## The St. Croix Grower's Association



## ~~The Vine~~ September 2009

## **Fall Update**

Hello Everyone! How quickly our growing seasons fly by. Many exciting developments have taken place within the SCGA over the last few months that serve to benefit your participation in this club. I'm happy to report the group formally elected a board of directors to facilitate the decision making process. This has streamlined our ability to effectively manage club responsibilities. You'll find a listing of board member names and titles on the back page. If you have an idea, concern, or question for consideration, email the address on the back and we'll get back to you.

Inside you'll find all the specifics regarding local weighoffs this fall. No matter what your pumpkin size, we invite you to participate in our local events. These serve as great networking opportunities to learn from the best, not to mention all the extracurricular activites built in to ensure a great time for the whole family. — Joe Ailts, SCGA President

# SPOTLIGHT: SCGA Sponsor Rupp Seeds

I wanted to write a few words about an SCGA sponsor that has been with us since the beginning. Back in 2005, a local greenhouse turned me onto their commercial seed supplier, Rupp Seeds. They are a small company with great customer service and a superior product. They have loyally contributed to our weighoff since 2005. As a vegetable farmer and field pumpkin grower, i have used their seed stock exclusively with consistent, productive results. They provide the "Phat Jack" variety of field pumpkin, arguably the largest and most impressive field pumpkin on the market. Their sweet corn varieties have been called "the best i've ever had". And their seed catalog is as extensive as any I've seen. If you are looking for a quality source for garden seed, please patronize this dedicated sponsor. You'll find their ad located inside this newsletter. - loe

## My, how things have changed

As of this writing, we've got about a month before the giants hit the scales. What amazes me is that fruit in gardens across the midwest are taping at estimated weights that would win weighoffs if they were harvested today. I 200, I 300, I 400 lbs before the Ist of September. Unreal! Either these growers fill sandbags for a living or something has really enhanced our ability to take a pumpkin from zero to 3/4 ton in a very short timeframe. Of course, many of these rapidly growing hogs will never make it to the scale. But inevitably, many do. Turn back the clock I3 years and you could count the number of I000lb pumpkins on one finger (1061 Zehr 1996). Step back another 4 years



and the world record 827 Holland (1992) is less than half the weight of our reigning champion 1689 Jutras. What has taken place in the realm of giant pumpkins seemingly

defies the principles of evolution. Perhaps the exponential growth in top weights isn't a function of genetic change at all. Certainly the number of growers making an attempt at the "big one" has increased significantly, increasing the likelihood of bigger weights. Growing techniques have



also improved over the years, allowing us to maximize genetic potential by catering to the plants' every need, and minimzing environmental effects that could hinder growth. The answer to why world records have increased so drastically over the last 30 years may never be elicited, the matter is simply too complex. However, we can all take pride in knowing we are part of the golden age of giant pumpkins. A time where anything can happen and the bar continues to rise. Here's to 1700+, and our collective quest to reach a ton.



## **Great Minnesota Giant Pumpkin Weighoff**

## **Hosted by**

## The Red Wing Visitors and Convention Bureau Saturday, September 26th Baypoint Park, Red Wing, MN

## **Schedule of Events**

10:00-11:00 AM: Registration

11:00-1:00 PM: Pumpkin Weighing

1:00-2:00 PM: Giants on Display

2:00-2:30 PM: Awards Ceremony

2:30-4:00 PM: Giants on Display

## This is a GPC-Sanctioned event

Prize Structure			
1st Place	\$1000	11th Place	\$45
2nd Place	\$750	12th Place	\$40
3rd Place	\$500	13th Place	\$35
4th Place	\$250	14th Place	\$30
5th Place	\$150	15th Place	\$25
6th Place	\$90	16th Place	\$25
7th Place	\$80	17th Place	\$25
8th Place	\$70	18th Place	\$25
9th Place	\$60	19th Place	\$25
10th Place	\$50	20th Place	\$25
\$50 Howard Dill Award to Prettiest Pumpkin			

## Join us at the Giant Pumpkin Weighoff



Come to Enjoy:

-Farmer's Market

-Food Vendors

-Creative Pumpkin Carver

**Bill Habedank** 

#### LODGING SPECIAL!

The Country Inn & Suites will offer a \$70 room rate for both Friday and Saturday weigh off participants.

Nichols Inn is offering a \$82.90 rate per night. Please ask for the Great MN Pumpkin Weigh Off Block.

www.redwing.org for more information



Nekoosa Giant Pumpkin Festival 9:00am-4:00pm Saturday, 10/3/09 River Side Park Nekoosa, WI 54447 715-323-4533 www.nekoosagiantpumpkinfest.com



715-268-7295 800-334-5238 Call us for all your printing needs!

## **Grow your own!**

Hello fellow growers. I hope this edition of the SCGA newsletter finds everyone dodging frost and getting excited for weigh-off season!

I'd like to revisit a topic that has been discussed in the past. Growing your own seeds. There are growers out there having great success growing their own seed lines and others that prefer proven seeds. One successful grower that grows many of his own seeds would be Dan Bowles. Dan seems to like growing unproven seeds or his own and grow them very well. On the other hand the best grower in the world Quinn Werner tends to only grow proven seeds. Most of us aren't lucky enough to be able to choose from any seed we want so many of us including myself look to grow their own.

I started this season off with 3 very high-end and proven seeds. I had 2 more that were seeds from pumpkins with very proven parents on both sides. I

The 1160 Stevens (672 Stevens x 998 Pukos) ~850lbs mid-august

then had 3 of my own. As it sits today my 3 seeds are my best pumpkins. The 3 high end proven seeds are either in the compost pile or my smallest in my patch.

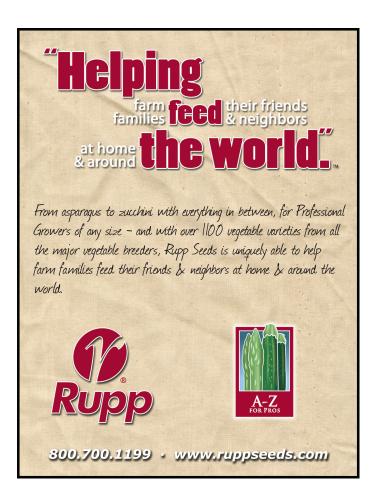
The first response I'd probably get here is I've put extra time into my own seeds as it's just human nature to take better care of our own. I've been very meticulous this year and made my best effort to never cut a corner with any plant. I've treated everything in the patch equally. Of course different areas of the patch

could have different soil qualities, have dealt with disease differently and had different pest issues, but this is all something very difficult to prove. I tend to believe the seeds are more comfortable at home back in their native soil. Once again this is pretty difficult to prove scientifically, but if a grower has confidence in a seed it only helps him or her work harder to achieve that full potential.

So next time you are out drooling over the 1068, 998, 1385 or others take a moment to sit back and think about growing your own. Maybe a newer grower or someone with not much of their own would hit up a more local grower instead of seeking out these super high end proven seeds. I'm not suggesting to completely give up on proven seed stock, but maybe instead leave a couple plant areas for your own.

Best of luck to everyone and we'll see you at the weigh-offs.

-Chris Stevens, New Richmond, WI



## HOLLAND'S LAND O' GIANTS

## www.hollandsgiants.com



During 20 years of growing giant pumpkins, we have identified the finest growing supplies available. Our growing supplies have played a role in the growth of many championship pumpkins, and helped numerous growers to achieve a new personal best.

#### **BIOGROW ENDO PLUS**

Now with 4 species of Endomycorrhizal Fungi, plus 2 species of Trichoderma & BioStimulant

The heaviest pumpkin in the World in 2008 was grown
using BioGrow Endo Plus (1,536.5 by Jake VanKooten)

#### **SOLUBLE SEAWEED POWDER 1-1-17**

A complex matrix of natural plant growth stimulants. Also contains 17% potassium, and 62 different trace minerals. Excellent for foliar feeding.

## **SOLUBLE AMINO ACID BIO-ACTIVATOR 15-0-0**

A new cutting edge technology for agriculture. The 17 Amino Acids are powerful chelating and synergy producing compounds.

### **DVD'S/VIDEOS**

Our 2008 (How To Grow Giant Pumpkins) production may be the most comprehensive guide to growing monster pumpkins ever produced. See actual microscopic pictures of Mycorrhizal Colonization and meet Dr. Michael Amaranthus, one of the World's leading authorities on Mycorrhizae

Also available on our website are Soluble Humic Acid, Soluble Fish Powder, Biomin Calcium, Blossom Booster and Fruit Finisher, Whizzer Sprinklers, organic controls, and much more!

We accept phone orders using your Visa, Mastercard and Discover cards.

Holland's Land O' Giants P.O. Box 969 Sumner WA 98390 (253) 840-3575 www.hollandsgiants.com



October 10 2009

10am - 5pm

Lowell Park

Downtown Stillwater

**Pumpkin Prize** 

Structure

\$1200

\$800

\$500

\$250

\$200

\$150

\$140

\$125

\$110

\$100

\$75

\$70

\$65

\$60

\$55

\$50

\$45

\$40

\$35

\$30

1st Place

2nd Place

3rd Place

4th Place

5th Place

6th Place

7th Place

8th Place

9th Place

10th Place

11th Place

12th Place

13th Place

14th Place

15th Place

16th Place

17th Place

18th Place

19th Place

Happenings All Day Mini-Pumpkin Decorating Face Painting Free Cookies

Micro-brew Tasting & Chili Tasting \$25.00 or \$20.00 in advance Chili Tasting - \$8.00 Everything else FREE!

THANK YOU to our sponsors!

## **Activities**

Pumpkin Cooking Contest 10am Pumpkin Decorating Contest 10am - 3pm Historic Cave Tours 10am - 5pm Pedal Tractor Pull 11am Giant Pumpkin Weigh-off 11am - 3pm Chili Cook-Off Tasting noon Micro Brew Tasting noon Live Music noon - 3pm Pumpkin Carvers 1pm Awards Ceremony 4pm Haunted Cave Tours 7-10:30pm

at the Joseph Wolf Brewery Caves - 402 Main Street South

\$75 Howard Dill Award to Prettiest Pumpkin

Bonus Mystery Cash Prizes! \$75 awarded to pumpkins closest to

20th Place **Squash Prize** 

400, 600, & 800lbs.

Proceeds benefit Valley Outreach Food Shelf & Stillwater DMA visit www.DiscoverStillwater.com for event details/more info

This is a GPC-Sanctioned event

For more information, please contact John Branch jbranch@pressenter.com 612-220-0035

#### Structure 1st Place \$200 2nd Place \$100



**Biggest and Prettiest Pumpkin Contest** I I:00am-4:00pm Sunday, 09/27/09 **Apple Jack Orchards** 4875 37th St. SE **Delano, MN 55328** 763-972-6673 www.applejackorchards.com

Valuable Door Prizes! To be awarded in Red Wing and Stillwater:

- -Neptune's Harvest
- -Companion Biological Fungicide
- -Other Growing Supplies



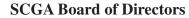


Actinovate® AG is a biological fungicide labeled for use against foliar and soil borne diseases. Use as a drench down, transplant dip, seed soaking or direct seed spraying.

#### Will Not Clog Machinery

Actinovate AG is 100% soluble powder that is compatible with chemical pesticides and fertilizers and may be tank mixed or rotated with most products. Because Actinovate AG has several modes of action, diseases cannot build a resistance to it and thus, is a perfect rotational or tank mix partner in any diseases management program. Try Actinovate AG in your pumpkin crops today.

To order, contact your local supplier today or call 888.261.4731 www.naturalindustries.com



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John Branch

Weighoff Director: Red Wing

Rick Stohr

**Directors at Large** 

Tom Englund

Dean Christopherson

Chad Revier

#### **Contact the SCGA:**

stcroixgrowers@frontiernet.net 715-220-7411

## 2010 Membership

Club seeds are distributed on a first come, first served basis. Renew your SCGA Membership Today to ensure your priority in the distribution!

Weighoff Information Included!!

