

Summer, 2026



GPC Common Ground

The Heart of the Season: Where Dreams, Doubts, & Giant Fruits Collide

by Cecil Weston

A PUBLICATION
DEDICATED TO
GROWERS
WORLD-WIDE WHO
CULTIVATE GIANT
FRUITS AND
VEGETABLES

The giant vegetable growing season has reached its midpoint. For many growers, this is the time of year when the long winter planning sessions, springtime seed starting, and endless hours of patch preparation begin to fade into the background. The hard work of getting a healthy plant



established and successfully setting fruit is largely behind us. Now comes the phase that every grower waits for - the incredible fruit growth these giants can pack on daily.

Across the globe, giant pumpkins, squash, watermelons, tomatoes, gourds, and other giant vegetables are beginning to hit their stride. What was once a small fruit attached to a vine just a few short weeks ago is now transforming into something extraordinary. Tape measurements are becoming daily rituals. Growth charts are referred to religiously. Every morning starts with a walk to the patch, eager to see what happened overnight.

This is the season of possibility.

For some growers, their fruit is already showing signs that it could become something special. Personal best numbers begin to appear on calculators. Comparisons are made to previous seasons. A fruit that is outperforming last year's champion sparks the imagination. Growers start asking themselves the questions that fuel countless summer conversations.

Is this the year I set a personal best?

Could this fruit challenge a club record?

Could it even compete on a larger stage?

And for a fortunate few, there is an even bigger question quietly taking shape among family members and trusted friends:

Could this be the fruit?

The one that everyone talks about years from now.

The one that changes everything.



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Yet while excitement grows in the patch, so does secrecy.

Social media feeds are buzzing with activity. Growers are posting pictures of healthy plants, well-maintained patches, and fruits swelling by the day. Some proudly share measurements and daily growth numbers, showcasing fruits that have captured the attention of fellow growers around the world.

But many choose a different approach.

In a hobby where every pound matters, information can become a valuable commodity. Daily gains, estimated weights, and current measurements are often held close to the chest. A carefully cropped photograph may be all that's offered, inviting speculation while revealing very little. Rumors circulate. Guesses are made. Everyone knows who has something big, but few know exactly *how* big.

The mystery is part of what makes this time of year so exciting.



Meanwhile, clubs around the world are hosting summer patch tours, one of the most enjoyable traditions in the giant growing community. Growers open their properties and invite fellow enthusiasts to walk among the vines, swap stories, and learn from one another's successes and failures.

These tours often provide valuable lessons that no book or seminar can teach.

One grower may showcase an irrigation setup that improves consistency. Another may demonstrate a pruning technique refined over years of experience. Visitors leave with notebooks containing new ideas and minds full of possibilities.

Yet perhaps the greatest benefit of these gatherings is the reassurance they provide.

Because nearly every grower, regardless of experience level or achievements, is asking themselves the same questions.

- *Am I doing this right?*
- *Could I be doing more?*
- *Should I push harder?*

The pursuit of giant vegetables has always been a balancing act.



The Heart of the Season: Where Dreams, Doubts, & Giant Fruits Collide - cont



The desire to maximize growth often competes with the need to maintain plant health. Every season presents countless decisions, each carrying consequences that may not become evident for weeks.

Some growers decide to push their fruit aggressively, seeking those extraordinary daily gains that can separate a good season from a great one.

Occasionally, those efforts are rewarded with spectacular growth rates and a fruit that climbs rapidly up the charts.

Other times, the results are less forgiving.

A fruit pushed beyond its limits may suddenly stop growing. What looked like a future champion can stall without warning. Even more heartbreaking are the fruits that grow so quickly that the skin cannot keep pace, resulting in catastrophic splits or cracks. Months of work can come to an end in a single day.

Every experienced grower has a story like this.

And every new grower eventually earns one.

As if managing plants and fruit weren't challenging enough, Mother Nature remains an unpredictable partner in every giant vegetable season.



Violent thunderstorms can undo weeks of progress in a matter of minutes. High winds twist vines and damage leaves. Hail shreds carefully maintained canopies. Flooding saturates root zones, while heat waves place stress on plants already operating at peak capacity.

Every summer, some patches emerge relatively unscathed while others suffer

significant setbacks. It is one of the few realities that all growers understand but can never fully control.

Then there are the human mistakes.

- A misplaced step damages a critical vine.

- A water valve is left closed.

- A treatment is mixed at the wrong concentration.

- A pruning decision turns out to be the wrong one.



The Heart of the Season: Where Dreams, Doubts, & Giant Fruits Collide - cont

No matter how experienced a grower becomes, mistakes remain an inevitable part of the journey. The best growers are not those who avoid every mistake; they are the ones who learn from them and adapt.

As July turns to August and the season matures, difficult decisions begin appearing in patches everywhere.

A grower may stand over a damaged fruit and weigh their options.

Do I stay the course and hope for the best?

Do I nurture a backup fruit that still has potential?

Do I remove the damaged fruit and start over?

Or do I call it a year and begin planning for next season?



These are not easy choices. The emotional investment in a giant vegetable can be substantial. Growers dedicate hundreds of hours to their patches, often involving family members and friends along the way. Letting go of a season's hopes is never simple.



Yet that ability to persevere is one of the defining characteristics of this community.

Because every grower knows that success is never guaranteed.

A fruit that looks unstoppable today may be gone tomorrow. A backup fruit that seemed insignificant weeks ago may become the giant everyone admires during weigh-off season. The season is far from over, and experience has taught us that some of the biggest surprises are still ahead.

For now, we stand in the heart of the growing season.

The plants are sprawling. The fruits are accelerating. Tape measures are stretched tight. Social media speculation is running wild. Patch tours are inspiring new ideas. Records remain possible. Personal bests are within reach.

Most importantly, hope is still alive in patches across the world.

Whether your fruit is setting new growth records, battling through adversity, or simply teaching you lessons for the future, remember that every season contributes to the journey. The weigh-offs will arrive soon enough. Until then, enjoy these summer days, learn from every challenge, and appreciate the remarkable process unfolding in your patch.

The middle of the season is where anticipation lives.

And for giant vegetable growers everywhere, that anticipation may be the most exciting part of all.



EARLY Tomato Competition

If you are participating in the early Tomato weigh off
PLEASE PREREGISTER on BigPumpkins.com

This is EXTREMELY helpful with data entry and getting all of the correct information associated with your entries in a timely manner.

To preregister go to the GPC Info page, then click the link that says :

[Register online for a GPC weigh off](#) (<----or click lthis link)

Fill out the address form completely.



Weigh-off Registration

First Name: Cecil

Last Name: Weston

Address 1:

Address 2:

City: East Jordan

State/Province: Michigan

Country: United States

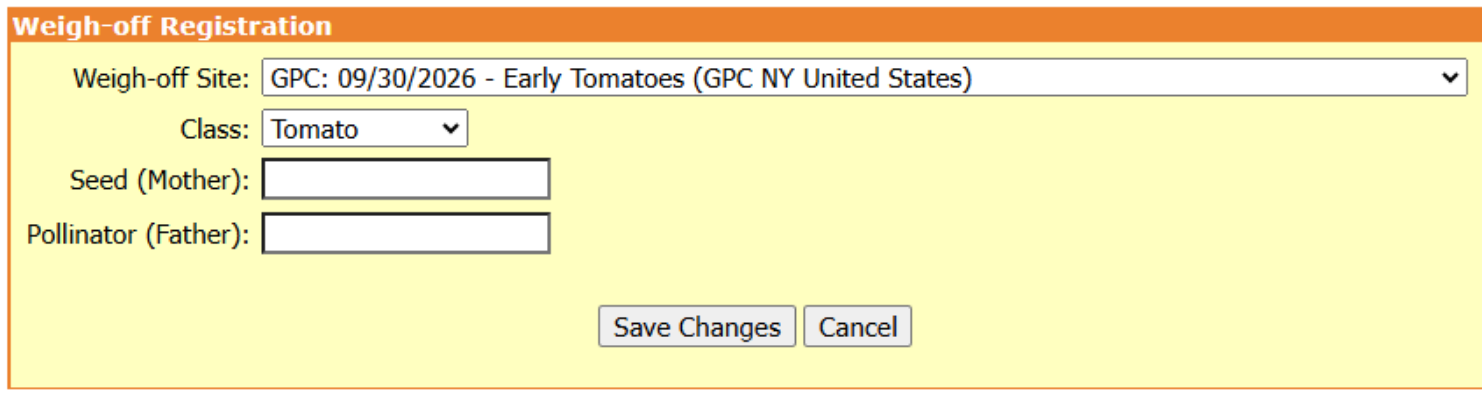
Postal/Zip Code: 49727-9325

Add Registration Save Changes

Make sure you select the correct country -- (it defaults to Austrailia)

Then after you click the "Add Registration" button a weigh off registration window will pop up,

Select **GPC: 9/30/2026 - Early tomatoes (GPC NY United States)** from the dropdown menu



Weigh-off Registration

Weigh-off Site: GPC: 09/30/2026 - Early Tomatoes (GPC NY United States)

Class: Tomato

Seed (Mother):

Pollinator (Father):

Save Changes Cancel

Create a separate registration for each entry



NEW GPC Weigh off Location in Chattanooga, TN

by Susie Zuerner

Launching October 10th, The Great Chattanooga Weigh-off at the Barn Nursery. Seriously, Y'all come!

For the first time in my 16 years of GPC competitions, the south has a full schedule of Saturday weigh-offs. The (new) Great Chattanooga Weigh-off at the Barn Nursery will compete in that coveted second Saturday in October where many of the biggest and best fruit will be weighed at arguably the most competitive weekend of the growing season. I would have thought that Chattanooga was pretty far south for a weigh-off but when the map is brought out, it's a straight shot there from I-40 to I-75, a short hop onto I-24 all on good roads, an easy exit and a very short distance from the bottom of the off ramp to the Barn Nursery.

The Barn Nursery is among the top 35 independent garden centers in the United States according to Garden Center Magazine.



Family owned for three generations, the Barn Nursery has steadily grown to provide the Chattanooga area with plants, landscaping supplies, pottery and soft goods that homeowners and landscapers alike want. The weigh-off developed with a series of conversations with the President of the Barn Nursery, Cole Webster. Cole has loved pumpkins for a long time, purchasing a big pumpkin or two during season but knowing there were much bigger pumpkins grown in the US. He and the Barn Nursery were ready to do what it would take to get growers to bring them to Chattanooga and to provide the Chattanooga community with a GPC event with pumpkins and watermelons the size of which most have never seen. The Barn's enthusiasm for this event was infectious even before the GPC registration was made. They want the weigh-off to be a destination weigh-off for the best growers everywhere and are making every effort to make all of the growers welcome, looked after and appreciated.

Growers will be welcomed into the competition area at 7:30am, with 3 to 4 forklift teams (and a spotter for each forklift) where they will offload and register.

Secured parking is available for trailers overnight, Friday evening until 7 pm at which point the parking lot will be locked.

Upon registering, every grower will be provided with a VIP lanyard, and a gift bag containing an event t-shirt and ball cap along with coupon(s) to have a free lunch for the grower, plus one, at one of the 5 food trucks that will be on property. The 5 food trucks

will feature BBQ, burgers, drinks and desserts! Other gifts within the bag will be from local Chattanooga businesses or items that growers will find useful including a B+ sample. Word has it that Espoma and Coast of Maine will be donating bagged products to each of the growers who completes onsite registration.

Once registration is complete the growers will be provided with a secure gated parking lot to park their vehicle or trailer in and return to a tented VIP growers area where cold drinks and warm friendships will carry the day no matter the weather. The event is well publicized with TV, Radio and Print media invited. 10 billboards will be going up around Chattanooga with the Barn Nursery expecting hundreds of people to witness the weigh-off, maybe more. Always community minded, the Barn Nursery expects to run a non-profit fundraiser during the weigh-off.

With eager sponsors available to the Barn Nursery the prize structure is very well funded. Initially the prize structure was published at \$25,000 total prize money but this has increased to almost \$28,000 at the time of this article.



Squash money will be available to 5 places and a bonus of \$500 will be paid to any pumpkin or squash over 2000 pounds. As it stands the pumpkins and squash will compete equally by weight with the heaviest fruit being awarded \$5000 dollars. So, IF the heaviest fruit is a squash over 2000 pounds it would receive the \$500 bonus for the 2k weight plus the 1st place squash money of an additional \$800 for a total of \$6300. The heaviest watermelon will receive a \$2000

prize and if a world record is weighed and still stands at the end of the 2026 growing season, a \$3000 bonus will be awarded.

The Howard Dill award for the best pumpkin 500 pounds or more will receive a \$250 cash prize. Right out of the gate the Great Chattanooga weigh-off will provide custom trophies unique to the event to all of the growers who place. Fifteen places will be paid for the pumpkins/squash and 10 places for the watermelons. All other GPC fruit categories beside pumpkin, squash and watermelon will compete for 3 places all with cash prizes of 100,75,50 dollars per category. There may be opportunities to sell your pumpkin to interested buyers when you come to Chattanooga. Cole Webster has expressed an interest in possibly buying the winning pumpkin after the weigh-off. If you are interested in having your pumpkin sold after the weigh-off please contact me a couple of weeks before your trip down to Chattanooga and discuss what you are interested in doing. Check the GPC weigh-off page for The Great Chattanooga weigh-off, we expect to update the page soon with current prize structuring and hotel discounts for Growers. See you there!

<https://www.barnnursery.com/> <https://www.instagram.com/p/Dbf2rsGulOa/>

<https://www.facebook.com/reel/1548819060117738>

<https://www.gardencentermag.com/article/2025-top-100-independent-garden-centers-list/>

Biostimulants and the Pursuit of a Giant Pumpkin

by Cecil Weston

For years, giant pumpkin growers have focused heavily on fertilizer programs, more nitrogen, more potassium, more calcium. While proper nutrition remains the foundation of successful pumpkin growing, some of the most exciting developments in plant science are not fertilizers at all. They are biostimulants.

Unlike fertilizers, biostimulants do not primarily feed a plant. Instead, they influence natural biological processes within the plant and soil. Their purpose is to improve nutrient-use efficiency, enhance stress tolerance, stimulate root development, and support overall plant performance. For giant pumpkin growers chasing personal bests - or even world-record weights - that goal is hard to ignore.

A giant pumpkin plant faces extraordinary demands during a growing season. It must develop a massive root system, support hundreds of square feet of leaf surface, move enormous amounts of water and carbohydrates, and sustain a fruit that can gain dozens of pounds per day. Any practice that improves the efficiency of these processes may provide a competitive advantage.

While scientific research directly focused on giant pumpkins remains limited, there is a growing body of evidence showing that various biostimulants can improve plant performance in agricultural and horticultural crops. The challenge for growers is understanding which products have science behind them and how to use them effectively.

What Are Biostimulants?

Modern definitions describe biostimulants as substances or microorganisms that enhance plant growth, nutrient efficiency, stress tolerance, or crop quality without acting primarily as nutrient sources.

The most common categories include:

- Seaweed extracts
- Humic and fulvic acids
- Protein hydrolysates and amino acids
- Beneficial microbes
- Chitosan and related biological compounds

Each category works differently, but all share a common objective: helping plants perform better with the resources already available to them.

Seaweed Extracts: A Favorite Among Serious Growers

If one class of biostimulants has earned near-universal acceptance among competitive growers, it is seaweed extracts.

Typically derived from marine algae such as kelp, these products



Biostimulants and the Pursuit of a Giant Pumpkin - cont

contain naturally occurring compounds that can influence plant growth and stress responses. Research suggests seaweed extracts may promote root development, stimulate chlorophyll production, improve nutrient uptake, and enhance tolerance to environmental stress.

For giant pumpkin growers, these potential benefits are especially attractive. A larger root system can access more water and nutrients. Improved stress tolerance may help maintain growth during periods of excessive heat, heavy rainfall, or fluctuating soil moisture.

Many growers incorporate seaweed products throughout the season, particularly during transplant establishment, vine expansion, flowering, and fruit development.

Do seaweed products directly produce a heavier pumpkin? The science cannot answer that question with certainty. However, healthier plants with stronger root systems are generally better equipped to support the demands of giant fruit production.

Amino Acids and Protein Hydrolysates

Perhaps no category of biostimulants currently generates more discussion among giant pumpkin growers than amino acid products.

Protein hydrolysates are produced by breaking down proteins into smaller peptides and free amino acids. These products are often marketed as tools for stress reduction, nutrient efficiency, and growth enhancement.

The theory behind their use is fairly straightforward. Plants naturally expend energy producing amino acids. When amino acids are supplied externally, some researchers suggest that plants may conserve energy and redirect resources toward growth and recovery.

Research has linked amino acid biostimulants with:

- Improved nutrient assimilation
- Enhanced root development
- Better performance under environmental stress
- Increased crop productivity



For giant pumpkins, the potential value may lie less in stimulating explosive growth and more in maintaining consistent growth during stressful conditions. Heat stress, drought stress, transplant shock, and periods of rapid fruit expansion all place significant demands on plant metabolism. Amino acid products may help plants navigate these challenges more efficiently.

Biostimulants and the Pursuit of a Giant Pumpkin - cont

Like all biostimulants, they should not be viewed as miracle products. Their value appears greatest when supporting an already healthy and well-managed crop.

Humic and Fulvic Acids: Supporting the Root Zone

Many experienced giant pumpkin growers believe success starts below ground. Humic and fulvic acids are naturally occurring compounds derived from decomposed organic matter. Unlike fertilizers, they do not provide significant amounts of nutrients. Instead, they influence the soil environment and plant-root interactions.

Research suggests humic substances can:

- Improve nutrient availability
- Stimulate root growth
- Enhance soil structure
- Support microbial activity
- Improve water-holding capacity

These benefits are particularly relevant for giant pumpkins because of the enormous root systems they develop. A healthy root zone serves as the engine that drives vine growth, leaf production, and fruit expansion.

Some growers describe giant pumpkin competitions as root-growing competitions disguised as pumpkin-growing competitions. While that may be an oversimplification, there is certainly truth behind the idea. A plant's ability to support a thousand-pound fruit ultimately begins with what is happening underground.

Beneficial Microbes: The Biological Frontier

Another rapidly growing area of interest involves microbial biostimulants.

These products typically contain beneficial fungi, bacteria, or a combination of both. The most commonly discussed examples include mycorrhizal fungi and plant-growth-promoting rhizobacteria.

These organisms can interact with plant roots in ways that improve:

- Nutrient acquisition
- Root development
- Soil biological activity
- Plant resilience under stress



The appeal is obvious. A giant pumpkin plant requires tremendous amounts of water and nutrients throughout the season. If beneficial microbes can improve the plant's ability to acquire those resources, they may help maximize growth potential.

Although results can vary, many growers see microbial products as investments in

Biostimulants and the Pursuit of a Giant Pumpkin - cont

long-term soil health rather than short-term growth stimulants.

The Reality Check

Biostimulants have become popular for good reason, but they are not magic.

One consistent theme throughout the scientific literature is that biostimulant performance depends heavily on environmental conditions, crop management, soil health, and overall growing practices. Results can vary greatly from season to season. In other words, no biostimulant can overcome poor genetics, inadequate irrigation, nutrient deficiencies, disease problems, or unfavorable weather.

A seaweed extract cannot compensate for drought stress if the plant is not watered properly. A microbial inoculant cannot fix a severely compacted soil. An amino acid product cannot make up for a lack of essential nutrients in the soil.

The greatest value of biostimulants appears to be helping already healthy plants become even more efficient.

Tips for Using Biostimulants Effectively

Just as important as choosing a biostimulant is understanding how to use it.

Apply Before Stress Occurs

Many growers make the mistake of waiting until a plant is struggling before applying a biostimulant. Most products perform best when applied before anticipated stress events.

Examples include:

- Heat waves
- Drought conditions
- Transplanting
- Rapid fruit growth phases
- Extended periods of rain

Helping a plant prepare for stress is often more effective than attempting to reverse damage after it occurs.

Focus on Root Development Early

Early-season growth sets the stage for everything that follows.

Applications of seaweed extracts, humic substances, and microbial products during transplant establishment and early vine growth may help encourage root expansion when it matters most.

The stronger the root system entering fruit-development season, the greater the plant's



Biostimulants and the Pursuit of a Giant Pumpkin - cont

capacity to support giant fruit.

Don't Use Biostimulants as Fertilizers

One of the biggest misconceptions is that biostimulants can replace a fertility program.

They cannot.

Biostimulants work best when combined with proper nutrition, irrigation, and soil management. They improve efficiency but do not eliminate the need for plant nutrients.

Time Applications Around Key Growth Stages

Many experienced growers target applications during critical developmental periods:

- Early vine growth
- Flowering
- Fruit set
- Rapid fruit expansion
- Stress periods



These stages represent times when plant metabolism is operating at maximum capacity and even small improvements in efficiency can be valuable.

Support Soil Biology

Products containing beneficial microbes perform best in environments where microbial life can thrive.

Good drainage, adequate organic matter, balanced fertility, and proper moisture management all contribute to a healthier soil ecosystem.

A poor soil environment can limit the effectiveness of biological products regardless of their quality.

Avoid the Kitchen-Sink Approach

The biostimulant marketplace is crowded with products making impressive claims.

Many growers are tempted to apply everything available in hopes of finding an edge. The problem is that when five products are applied simultaneously, it becomes impossible to determine which one is actually providing value, or if they are competing with each other.

A better approach is to introduce products gradually and evaluate their performance over time.

Biostimulants and the Pursuit of a Giant Pumpkin - cont

Keep Detailed Records

Some of the most successful giant pumpkin growers are meticulous note-takers.

Track:

- Application dates
- Product rates
- Weather conditions
- Fruit growth measurements
- Plant observations

Long-term records often reveal patterns that cannot be seen during a single season.

Final Thoughts

The science surrounding biostimulants continues to evolve, and interest among giant pumpkin growers shows no sign of slowing down.

Seaweed extracts, amino acid products, humic substances, and beneficial microbes all offer intriguing possibilities. Research suggests they can improve nutrient-use efficiency, root development, stress tolerance, and overall plant performance. What the research does not yet prove is that any single product can transform an average pumpkin into a world record contender.

The true value of biostimulants may be more subtle.

They help create healthier roots. They help plants manage stress. They help improve efficiency. They help support the biological and physiological processes that drive growth.

And in giant pumpkin growing, where success often comes from stacking dozens of small advantages

together, that may be more important than any miracle product.

The biggest pumpkins are still grown through exceptional genetics, healthy soil, balanced



fertility, proper irrigation, and careful management. Biostimulants are not a shortcut around those fundamentals. Instead, they are another tool in the grower's toolbox - one that may help a well-managed plant perform just a little better when every pound counts.

Kentucky Giant Growers Patch tour

By Josh Monin

On July 18, we hosted the third annual Kentucky Giant Growers Patch Tour, partnering with the Mountain State Giant Growers from West Virginia for a joint event. The tour route spanned from Prestonsburg, Kentucky, to Covington, Virginia. We visited four top growers to observe their giant pumpkins, watermelons, squash, and tomatoes. Our featured growers included Dwight Sloan in Prestonsburg, who cultivates giant pumpkins and squash, and Ethan Ramey in Huntington, who focuses on giant tomatoes. We also visited Chris "Doc" Rodebaugh in Lewisburg, who grows giant pumpkins, tomatoes, and watermelons, as well as Steven Hall, Jr. in Covington, who raises giant pumpkins, watermelons, and long gourds.

Throughout the tour, we learned several advanced Giant Growing techniques for cultivating giants. Doc Rodebaugh demonstrated innovative methods such as using daisy-chained LED grow lights for extra photons, but he will tell you the biggest advantage is the extended patch work hours the light provides. Dwight Sloan's automated systems, and precise drip irrigation to optimize plant growth was a big take away. Dwight uses a Rain Bird Irrigation system that allows him to water different zones in the patch at designated times. We also observed effective shading techniques, the application of weed fabric, and specialized procedures like plant crown repair surgery at Steven Hall's Patch. Additionally, growers shared unique pest control strategies. One of my Personal favorite pest control strategies

Comes from Ethan Ramey's patch. He explained how to use a Black Light to locate Horn Worms on tomato plants at night.



Doc Rodebaugh's Main Patch (Pictured above) features raised tomato beds and one of his giant pumpkins which was growing on a scale.



Crown Repair.

Dwight Sloan and grower Ethan Ramey's daughter are shown in front of growers studying the crown of Steven Hall's giant pumpkin, he had split the crown due to disease.



Steven Hall, Jr.'s Main Patch with Lights. Steven has been innovative in making time for his hobby. Since he works many hours, he has added lights to enable evening work in the patch.

Kentucky Giant Growers Patch tour



King of the Patch. Doc Rodebaugh's 2144 Barron growing on a scale and in the glow of LED grow lights.



Three Generation of Growers. Doc's daughter, Stella, is shown with her dad and her grandfather, Albert Rodebaugh visiting Steven Hall, Jr's Patch in Virginia. Also shown, Scott Bayuk and Josh Monin.



Growers discussing Steven Hall's 2144 Barron



Let There Be Light. Doc Rodebaugh's grow lights provide supplemental light early in morning and late in evening, extending photosynthesis. Growers are interested in Doc's multi-strand daisy-chain setup of lights covering the whole patch. Each strand is 100 foot long and holds 24 LED grow lights.



Doc's Notorious Stop Sign Patch.

Kentucky Giant Growers Patch tour

Ethan Ramey's Watermelon Growing on DeWitt Weed Fabric.



Ethan Ramey's Giant Tomato Patch.



Drip Irrigation and Shade Cloth Year Around.
Only a couple of Dwight Sloan's growing secrets



Giant Tomatoes Right Outside the Window. Ethan Ramey explains to growers how to properly trim and maintain a giant tomato.



Touring Dwight Sloan's Patch. Growers admiring Dwight's completely automated RainBird Irrigation System.

OVGPG & MGPG visit NY Giant growers patches

In a combined Club patch tour the NY growers hosted growers from NY, OVGPG and MGPG clubs to visit their patches on July 25th 2026.

Below are some of the pictures taken by attendees.

1st stop Karl Haist's Patch



OVGPG & MGPG visit NY Giant growers patches

**2nd stop
Scott &
Emmet
Andrusz's
Patch**



OVGPG & MGPG visit NY Giant growers patches

3rd stop - Tadd & Bryson King's Patch



OVGPG & MGPG visit NY Giant growers patches

Last stop
Andy &
Amelia
Wolf's Patch



WPGP Patch Tour 2026



WPGP Patch Tour 2026



2026 PGVG Patch Tour

Saturday, August 8 the Pacific Giant Vegetable Growers held their annual patch tour. The day began at Plumper Farms owned and operated by club member Jim Kessinger. Relatively new to giant pumpkin growing, Jim has been growing market pumpkins for nearly 30 years. Due to a shortage of water on his property, Jim employs a dry growing technique for much of his crops. You would never know it by looking at them!



2026 PGVG Patch Tour

Our next stop was at Jeff Uhlmeyer's patch near Olympia, Washington. Jeff is having another banner year with a couple of beautiful giants. He also boasts an incredible garden—growing in sandy loam (or loamy sand, if you prefer!). This season, Jeff is experimenting with a heater in one of his greenhouses to prolong the growing season.



2026 PGVG Patch Tour

Our final stop was just down the road from Jeff's at Cindy Tobeck's patch. Cindy's property was in peak form having recently hosted her daughter's wedding. The yard was immaculate, and as you would expect, her pumpkin patch did not disappoint. Cindy explained some techniques for weed suppression and we even got her to climb her long gourd trellis. Pumpkin Royalty Jim Ford traveled cross-country to take in our tours. Our tour this year had perfect weather, great food, and great pumpkin friends. It was just what we needed for the end of the season push that is ahead!



Follow the label!

As Giant fruit and vegetable growers everything we do is often in excess. Some of us learn a very hard lesson when we over apply a product. Others never really make the connection that over application may have hurt more than it helped. Every season, usually more than once or twice I find myself talking to someone who either accidentally burnt their leaves or otherwise harmed their plant by over applying. It's usually a fungicide, but it can be other products too and many times its because they either don't read the label, or they misunderstand the label. A lot of the fungicides we use are labeled for application per acre. There are 4 very important numbers on that label.

1. How much to apply to the AREA– total amount of product to apply.
2. How much water to mix it in to make that application (strength of solution – especially for foliar applications)
3. Application interval
4. MAX amount (or number of applications) to apply per year.

All of these are extremely important to understand **before** using the product.

Using a weaker solution, less than recommended for the area, or even more often than recommended. will not be as effective and may create resistance in the fungus you are trying to prevent.

Using a stronger solution or more than recommended may burn/damage your plant or the environment -- including the ground water.

Sometimes there are other application notices to protect your plant, like don't apply over a certain temperature, or don't mix with certain other chemicals.

Know your patch's equivalent of an acre and use that to multiply the label dosage to find how much you should use for your area. (if its labeled for use by the acre)

To find your patches equivalent: divide the sq footage of your patch by 43560 (the number of sq ft in an acre), then use the answer for all of your calculations to convert to your patch size.

EXAMPLE: your patch is 40ft x 30ft -- 1200sq ft -- $1200/43560=0.275$.

If the product says use a pint per acre, you calculate $16 \text{ oz} \times 0.0275 = 0.44 \text{ oz}$ to get the correct dosage in ounces of this product for your 1200 sq ft. patch

Converting oz to ml is usually easier to precisely measure the small amounts we need instead of trying to measure partial ounces. There are online calculators for this, but if you multiply the number of ounces by 29.5735 you can calculate it yourself. Continuing with the above example, $0.44 \text{ oz} \times 29.5735 = 13.01234$. So 13 ml would be the amount to use for 1200 sq ft.

ALWAYS READ AND FOLLOW the label -- It's the Law
and you will have better results.

MORE IS NOT ALWAYS BETTER

Can Fusarium be friendly?

By Heber Hall

Editors note: Many in the Giant growing world have experienced the devastation caused by Fusarium. Recently I heard some interesting information might be worth considering if you are currently dealing with this nemesis.

Disclaimer: The views and claims expressed in this article are solely those of the author. Publication in this newsletter does not constitute endorsement by the GPC, nor does it imply that the GPC has verified or validated the accuracy of the information presented.

I am Heber Hall. I've been working in the pathogen/plant space since 2018, when I dealt with a devastating year long fusarium infection in my medical cannabis facility. After eventually finding a natural solution, although unexpectedly; I developed a product that inhibits quorum signaling in pathogens, among a slew of other beneficial properties. I began helping friends clean their facilities up using the product I had developed; fusarium was rampant in Washington state, starting back in 2016. I began working with large facilities in 2021, and have had a 100% success rate with turning the pathogen completely around in every facility and farm I've directly worked with. I am the owner and developer of the mycogasm line of products, and am working on MANY projects this year, from cannabis to dahlias to pumpkins to wheat and other crops.

I'm working with a couple giant pumpkin growers this year, who had already lost a fruit; we're making sure they don't lose more, and that they have strong contenders at the weigh-offs. I tend to choose the tough projects; the things they call incurable. I approach things much differently than most, relying on nature to show me how it's done, and attempting to drive my approaches in the same direction.

I've written a book on fusarium, and battling it in high density cropping. This book goes over all the metabolic framework that supports, or can lead to pathogenic behavior and it lays out the basis upon which virulence is expressed. The discussion is more geared toward indoor cropping, but all of the information regarding salt based nutrient solutions could be priceless for those growing with the same. This book is available on amazon, and is titled UNDERSTANDING FUSARIUM IN NON-FIELD HIGH DENSITY AND CONTAINED MEDIA CROPPING.

Earlier this year, I was interviewed by Joe Ailts, who many of you are familiar with; that is available to view on his YouTube channel 'WORMHOLE AGRONOMY'.

My products AND book can be found on <https://mycogasm.bio> and I can be reached at email at hhall7600@gmail.com and phone at (928) 492-MYCO (6926).

I have a special offer on my website specifically for giant pumpkin growers -- **Use Code PUMPKIN10 for 10% off plus free shipping for everything on my site**, including my book. If you're dealing with a particular issue, please reach out and let's see what we can help you figure out!



My study and direction of treatment entirely changed when I discovered that very key piece of information; not only is it (fusarium) normally a symbiont, but it is also quite possibly the most common fungal endophyte in nature; inhabiting more species than mycorrhizae.



I've spent the last several years helping cannabis growers who were ready to douse the place in gasoline, light it, and walk away! Most of the people I've worked with so far, had lost everything financially and had already tried everything they could find any information on, online; to no avail. We turned every single one of their grow operations completely around! All, except one, were very quick and really didn't teach me a lot, except that a particular product worked very well against most initial moderate infection loads; even across thousands of infected plants in a facility. A year and a half ago I began working with a licensed facility that had been battling it for over a year, and had one of the most severe cases of virulence I had seen. This is where I began to see the true capabilities of fusarium when it is expressing every possible pathogenic trait, coupled with extreme virulence. I was able to observe what this fungus would do/cause in the plant in relation to every possible stressor known. My observations drove me to dig into studies from every angle, and truly assemble an accurate picture of what this fungus is capable of, and will do, based on what genes are being heavily expressed, and the stressor present.

We were able to compile this information and actually work backwards, suppressing the pathogenic gene expression and suppressing excessive reproduction, **bringing the fungus back into line as a beneficial endophyte. Yes, you read that correctly!**

I discovered, in my research, that fusarium's pathogenicity is largely driven by metabolism. Fusarium is capable of using a whole number of different compounds as an energy source, from sugar, to lignin, to aminos, and even nitrate nitrogen! It must express different metabolic framework to break down and use each different food source. This metabolic framework can also allow for potential pathogenic issues later on, and can cause a reliance on those materials as well, once that framework is heavily expressed.

Let me explain a little more what I mean. Fusarium prefers sugar over any other food source; when plenty of sugar is available fusarium won't express very much genetic framework to use nitrate nitrogen as a food source. Both of the compounds provide oxygen that fusarium can use when oxygen is not available due to saturation or some other reason. I guess I forgot to preface with: fusarium is strictly an aerobic fungus. We see the biggest problems when

fusarium cannot access oxygen! IF sugar is insufficient to support fusarium, especially during an anaerobic event, fusarium turns to nitrate. When fusarium has to turn to nitrate, it ramps up expression of nitrate reductase. Once this is ramped up fusarium will begin to rely on nitrate, if it is present. This reliance on nitrate causes over growth of the hyphae and excessive sporulation. **This is what causes wilt!** The hyphae reside primarily in the roots and xylem of the plant, **and when it grows excessively it physically blocks the transport of water and nutrients up the plant.**

Now, if you've dealt with fusarium before, this is ONE of its pathogenic expressions/traits that you may have dealt with. Think back, and try to remember the chain of events that led up to the wilted plants; over 80% of the time it follows a heavy, prolonged saturation event. When plants are over-saturated or stay too saturated for too long, their sugar content (BRIX) becomes diluted. This sugar is what was keeping the plant and microbe communicating together, and keeping the microbe in a beneficial state. Suddenly that supply became severely diminished; so much so that the fungus HAS to turn to available nitrate in the plant or soil, and begin using it to just survive the saturation event. The lower the sugar levels go, and the longer the event takes place, the more expression of that nitrate gene takes place. Once the plant recovers and begins making sugar again, it's often too late. The line of communication (brix... sugar supply) has severely weakened and the fungus has become content living on nitrate, especially if there are lots available! The fungus begins growing and hyphating excessively, sporulating in the soil and plant, and you see the plant completely wilt!! This is the most common thing people will see in field crops with this fungus, as that's usually the end of that plant, and it cannot progress to further pathogenic expressions. However, sometimes we see virulence accompany this pathogenic expression, and an entire field of plants will all die within a short period of time. This is due to quorum signaling, in addition to pathogenic expression. Quorum signaling is when the fungus uses chemical signals to let each other know they're all there, basically forming an army with high tech communications!

I won't bore you with the other things that can appear from persistent virulent infections, because we just won't see that in this crop because of the nature of farming this crop.

I will, however; discuss the good, the bad, and the ugly of common pumpkin growing practices; and give some pointers to avoid the possible bad or ugly outcomes.

The good:

1. Making sure calcium is near 70% of base saturation, and keeping boron levels up
2. Using inoculants, fulvic, humic, kelp, and other biostimulants
3. High organic matter
4. Frequent waterings, without over-saturating soil
5. Keeping cover crops planted when we aren't growing pumpkins
6. Working compacted areas to keep them aerated

Each of these practices helps lead to plant health, and strengthening the plant/symbiont relationship; as well as soil health, and providing a suitable soil environment for it to live beneficially.

The bad:

1. High EC soils
2. Over fertilizing, especially nitrate or P
3. Fungicides
4. Pesticides
5. Oxidative products (H₂O₂, peracetic acid)
6. Over application of K during fruiting
7. High soluble P in the soil

Fungicides don't work well against fusarium due to its ability to counter them quickly and effectively, building immunity nearly overnight. Some pesticides will actually cause the pathogenic 'flip' in fusarium. Oxidative products tend to reduce numbers of everything, and if the original reason fusarium was there to begin with is not corrected, fusarium comes back with a vengeance and there's very little biology to even begin to stop it! As we discussed earlier, excessive nitrate is generally what sets this fungus on the wrong foot; high P significantly reduces root associations of competitive biology, such as mycorrhizae. You can apply all the mycorrhizae in the world, but if your soil is much over 80 ppm of soluble P then you are NOT gaining the benefit of them because the plant rejects them at the root. The association between fusarium and the root does not depend on P, so it blocks one out while letting the other take over. Calcium, magnesium, potassium, ammonium, are all competing for uptake in one way or another; over applying K, which has higher solubility than most of the others, tends to cause antagonism with uptake of every one of those other compounds. K and P can both be applied to the leaves during this period to prevent both high soluble soil P, and antagonism due to K.

The ugly:

1. Bringing in loads of untested manure, soil, or compost
2. Continual over-watering or prolonged saturation
3. Plant continually under 5 brix
4. Severely under-watering

These 4 things can absolutely cause havoc, and destroy the chances of having a healthy resilient pumpkin come weigh offs.

We can combat nature with applying sugars, inoculants, micro-nutrients, etc. when she gives us more rain than we wanted. We can address those excessive saturation events so that we prevent pathogenic expression beginning during those. But, if we are creating these problems ourselves by over-watering and not paying attention to actual saturation percentages, we can be our own worst enemy! It takes a LOT of water to grow a giant pumpkin, and this is how a LOT of people grow theirs; but if you're pushing saturation levels, and creating this harsh environment for fusarium, you'll wish you had not!

On the reverse side of that coin, if we have patches of dry soil, or are severely under-watering, we are also opening ourselves up for that nitrate issue in the fungus. Dry soil doesn't cycle nitrogen, it accumulates nitrate. Soil under 30% moisture doesn't allow the plant access to that nitrate, but allows the fungus unfettered access all the way down to 6% moisture. Sugar is the primary food source for all symbionts, if brix is 5 or less it just not enough! Furthermore, the plant satiates the fungus with secondary metabolites as well, which are nearly nonexistent below brix of 6.

There are several types of biology that are exceptional at suppressing pathogenic fusarium. For an active infection or known pathogenesis in the soil, *Trichoderma harzianum* and *Bacillus subtilis* seem to be a couple of the rock stars capable of battling fusarium. For prevention and suppression *Pseudomonas fluorescens* (rhodospirillum rubrum) and *Lactobacillus* (most species) are excellent soil inoculants to use fairly regularly. Arbuscular Mycorrhizae is an excellent competitive microbe at the plant roots, and can be effective as a preventive as well.

Saving some of the most pertinent information for last: there are several plant derived compounds (polyphenols) that have proven to be exceptional at preventing fusarium infections, downregulating mycotoxin synthesis, and inhibiting quorum sensing. **Plants begin producing polyphenols at a brix of 6;** the higher we get above that, the more polyphenols and other secondary metabolites will be present. *A little trick I have figured out to improve brix is by foliar application of all the oxidative metals used in photosynthesis, as they are often a 'bottleneck' to this process. Mixing soft rock P and molasses in water, and applying to leaves and root zone can also give a little brix jump for a couple days; this method is excellent when nature gives us too much moisture at once!*

My experience with this fungus has led me to direct my work using these plant extracts, inoculants, and adjusting nutritional inputs for the soil and plant. Addressing the big picture not only leads to lack or loss of pathogenic expression in the fungus, but also ensures even greater future success; mitigating the potential for reoccurrence. I developed a product that contains these plant derived polyphenols, and use it EVERY time I have to take on this fungus with a client. Those polyphenols downregulate mycotoxin synthesis and inhibit quorum sensing in the fungus, while giving the plant some extra ammunition it can use in the battle without having to spend the energy to produce. In addition to this, we look through the potential causes of pathogenic expression in the soil, plant, air, and water and address those; often it is nutritional. We inoculate with the proper microbes, depending if we're working on a current problem or preventing a future problem. We stay completely away from practices on the 'ugly' list, and we try to do as little as possible on the 'bad' list. Generally, this line of preparation/attack, leaving nothing unturned, leads to success on every front; that's what we need when we have one shot to try and get that record each year!

2027 International Growers Convention

The GPC is pleased to announce that the next International Growers Convention will be held in Canfield, Ohio, on March 5–7, 2027.

We extend our thanks to the Ohio Valley Giant Pumpkin Growers club for their outstanding proposal to host the event in their home state.

More details will be shared in late fall 2026—stay tuned!



SAVE THE DATE

2027 - IGC
CANFIELD, OH

MARCH
5-7





Meet the new GPC European Representative

Hi everyone,

I would like to introduce myself. My name is Vincent Destombes, I'm 37 years old and I live with my partner and two kids in the Belgian countryside between Retie and Kasterlee.

I'm already growing Giant pumpkins in open air for about 9 years, but I never had a real giant yet. My biggest accomplishment concerning growing big fruits is a pumpkin of 948 lbs. My goal is to grow them as big as I possibly can and secretly I dream of crossing

that 1500 lbs line. That's why I love to be a part of the commonwealth, to get to know new growers around the globe and get some tips and tricks. I am very curious about what's about to come in this adventure and I'm in eager to learn from more experienced growers.

Next to growing "not so giant pumpkins" I enjoy gardening, traveling, getting in touch with new people, my day job as an educator and most of all I like to get into new adventures with my family.

Why I joined the GPC? Simply because I like to be a part of a big community. At first the camaraderie, to learn from each other and to have and discuss similar interests. That we support a beautiful hobby and make it fair to compete for everyone is just a dream coming true.

I hope to meet you guys soon and if someone has some questions... please don't hesitate and contact me.

Happy growing from Belgium.

Vincent Destombes





GPC-Weging

Regels voor een visuele inspectie



De GPC heeft enkele regels met betrekking tot vreemde stoffen en chemische reststoffen. Het is de weging site en de teler hun verantwoordelijkheid om alle GPC regelgevingen te volgen en bijgevolg de veiligheid van iedereen op het event te garanderen. Een weging site kan met de volledige steun van het GPC, inschrijvingen uitsluiten en/of wegsturen als blijkt dat de GPC regels niet of niet correct worden nageleefd. De beslissing van een jurylid of voorafgaand aangeduid persoon wordt ten alle tijd als definitief aanzien. Desondanks behoudt het GPC het recht om deze beslissing te wijzigen wanneer de regels omtrent uitsluiting correct werden nageleefd.

Belangrijk om in acht te nemen - Richtlijnen voor visuele inspectie en presentatie:

De visuele inspectie dient steeds te gebeuren alvorens het uitladen

Beoordelingspunten:

1. Alle inschrijvingen dienen vrij te zijn van vreemde substanties en chemische reststoffen.
2. Alle inschrijvingen worden vrij toegankelijke onbedekt aangeboden aan de uitlaad- en/of verzamelplaats. Ze blijven ook onbedekt zodat het publiek de kans heeft om de inschrijvingen te bekijken.
3. Alle inschrijvingen zullen voor het uitladen aan een visuele inspectie worden onderworpen door een jury of een vooraf aangeduid persoon. Dit onder het toezicht van de site coördinator.
4. Alle inschrijvingen waarop chemische reststoffen worden aangetroffen worden niet uitgeladen. Deze afspraak is van toepassing voor alle categorieën.
5. Bij het aantreffen van chemische reststoffen, zal je worden doorverwezen naar een reinigingsstation:
 - a. Na het reinigen van de vrucht mag deze opnieuw worden aangeboden aan de uitlaad en/of verzamelplaats voor een nieuw nazicht van de vrucht.
 - b. Als de vrucht wordt goedgekeurd en ze voldoet aan de alle andere inschrijvingsvoorwaarden dan kan de vrucht worden uitgeladen.
6. Als het opnieuw inspecteren van de vrucht resulteert in een diskwalificatie dan heeft de teler het recht om een beoordeling van deze beslissing te vragen aan het team van juryleden en de coördinator van het event.
7. Wanneer alle inschrijvingen zijn uitgeladen zal de controle overgaan naar de coördinator van het event.
8. Aansluitend zal er een grondigere controle plaatsvinden uitgevoerd door de juryleden om uit te sluiten of er factoren aanwezig zijn die leiden tot onmiddellijke diskwalificatie.
9. Na het uitladen zijn schaduwdoeken voor of het bevochtigen van de vrucht niet meer toegestaan.
10. Sites kunnen het gebruik van waterkruiken toestaan tot op het moment dat de vrucht naar de weegschaal zal worden gebracht. Deze zullen echter worden verwijderd wanneer de steel wordt gesneden om aan de wedstrijdvoorwaarden te voldoen.
- 11.

Deze checklist zal worden aangeboden en ter beschikking worden gesteld aan alle juryleden en de wegingsverantwoordelijken. Voor een volledige oplijsting van alle wegingsafspraken kan u terecht in het wegingshandboek voor alle regels en afspraken. U kan dit handboek vinden op <https://gpc1.org>

GROW them BIG een een fijne tijd gewenst op jullie weging.



GPC News from President Cindy



Summer greetings fellow growers! I have had a busy season making everything perfect for my daughter's late July wedding! Since last fall I have landscaped and hard-scaped, painted and built, fertilized and weeded, and literally every time I went to town on an errand, I came home with MORE flowers! I knew that turning my house and yard into a beautiful wedding venue would limit my time in the patch, so I scaled back my normal operation by half, and only have three AG's this year. Truth be told, I enjoy growing three so much, I may never go back to my usual six!

Besides all of the obvious work that it took to host a wedding and reception, the GPC Committee and I have been working behind the scenes to get ready for our upcoming weighoffs. One thing that I am especially proud of is the new GPC judges training and test. Our GPC mission statement reads,

"The Great Pumpkin Commonwealth's mission cultivates the hobby of growing giant pumpkins throughout the world by establishing standards and regulations that ensure the quality of fruit, fairness of competition, fellowship, and education for all participating growers and weigh-off sites."

This mission drove our decision to develop this training and certification. Our judges have a very important job, and oftentimes records and significant prize money are at stake at our events. The committee developed the training module and an open-book test to educate and certify weigh-off officials prior to the events. Per the rules, every site must have 3-5 judges, and AT LEAST ONE of those individuals must be certified. This is a great resource for ALL growers to gain a more in-depth understanding of the GPC rules before attending a weigh-off, and we welcome ANYONE to partake in the training and judges' test. Site coordinators should identify their potential judges, and those officials will need to complete the testing between now and one month before their site's scheduled event. Go to the GPC website to access the training and testing module. www.gpc1.org

I would like to thank all of the site coordinators who have already stepped up, showing their commitment to the growers by having a certified judge in place. Growers can rest assured that after a season of hard work, certified sites are committed to judging fairly and consistently.

In other GPC news, we welcome a new European Intern-Representative from Kasterlee, Belgium, Vincent Destombes. Vincent is already hard at work translating the rules handbook and judges training into Flemish, so that growers in Belgium and The Netherlands have access.

Access to GPC resources for growers from all over the world is something we have been working on this spring and summer. We asked Ken at Bigpumpkins.com if he would add a



GPC News from President Cindy



metric column to our results page, and he quickly delivered! Next, Patrik and Luca worked together to translate the rules handbook to German, as well as the judges training module.

Speaking of Europe, the GPC is committed to a 4-year rotation for hosting the International Growers Convention. We had two European clubs step up as potential hosts for the convention in 2028. At our last meeting, the committee compared the two options, and are leaning strongly towards one. After we get some hotel costs firmed up, we will be able to make an informed decision. Be sure to come to the IGC in Ohio in March for the big reveal and find out where we will be meeting in Europe!



As a teacher, I have a strong commitment to children and education. Following our membership survey, the committee has been in talks about how we can grow our youth. I personally started a Giant Pumpkin Club at school, and have volunteered to meet weekly throughout the summer with the kids to coach them with their giant squash. They're having a really positive experience, working as a team, and learning so much about how to care for their plant. One thing the GPC will

be instituting this year is that all youth members will have free registration to the IGC. We hope to welcome more kids to our convention in Ohio and are brainstorming ways to make their experience educational and memorable. They are our future!



Finally, I want to give you a sneak-peek of this year's site awards. The GPC Committee wanted to honor the Ohio flag, since that is where our upcoming IGC is, and the colors also commemorate the 250th anniversary of the United States of America. One thing I want to note is that we spent a considerable amount of time getting ribbon bids so that we could ensure we were getting excellent quality at a competitive price. We kept our European and USA vendors, but had a very significant price discount by changing our Canadian supplier. We want to assure you we are good stewards of our resources!

I look forward to seeing you and your GPC ribbons and plaques along with your big pumpkins at the upcoming weighoffs!

-Cindy Tobeck, President



Dave Stelts & Pete Caspers Weigh in on the GPC Judges Training



The GPC Committee honors our past leadership, and we know that what we do builds upon the hard work that others have accomplished that preceded us. Here are two past GPC Presidents who share why they believe the new site Judges Training and Assessment module is a step in the right direction:



When I saw the GPC committee had come out with a Judges Certification course, I was very happy. We had talked about this being needed for years and to finally see it released was great. I got my certification on the first day. I would love to see as many growers take the course and get certified as possible. The more people with knowledge of the rules the better! Fairness across the world is the goal!

Pete Caspers GPC Central Rep, Treasurer, President (2019-2025)

It has always been the goal for the GPC to find ways to ensure the rules are being executed fairly and consistently throughout all sites world wide. Working through language barriers, interpretation, and geographical challenges to get guidance for this goal has proven daunting to achieve. I applaud the efforts of this committee to bridge this gap to better help the integrity of competition at all GPC sites. I would encourage all growers to get registered with this training module not just to be a judge but to better understand what is expected at every GPC sanctioned weigh-off site. This is a great first step and will look forward to seeing it evolve moving forward.

Dave Stelts, GPC President (2004-2014) Hall of Fame Inductee



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"If you want to be the best, you have to use the best."

-Ian & Stuart Paton

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5779 State Route 1389
Hawesville, KY 42348**

Contact Your GPC Representatives:



SUBMIT ARTICLES TO THE GPC COMMON GROUND!

Thank you for reading Edition 30 of The GPC Common Ground! It is my hope to publish a newsletter that reflects the interests of giant fruit and vegetable growers as well as provide educational content, grower features, event recaps, club spotlights, and regional highlights.

It is the intent of the GPC board to provide this newsletter to growers worldwide as a means to exchange information, grow community, and advance the weights of giant produce.

Got a story to share? We'd love to feature your tips, experiences, products used, successes or even lessons learned while growing giant fruits and vegetables! Whether it's a quick growing hack, or a full article, your contribution helps inspire growers worldwide. **GPC Common Ground will be by growers, for growers, so I need your input. The time to submit for the next edition is now. Accepting all document types, plain text or in a Doc format preferred, but I can usually get what I need from pdfs too.**

GPC Common Ground will be published four times per year and posted on the GPC website. Archived newsletters are also available at <http://www.gpc1.org/newsletter>

Please direct feedback, photos, inquiries and article submissions to:

Cecil Weston: centryboy764@gmail.com

This is the time of year when problems start appearing out of nowhere. Give it everything you have, and you will either succeed or learn something for the next time. This cartoon is something I ran across a long time ago and it has helped me through a lot of tenuous times through my life. I'm sure someone out there needs to see it and know, there is always a chance.



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