

# The St. Croix Grower's Association

www.stcroixgrowers.org



~~The Vine~~  
December  
2017

## Harvestfest Recap

The 13th annual Stillwater Harvestfest was another success for the record books. Forecasted rain held off until all the pumpkins had been weighed. Pete Vander Wielen from Sherwood, WI took home top prize with a 1991.5lb entry. The top ten average landed at 1669.5lbs, which, to our knowledge, is the 2nd highest TTA in the 2017 record books. Our group weighed 33,884lbs of giant pumpkin that day.



Year	TTA	Total weighed
2005	?	?
2006	873	13025
2007	834	9934
2008	1003	23127
2009	1181	20892
2010	1390	45937
2011	1346	32835
2012	1291	29164
2013	1499	34200
2014	1663	42764
<b>2015</b>	<b>1813</b>	48296
2016	1598	31397
2017	1669	33883
		<b>365454</b>

Year	Grower	pumpkin	milestone
2006	Bill Foss	1213 lbs	MN SR Pumpkin
2006	Jerold Johnson	1028 lbs	MN SR Squash
2007	Kevin Marsh	1445 lbs	SD SR Pumpkin
2008	Chad Revier	1428 lbs	MN SR Pumpkin
2010	Kevin Marsh	1548 lbs	SD SR Pumpkin
2010	Taran Marsh	223 lbs	SD SR Watermelon
2010	Chris Stevens	1810 lbs	WR record
2011	Chad Revier	1630 lbs	MN SR Pumpkin
2013	Joe Werner	1779 lbs	MN SR Pumpkin
2014	Scott Steil	1873 lbs	MN SR Pumpkin
2014	Scott Steil	197.5 lbs	MN SR Field Pumpkin
2015	Josiah Brandt	2185	WI SR pumpkin
2016	Chris Qualley	1918	MN SR pumpkin

We are approaching a half million pounds of weighed pumpkins in our history as a weigh-off site. Complete data for the 2005 event has eluded our record books, if you have any info on our inaugural event, please pass it along! This year was the first year since 2012 that the site did not have state or world record milestone. Hopefully that will change in the 2018 season. Congrats to all those who entered!

## 2017 Harvestfest results

Place	Weight	Grower	City	State	Female	Male	OTT	Est	% heavy
1	1,991.5	VanderWielen, Pete		Wisconsin	2145 McMullen	2004 VanderWielen	464	2,040.00	-2
2	1,904.5	Steil, Scott	Richmond	Minnesota	2230 Wallace	2145 McMullen	443	1,828.00	4
3	1,764.0	Stevens, Amber & Chris		Wisconsin	2145 McMullen	2109 Zywiec	437	1,768.00	0
4	1,736.0	Qualley, Chris	Otsego	Minnesota	1918.5 Qualley	2145 McMullen	439	1,788.00	-3
5	1,629.0	Carrier, Kent	Walhalla	North Dakota	1916 Barron	1824 Shenoha	406	1,468.00	11
6	1,612.5	Midthun, Pete		Wisconsin	2145 McMullen	self	417	1,573.00	3
7	1,576.5	Johnson, Jake		Minnesota	1706 Gehweiler	1781 Steil	420	1,602.00	-2
8	1,573.0	Carter, Tracy & Candra		Wisconsin	1338 Martin	2145 McMullen	414	1,544.00	2
9	1,481.5	Walsh/Parres, Kevin/Jeff	Ellendale	Minnesota	1949 Patton	2261 Wallace	408	1,487.00	0
10	1,427.0	Zywiec, Lorelee	New Richmond	Wisconsin	1938 Zywiec 2016	1781 Zywiec 2014	405	1,459.00	-2
11	1,412.0	Bernstrom, Charlie		Minnesota	1716 Schmidt	1944.5 Pugh	403	1,440.00	-2
12	1,277.5	Gienger, Travis		Minnesota			415	1,554.00	-18
13	1,245.0	Magnuson & Schramel, James & Lisa		Minnesota			402	1,431.00	-13
14	1,237.0	Caspers, Pete	Peosta	Iowa	2095.5 Willemijns	2145.5 McMullen	389	1,311.00	-6
15	1,230.5	Althoff, Ryan		South Dakota	1292 Marsh	open	365	1,101.00	12
16	1,200.5	Olson, Cole	Zimmerman	Minnesota			364	1,093.00	10
17	1,165.0	Patrick, Brian	St. Joseph	Minnesota			393	1,347.00	-14
18	913.0	Schutte, Adam	Zimmerman	Minnesota	1776 Werner	self	335	863	6
19	891.0	Johnson, Terry	aitkin	Minnesota	1152 Johnson		345	939	-5
20	862.5	Daudt, Loren	Zimmerman	Minnesota	1477 Schutte	1776 Werner	322	769	12
EXH	856.5	Johnson, Terry	aitkin	Minnesota			333	848	1
21	778.5	Dodor, Bob	New Richmond	Wisconsin			328	811	-4
22	673.5	Engel, Shannon	Menomonie	Wisconsin	1200 Est Engel	1374 Engel 2014	305	655	3
23	660.5	Dabrowski, Bart		Wisconsin			304	648	2
24	617.5	Haan, Mike	osceola	Wisconsin			325	790	-22
25	348.5	Brown, Chris	Nowthen	Minnesota	Unknown	Open	250	360	-3
26	301.5	Haslup, Mitch	Hudson	Wisconsin			241	323	-7
27	261.0	Stoltz, Steven	Mahtomedi	Minnesota	775 Bernard	1975 Wallace	228	273	-4
DMG	1,256.5	Johnson, Cassandra		Minnesota	1781 Steil	1706 Gehweiler	400	1,412.00	

## Grower Profiles

### Grower: Pete VanderWielen

I have been growing giant pumpkins for 4 years.

My personal best is 2004 pounds. Other notable accomplishments are that I grew a 7.00 pound tomato this year. I grew a state record long gourd 2 years in a row. The 143.75 inch gourd this year was longest in the world this year and 3rd longest ever.

I have been gardening for 22 years. I have grown vegetables, flowers, herbs, berries, corn, etc. My interest in pumpkins started when my son and I grew a volunteer pumpkin. Later we joined the WI club to get good seeds. Since then the pumpkins have taken over the garden, and the garden doubled in size.

I grow pumpkins to challenge myself and to teach my son some life lessons. My goal started out to have fun being in the garden but now I want to be competitive also.

My biggest mistake was trying to grow organically the first year. The Squash vine borers and powdery mildew loved it. I started using Merrit and Eagle 20, and purchased a Stihl SR 200 back-pack sprayer.

My advice for new growers is to cover the basics. Have your patch in a spot with good drainage. Prep the soil with aged manure and compost. Get some proven seeds. Have a spray program so the bugs don't take away all your hard work. Figure out your watering system and have it ready before you need it. Also, join a club. That is where you can gain knowledge, get good seeds, and make friends. Once you cover the basics you can move forward and fine tune for your patch. Every patch is different and will have different priorities to put your resources into.

Some seeds I will be growing next year are 2145 McMullen, my 1991 and 2004, and possibly 2363 Holland. For long gourds it will be my 143.75 and 1 more undecided. Tomato will be my 7.0 and 5.78 and more undecided.

Three products/tools/practices that most significantly contribute to my success in the patch: Soil prep, testing, and amending. I have always added compost and manure to my garden. Since I started growing giant pumpkins I also get a soil test in the spring and fall. I use Western labs and follow the recommendations they give. The last 2 years I have done a total of 3 tissue tests.

A good rear tine tiller that goes deep is a tool that I believe is needed. I have a troy built horse tiller. Also a gas powered back-pack sprayer is a great tool to apply pesticides and to foliar spray.

A practice I use in my patch is compost tea. I am constantly brewing a 50 gallon batch of compost tea from as soon as the nights are in the 60's, until my water supply in the nearby lake starts getting to much algae in July. I am then forced to use city the rest of the growing season. I use my own compost, molasses, and liquid fish.

Other hobbies include walleye fishing, and sturgeon spearing. I like to take on different projects. Right now I am doing a rebuild on a troy built horse tiller.



Patch Photo: June 24 2017.  
Pumpkin set and some vines terminated.



## Grower Profiles

**Grower:** Scott Steil, Richmond MN

I have been growing competitively for about 8 years.

My personal best Giant Pumpkin that I got to scale is the 1904 I grew this year. I had a bigger one last year that split at 1949. I currently have the state record squash at 1147 that was grown this year and the State Record Field Pumpkin 197.5 and Long Gourd 128.5 that were grown in 2014

I have always grown pumpkins but got serious after I saw how Chad Revier was growing much larger ones than me just down the road. With Chad's help I started to grow much bigger pumpkins and got a little more serious about things.

I grow pumpkins to keep in shape. It is a lot of work and keeps me very busy in the summer. Because of the cool climate where I grow a world record may never be possible but that is always the main goal.

Mistakes? Putting up a greenhouse and then thinking growing in it would be easier. While it has obvious benefits in a cold climate it is a lot more work and a huge challenge to control the environment inside.

Advice? Get to know a good grower and do what he/she says. This will increase the learning curve significantly. Chris Qualley is a perfect example. He asked if I would show him exactly how to grow and giant and he promised he would put in all the work and effort it takes, and he did. The results speak for themselves as he produced a state record his first year on my 1724 seed.

Clearly the 2145 is the best seed out there but was also widely grown. The upside is tremendous but I struck out twice this year with the 2145. I like my 1904 from this year (2230 Wallace x 2145 McMullen). I also like the 2230 Wallace and would grow it again. As for unproven seeds from this year, the crosses Todd Skinner and Andy Wolf made could be very good.

Practices that most significantly contribute to your success in the patch: consistent watering, heat control inside the greenhouse, consistent feeding.

There are so many things that effect the end results but the three above are the most important things I do to keep things going. While it is nothing new, it is the most important I believe.

Other than gardening, I really enjoy hunting and fishing. I was a professional fisherman for 13 years and got to travel the country and see some great places. I still grew pumpkins while being on the road 15 days per month, which was not ideal. I have since retired from professional fishing and

fish for fun now. I also love to hunt and really take pride in planting great food plots. I guess this is a way to combine my love of gardening and hunting. I am fortunate to have a family that likes to hunt so getting to see the rewards each fall is always fun. I have a hard time sitting still so I usually find something to keep me busy that involves hunting, fishing or gardening.



# **HOLLAND'S LAND O' GIANTS**



*Joel and twin daughters, Shannon and Shawn with our 2,363# pumpkin*  
**PRODUCTS WE USED TO GROW THE 2017-WORLD CHAMPION!**

## **PUMPKIN POWER 9-3-4, plus 3% Calcium** **“ALL ORGANIC GIANT PUMPKIN FERTILIZER”**

**PUMPKIN POWER** is actually great for all fruit and vegetables. It is granular for easy dust free application. **PUMPKIN POWER** is made from feathermeal, steamed bonemeal, Langbeinite, gypsum, and is optimized for maximum effectiveness with Amino Acid Bio-Activator. **PUMPKIN POWER** is listed by the Organic Materials Review Institute (OMRI) and the Washington State Department of Agriculture for use in the production of organic food. **PUMPKIN POWER** supports and improves microbial activity, encourages robust roots and feeds plants for up to 3 months. Apply 3-5 pounds and till into a 10' X 10' area at each planting site. Work in 1/4 -cup per 3-ft. section of vine when burying vines.

### ***“The finest foliar spray on the planet”***

Our **Seaweed Powder** mixes instantly in water and contains 17% Potassium. The **Seaweed Powder** also has a nice, gentle 1% of Nitrogen and Phosphorous. Perhaps the greatest benefit lies in the array of over **62 different trace minerals**, and the complex matrix of natural growth promoting hormones and plant stimulant factors. Our **Seaweed Powder** has all the goodness of genuine “*Ascophyllum Nodosum*” Seaweed without any harsh preservatives and stabilizers, that can be found in liquid seaweed products. It is also less expensive to use and has a much longer shelf life.

## **BIOGROW ENDO PLUS**

**The Premium Mycorrhizal Inoculant with 4-species of Endomycorrhizal Fungi.** **BioGrow Endo Plus** is made by Doctor Michael Ammaranthus, who was a University Professor for over 20-years, and is one of the World's leading authorities on Mycorrhizae. Not all Mycorrhizal Fungi have the same capabilities and tolerances. Some are better at imparting drought resistance, while others may be more effective in protecting against pathogens or have more tolerance to soil pH, or temperature extremes. Because of the wide variety of soil, climatic and biotic conditions characterizing man-made environments, it is improbable that a single mycorrhizal fungi species could provide the ultimate benefit to a plant.

## **NUTRI-AID BLOSSOM BOOSTER AND FRUIT FINISHER 0-52-34**

**NUTRI-AID BLOSSOM BOOSTER AND FRUIT FINISHER** is a great water soluble fertilizer that dissolves readily and can be foliar or root fed. Best if started 3 weeks before blossoming and continued throughout the season. **NUTRI-Aid 0-52-34** contains 52% Phosphorous to stimulate vigorous blooms and to aid in root growth, seed formation, and the development of viable seeds. **Nutri-Aid 0-52-34** also has 34% Potassium to help build complex carbohydrates (in other words-pumpkin meat!) Potassium is also critical in maintaining a healthy plant and contributes to high quality fruit and vegetable production. **Nutri-Aid 0-52-34** puts all its energy into roots, blossoms, seeds, and pumpkin meat, not vines!

## **BIOMIN CALCIUM SOLUBLE POWDER**

### **5-0-0 PLUS 15% Calcium and Amino Acids**

We have been working with the Bio-Tech industry to bring this wonderful product to market for several years. **BIOMIN CALCIUM SOLUBLE POWDER** has all the advantages of quickly available Calcium as the **BIOMIN CALCIUM LIQUID CONCENTRATE** has, but at a much lower cost! A little over 3-pounds of powder is equal to 1-gallon of the **LIQUID BIOMIN CALCIUM CONCENTRATE**. This is an ideal foliar spray that provides quickly available Calcium for stronger cell walls. It will help pumpkins resist cracking and splitting, while encouraging fruits to weigh heavy for their size. It can be used for direct application to the skin of pumpkins.

## **SOLUBLE FISH POWDER 12-1-1**

**Soluble Fish Powder** is superior to liquid fish emulsions. It is produced in a low temperature process which enzymatically digests fish protein preserving vital factors. Liquid fish is made in a high temperature process that can break down the amino acids, Vitamins and enzymes. Liquid fish emulsions also require powerful stabilizers and preservatives to avoid spoilage. **Soluble Fish Powder** is completely dry and requires no additives. It is also most economical as you pay for product only and not water! **Soluble Fish Powder** is less expensive to ship, easier to handle, and more stable in storage. The **Soluble Fish Powder** takes a little more work to thoroughly mix, compared with the seaweed. This is a perfect partner to our **Soluble Seaweed Powder**. The **Soluble Fish Powder** provides more nitrogen and macronutrients and the **Soluble Seaweed Powder** provides the essential trace minerals, growth promoting hormones, and has up to 17% potassium. The two products can be mixed with each other for a combo-spray, or applied separately.

**Holland's Land O'Giants**  
**(253) 840-3575**  
**www.hollandsgiants.com**





# ANOKA BRINGS IN THE GIANTS



The Halloween capital of the world added a giant pumpkin weigh off to their long list of events this year. At this first annual event we couldn't have asked for a nicer day. The weather was absolutely beautiful. Along with the giant pumpkins there was a pumpkin carving and scarecrow contest. As well as vendors, chainsaw carving artist Adam Gale, Braven music school student bands and the Engels carving one of the atlantic giants. This is a GPC premium site so all fruit can be weighed and registered.

The big winner of the day taking home the \$1000 grand prize and the peoples choice award was Todd Norholm with his 1177 pound pumpkin. Travis Gienger in second at 1036 pounds and first year grower Chris brown rounding out third at 763 pounds. The prestigious Howard Dill award went to Mike Haan and his gorgeous 555 pound pumpkin which was a 1109Borgers16 self. These seeds are still available through the SCGA if you want a good shot at a HD award next year. Sydney Brown (age 10) was also able to take home a 8<sup>th</sup> place ribbon and a 1<sup>st</sup> place youth ribbon. It was encouraging to see a youth entry. hopefully we will see more at all the weigh offs in the following years.

I would like to thank everybody that brought something to weight and helped out both upfront and behind the curtain. The seed is planted it can only grow from here.



PROUDLY SPONSORED BY



Place	Weight (lbs)	Grower Name	City	State/Prov	Country	Seed (Mother)	Pollinator (Father)	OTT	Est. Weight	Pct. Chart
1	1,177.00	norholm, todd	anoka	Minnesota	United States	1864zywiec	self	387.5	1,298.00	-9.0
2	1,036.00	gienger, travis	anoka	Minnesota	United States	?zywiec	open	349.5	974.00	6.0
3	763.00	Brown, Chris	Nowthen	Minnesota	United States	Unknown	Open	308.0	674.00	13.0
4	716.00	anderson, bev	center city	Minnesota	United States	1868sherwood	self	309.0	681.00	5.0
5	715.00	schramel, lisa	albany	Minnesota	United States	1477	open	319.0	748.00	-4.0
6	687.00	haan, mark		Wisconsin	United States	?bogie	self	315.0	720.00	-5.0
7	555.00	haan, mike	osceola	Wisconsin	United States	1109borgers16	self	310.5	690.00	-20.0
8	212.00	brown, sydney	nowthen	Minnesota	United States	unknown	open	200.0	186.00	14.0

8 Entries.



## 2017 UMGPW Weigh-off Summary

The Upper Midwest Giant Pumpkin Growers held their weigh-off at Gale Woods Farm in Minnetrista, MN on October 7th. Gale Woods is an educational farm park operated by Three Rivers Park District with a mission of providing opportunities for people of all ages to understand where their food comes from and to experience a farm setting firsthand. The pumpkin weigh-off fits well into the farm's annual "Celebrate the Harvest" event which also includes the "Star of the North working dog championships, a pumpkin carving contest, farm tours, garden harvest cooking classes, and opportunities to lead haltered llamas.

This was the second year that the UMGPW weigh-off was held at Gale Woods. Although the day started out cloudy and

threatening rain, the sun was shining by mid-afternoon and by day's end approximately 1,500 people had attended. Fifteen pumpkins were weighed with the heaviest entry grown by Joe Jensen who had a personal best 1,594 lbs. Scott Steil also had an impressive green squash entry of 1,147 lbs.

Place	Weight (lbs)	Grower Name	City	State/Prov	Country	Seed (Mother)	Pollinator (Father)	OTT	Est. Weight	Pct. Chart
1	1,594.00	Jensen, Joe	CHASKA	Minnesota	United States	1260 Jensen	Self	416.0	1,563.00	2.0
2	1,584.00	Steil, Scott	Richmond	Minnesota	United States	2145 McMullen	Sib	416.0	1,563.00	1.0
3	1,447.00	Qualley, Chris	Otsego	Minnesota	United States	2145 McMullen	1918.5 Quasley	408.0	1,487.00	-3.0
4	1,137.00	Schramel, Lisa	albany	Minnesota	United States	Unknown	Unknown	369.0	1,135.00	0.0
5	1,030.00	Kilanowski, Sharon	Northfield	Minnesota	United States	1653 Foss	Self	353.0	1,002.00	3.0
6	1,001.00	Foss, Bill	buffalo	Minnesota	United States	1918 Qualley	2004 Vander Wielen	354.0	1,011.00	-1.0
7	886.00	Haan, Mike	osceola	Wisconsin	United States			351.0	986.00	-10.0
8	794.00	Haan, Mark		Wisconsin	United States	Bogie	Self	331.0	833.00	-5.0
9	684.00	Wallace, Doug	Osakis	Minnesota	United States	1474 Clementz	open	306.0	661.00	3.0
10	505.00	Hausladen, Tony	Lester Prairie	Minnesota	United States	Haist 1969	Rose 2058	281.0	512.00	-1.0
11	471.00	Erickson, Paul	Circle Pines	Minnesota	United States	1350 McDowell	Open	273.0	470.00	0.0
12	464.00	Hausladen, Tony	Lester Prairie	Minnesota	United States	Rose 2058	Haist 1969	275.0	480.00	-3.0
13	458.00	Magnuson, Jim	New London	Minnesota	United States	Unknown	Unknown	280.0	507.00	-10.0
14	349.00	Brown, Chris	Nowthen	Minnesota	United States	Unknown	Open	238.0	311.00	12.0
15	336.00	Scobee, Eric	Minnetrista	Minnesota	United States			256.0	387.00	-13.0

**15 Entries.**

A highlight of the Gale Woods weigh-off was the first ever Minnesota Tomato Challenge which awarded \$500 to the heaviest tomato. Bob Borgers took first prize with a 5.24 lb tomato, just edging out Chris Qualley's 5.22 lb entry. Although it takes a

bit of strategy and timing to grow your biggest tomato in October, we are hoping that the MN Tomato Challenge will continue to grow into a significant feature of the UMGPW weigh-off.

Place	Weight (lbs)	Grower Name	City	State/Prov	Country	Seed (Mother)	Pollinator (Father)	OTT	Est. Weight	Pct. Chart
1	5.24	Borgers, Robert	Spring Lake Park	Minnesota	United States	Megamutt D	Open	0.0	0.00	0.0
2	5.22	Qualley, Chris	Otsego	Minnesota	United States	5.22 Qualley Big Zac	Open	0.0	0.00	0.0
EXH	5.12	Qualley, Chris	Otsego	Minnesota	United States	5.22 Qualley	Open	0.0	0.00	0.0
3	4.50	Hill, Larry	International Falls	Minnesota	United States	4.57 MaCoy	Open	0.0	0.00	0.0
EXH	4.30	Hill, Larry	International Falls	Minnesota	United States	6.88 MaCoy	Open	0.0	0.00	0.0
EXH	3.14	Qualley, Chris	Otsego	Minnesota	United States	2.45 May	Open	0.0	0.00	0.0
4	2.37	Brown, Chris	Nowthen	Minnesota	United States	4.89 Martin	Open	0.0	0.00	0.0
DMG	5.19	Hill, Larry	International Falls	Minnesota	United States	4.57 MaCoy	Open	0.0	0.00	0.0

**8 Entries. (3 were exhibition only.)**



## SCGA Board of Directors

### President/Treasurer

*Joe Ailts*

### Vice-President

*Chris Stevens*

### Secretary

*Lorelee Zywiec*

### Treasurer

*Alex Bogie*

### Directors at Large

*Tony Bolander*

*Mark LeClair*

*Brie Quanrud*

### Contact the SCGA:

[stcroixgrowers@gmail.com](mailto:stcroixgrowers@gmail.com)

[www.stcroixgrowers.org](http://www.stcroixgrowers.org)

715-220-7411

Help us Grow!



The SCGA is looking to expand our reach. Do you know someone who would like to be a part of our organization? Refer a new member and save \$5 on your membership dues.

## Upcoming Events

### SCGA Seed Auction

Friday, December 29th @ 7pm CST

Bigpumpkins.com chatroom

### Anoka Seed Auction

January 6th, 2018 @ 7pm CST

### SCGA Spring Meeting

March 31, 2018

10am - 2pm

Anoka Legion

400 Main St W

Anoka, MN 55303

### GPC Big Show 2017

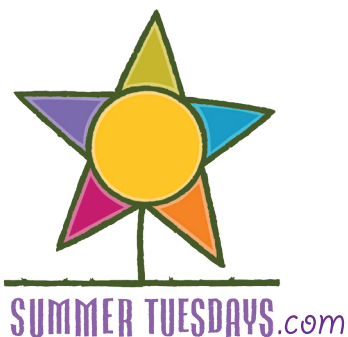
February 23-25

Portland, Oregon

### GPC Big Show 2018

Feb/March

Lambeau Field, Green Bay WI!!!



[www.stcroixgrowers.org](http://www.stcroixgrowers.org)

