be in the mix, but stress the systemics until you get a handle on the PM. Kevin Card uses Alaskan Fish Fertilizer as a foliar spray to keep PM from starting on his plants.

Al Eaton, the current world record holder at 1446 lbs, said it well when he recommended using three fungicide products from different families in rotation.

## SO HOW BIG DO THEY GET IN UTAH?

Here is a list of top ten largest pumpkins ever grown in Utah. The Top Ten average weigh is 735 lbs. \* Indicates a Utah State Record.

	<u>Grower</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Hometown</u>
1	Gordon Tanner	906*	2004	J&L Garden Center	Kaysville
2	Gordon Tanner	891	2004	J&L Garden Center	Kaysville
3	Gordon Tanner	835	2004	J&L Garden Center	Kaysville
4	Bruce Orchard	777.5*	2001	Thanksgiving Point	Bountiful
5	Kenny Blair	752	2003	J&L Garden Center	Bountiful
6	Gordon Tanner	671	2004	J&L Garden Center	Kaysville
7	Andrew Israelsen	647	2004	J&L Garden Center	Taylorsville
8	Kenny Blair	633*	2000	Thanksgiving Point	Bountiful
9	Bruce Orchard	620.5*	1998	Wasatch Shadows	Bountiful
10	Brent Wolfley	612	2004	J&L Garden Center	Layton

And here are the top eight Utah Squash. The average weight is 368 lbs.

	<u>Grower</u>	<u>Weight</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Site</u>	<u>Hometown</u>
1	Kenny Blair & kids	524.5*	2001	Thanksgiving Point	Bountiful
2	Ryan Card	406.5	2001	Thanksgiving Point	Highland
3	Kevin Card	400.5	2003	Thanksgiving Point	Highland
4	Matthew Isom	338*	2000	Thanksgiving Point	Salt Lake City
5	Kevin Card	337	2002	Thanksgiving Point	Highland
6	Kevin Card	307.5	2003	Thanksgiving Point	Highland
7	Brent Wolfley	300 est.	2003	self weigh	Layton
8	David Latour	263	2002	Thanksgiving Point	London

### TAIL OF THE TAPE, THE 906 TANNER 2004

Here is the data on the current Utah state record pumpkin. The 963 Stucker 2002 seed was started on Apr 23<sup>rd</sup>, transplanted outside May 4<sup>th</sup>, and pollinated July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

DATE	OTT(in)	est lbs.	lbs/day	Day	DATE	OTT(in)	est lbs.	lbs/day	Day
17-Jul	80.0	15.4	3.1	15	31-Aug	329.5	717.4	9.4	60
22-Jul	134.0	57.6	8.4	20	5-Sep	335.0	753.2	7.2	65
27-Jul	187.5	142.6	17.0	25	10-Sep	339.0	780.0	5.4	70
1-Aug	226.0	240.9	19.7	30	15-Sep	343.0	807.4	5.5	75
6-Aug	257.0	348.0	21.4	35	20-Sep	346.3	830.5	4.6	80
11-Aug	278.8	440.2	18.4	40	25-Sep	347.3	837.2	1.3	85
16-Aug	298.0	534.6	18.9	45	30-Sep	348.0	842.6	1.1	90
21-Aug	311.0	605.6	14.2	50	5-Oct	348.5	846.2	0.7	95
26-Aug	322.0	670.5	13.0	55	8-Oct	348.5	846.2	0.0	98

For information on OTT measuring go to: <http://www.backyardgardener.com/weight.html> and <http://www.bigpumpkins.com/ViewArticle.asp?id=57>

### UGPG T-SHIRTS & HATS

The UGPG has some really nice T-shirts and Hats for sale with our logo on them, to help raise money for the group. Contact Ray Tolman for more information.

### UTAH'S TOP GROWERS

Most of Utah's top growers belong to the UGPG, and we are here to help you in any way that we can in your efforts to grow a big one. The following individuals have offered their time to help. The people on this list have over 60 years of giant pumpkin growing experience! So give one of us a call if you have a question. We're sorry if we left anybody off the list. Let us know and we will put you on it next time.

<u>Name</u>	<u>phone</u>	<u>email address</u>	<u>Personal Best</u>
Kenny Blair	298-2437	blair20002004@yahoo.com	752 lbs.
Kevin Card	756-5711	highlandpumpkins@yahoo.com	568 lbs
Andrew Israelsen	966-1070	aisraelsen@comcast.net	647 lbs
Bruce Orchard	295-4806		777.5 lbs.
Gordon Tanner	451-5002	s1tanner@yahoo.com	906 lbs
(That's a one "1" not an L "l")			
Ray Tolman	295-7019	jetrbt@max.com	581 lbs.
Brent Wolfley	593-6361	wolfley@aol.com	612 lbs.

Again **thanks** for signing up with the UGPG. Have a fantastic season!