



THE PRIMARY VINE FALL/WINTER 2020



Season's Greetings

(Or, in gardener speak)

Off Season Greetings

Fellow members,

There are a lot of things that are hard to believe currently happening in our world and the continued uncertainty of how the pandemic will play out is unsettling at best. We all are seeking to find positive distractions and yearn for how life was just a short year ago.

Please be assured that what hasn't changed is your gardening club, our great members, and our abilities to survive financially through these tough times. Although our club sees a new President on a two-year cycle, each one has been fiscally responsible and works hard to carry a balance high enough to fund our activities for 2-3 years. With your current support we will continue to carry on and hopefully by summer of 2021 we will be able to have a more normal patch tour and weigh off.

Even though this is officially our off-season, there are still a few ways you can participate to make our club vibrant and successful. From our annual silent auction on BigPumpkins.com, to our seed swap, your participation in events is what makes the club tick and can be a great distraction to help move the dark days of winter along.

In closing I want to wish you all a safe and happy holiday season and to do our best to support our friends and families, including our pumpkin family.

John Young

*2020 VGPGA Weigh-off
First place and new site record!*



*2304 lbs Steve Geddes and Laurel Buccino from Boscawen, NH
Fourth largest pumpkin in the world grown in 2020*

2020 VGPGA Weigh-off

Second place

Third place



Kevin Companion from Huntington, VT



John, Kerry & Andrew Young from Jericho, VT

Howard Dill Award winner

New Vermont State Record Bushel Gourd

Results:

Place	Weight (lbs)	Grower Name	City	State/Prov
1	2,304.00	Geddes, Steven	Boscawen	New Hampshire
2	1,562.00	Companion, Kevin	Huntington	Vermont
3	1,552.00	Young, John and Kerry	Jericho	Vermont
4	1,540.00	Tucker, Chad	Brushton	New York
5	1,188.00	Seelow, Wayne	Edinburg	New York
6	1,148.00	Keim, Terry	Williston	Vermont
7	1,117.00	Seelow, Courtney	Edinburg	New York
8	1,055.00	Horton, Wilbur	Springfield	Vermont
9	982.00	Baird, Jenna	North Chittenden	Vermont
10	973.00	Palmer, Randouth	Norwich	New York
11	964.00	Duffy, Dale	Fairfax	Vermont
12	962.00	Keys, Laural	Salem	New York
13	946.00	Cole, Mike	Castleton	Vermont
14	925.00	Morgan, Jim	Barre	Vermont
15	895.00	wood, tina	west chazy	New York
16	875.00	Harnden, Nicholas	Cadyville	New York
17	765.00	Gates, Lisa	Benson	Vermont
18	674.00	Bleeker, Jay	Plattsburgh	New York
19	559.00	Allen, Jacob	Barre	Vermont
20	540.00	Luce, Inge and Jeff	East Calais	Vermont
21	336.00	Haseck, Michael	South Burlington	Vermont
22	212.00	Nelson, Ethan	Brandon	Vermont

22 Entries.



Mike Cole from Castleton, VT

(The featured member this issue is Ron Scholtz. He has been a member on and off over many years, in fact he was one our founding members. He has grown a variety of giant vegetables, growing a new State Record Marrow last year!)

Where do you live and how many years have you lived there?

I reside in Williamstown, Vermont and have lived here for 25 years.

What do you do for regular work (if retired what did you do for work, how long)?

I work at Agway in Montpelier, Vermont.

What is your family status, married, kids, pets, etc? Do you have any other hobbies?

I am married and we have two adult children. We have two dogs and one cat. I try to go fishing whenever possible.

How many years have you been growing giants?

I have been growing giants for 20 years

How did you get interested in growing giants?

I went to the Topsfield weigh-off in 1998 and joined the New England Pumpkin Growers Association (NEPGA) in May of 1999. I wanted to see if I could grow a really big pumpkin and I felt by joining this association that they would give me a better chance than if I did it on my own. I enjoyed being a part the NEPGA so much that Dick Rodgers and myself went to the State of Vermont and received a grant to create the Vermont Giant Vegetable Growers Association in 2001.

What do you like most about growing giants?

The aspect I like the most about growing giant vegetables is achieving a goal you set for yourself during the winter months. I have always wanted to grow a 1,000 lb vegetable. In 2018 I was able to achieve this goal with the mentoring of Danny Boyce with a 1,138 lb pumpkin. I have turned my attention now towards growing giant marrows and giant field pumpkins. I believe I do better at growing giant marrows than pumpkins.

What is your biggest challenge or obstacle in growing?

For myself, the biggest obstacle I face is daylight hours. For me, my patch does not get direct sunlight until 8:30AM and it starts to lose sunlight by 5:00PM. I think the lack of sunlight impedes on my potential.

Do you have any help in the patch?

In the early years when the children were younger, I would say yes, but not so much anymore.

What is one thing you've done that you think has improved your weights?

Some things that have helped increase the number on the scale are getting an annual soil sample, talking to other growers and the use of soaker hoses.

Any words of advice for new growers?

I would say for them to get involved with a group like ours. It is important to network with other growers and learn what goes into growing giant vegetables. I don't believe you can do this solo sport alone.



Ron with his Vermont State Record 115 lbs giant marrow Personal best giant pumpkin 1138 lbs from 2018.



Annual Online Seed Auction - note the dates!

Our annual online silent seed auction will again be hosted on the Bigpumpkins.com website from **January 9th to January 17th** at 4pm. We would like to thank this year's auction seed gatherers Norm Gansert and Paul Gouin as well retiring member Steve Minor who has donated many great seeds and two travel straps! It is still early, but we have close to 80 lots to offer so far. If you have seeds that you would like to donate, please reply to the club email and I will give you the details. In past years, our members have shown great support by bidding on the auction lots and we are hoping this is a continuing trend. Please remember that the club has only volunteer positions and the funds raised goes directly to VGPG events and the weigh off.

Membership 2021 : If you haven't already done so please renew your membership. Dues are only \$20 per year. Your dues cover annual seed swap, Winter Meeting, Summer BBQ and Patch Tour and Weigh-off in September, as well as bi-annual Newsletter. What a deal. You can register by mailing form and check to Ann Squires or you can pay on-line via PayPal from our website.

<http://vermontgiants.tripod.com/id26.html> You will need to have signed up as a member by March 1st, 2021 in order to receive seeds from our club distribution as well as to qualify for a VGPG 1000 plus pound fleece jacket in 2021. You can still sign up as a member throughout the year as well as at our weigh off but won't be eligible for the current year seed distribution or 1000-pound fleece jacket award.

Our seed distribution will again be organized by Dan and Holly Boyce who have graciously done this for many years. Our Vermont club is one of the few in the world that collects seeds from the membership and distributes them to members. In past years, packets have contained 15-20 great genetic seeds thanks to our growers. We welcome contributions. **If interested, send 50 individually packaged seeds by early January to:**

Dan and Holly Boyce
152 Rte. 144
Benson, VT 05743

In these crazy times, we will have a virtual winter meeting, to be held via Google Hangout on Saturday February 6th. Details to follow via email. If you are not "tech" savy and need some help please send an email to Terry Keim at keimt@comcast.net.

Also we are in search of a new President and Secretary for the next two years, if you are interested in either position please let us know through an email. There are plenty of mentors that are willing to help a new President/Secretary out and if you have any questions regarding time commitments or other details please feel free to email John Young directly at jkpyoung@hotmail.com and he will share his experience.

New Vermont State Record Tomato

6.44 lbs.

John and Kerry Young

Jericho, VT

September 6, 2020



Wishing you blue skies in 2021

