



## Fact Sheet

### THE GIANT VEGETABLE COMPETITION

A competition with several 1,000 lbs pumpkins being hoisted by cranes into the judging area is something not to be missed. Back by popular demand, The Royal Agriculture Show is getting ready to host the **Giant Vegetable Competition**, with farmers going that extra mile to pamper, prepare and produce their record-breaking veggies. The competition includes vegetables such as carrots, zucchinis, onions, sunflowers, pumpkins and more!



#### Recent records broken at The Royal:

**In 2005** The Royal featured the world's longest gourd, measured at over nine feet

**In 2006** The Turks Turban broke the record for the world's largest squash, weighing in at just over 86 lbs

**In 2008** The rutabaga sealed the deal and broke the world record weighing a whopping 77.8 lbs.

Last year saw the introduction of the **My Giant Vegetable Challenge** sponsored by the Ontario Toyota Dealers. Over 1,400 packets of seeds were given out to a new generation of giant vegetable growers.

#### Tips For Growing A Giant Pumpkin

- The right seed – Specific seeds are used to grow any giant vegetable, so make sure you have the correct kind. The right genetics will make all the difference in growing your giant pumpkin.
- Prepare your garden – If you plan on breaking any records, you are going to need to give your pumpkin lots of room to grow. Remove all pumpkin vines and add nutrients to the soil including compost and cow manure. Testing a soil sample before planting will also help you figure out what you're lacking for nutrients.
- Fertilize – It is important to give your pumpkin the right ingredients to keep it healthy and ensure growth. Adding fertilizers such as sulphur and ironite when watering the pumpkin can be just the trick.
- Loads of H<sub>2</sub>O – When growing any vegetable it is important to remember to water it, and with a giant vegetable, this is even more important. During the growth period, a giant pumpkin can gulp almost 45 gallons per day.
- Keep the bugs away – A giant pumpkin can act as a buffet for pesky bugs, so use of a fungicide is necessary to keep your pumpkin safe.
- Always have a back-up plan – You can never be sure that one seed will be the winner, if frost, bugs or just bad luck cause problems, it is best to have one to three back up plants to go for the record.

Learn more tips and talk with giant vegetable growers at The Royal this November!

-30-

For more information visit [www.royalfair.org](http://www.royalfair.org) – November 6-15, 2009

Materials and images can be downloaded for media use

#### Media Contacts:

**Tiffany Fisher**

Mansfield Communications

(416) 599-0024 x 222

[tiffany@mcipr.com](mailto:tiffany@mcipr.com)

**Kate Walsh**

Mansfield Communications

(416) 599-0024 x 229

[kate@mcipr.com](mailto:kate@mcipr.com)