



GPC

Weigh off Handbook

This is a guide to help with your weigh off, we have tried to cover all the “frequently asked questions” and to supply some helpful instruction on running your contest.

Some sites have a pre-registration for their weigh offs; this is an option any site can use in determining the amount of entrants there will be.

Any site may take our example entry form and modify however they wish. It is based on the data entry program, which will make it easier for those working the computer, and can be found on page 2 of this handbook. The link for the software is sent out to the designated representative from the site before the contest.

This example entry form can also be found at:

<http://greatpumpkincommonwealth.com/PDF/ENTRYFORM.doc>

It is a huge benefit to have all the correct information about the grower/growers and their fruit. The cross should be noted, female and male. Were the pollinations controlled?

Here is a link that has Dave Stelts and Ken Desrosiers talking about the BP spread sheet:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=an7ZTDe2SC0>

Here's some samples of how other sites handle the registration process:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WmrO6ZC1tKE>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GPOZlxylnUQ>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9ww_0qqtNnk

GENERAL WEIGH-OFF ENTRY FORM

Grower Information					
** First Name:	<input type="text"/>				
** Last Name:	<input type="text"/>				
Address:	<input type="text"/>				
	<input type="text"/>				
** City:	<input type="text"/>				
Country:	<input type="text"/>				
State/Province:	<input type="text"/>				
** Postal Code:	<input type="text"/>				
** Required					
Entry Information					
** Class:	<input type="text"/> Pumpkin <input type="text"/> Squash <input type="text"/> Long Gourd <input type="text"/> Tomato				
(choose one)	<input type="text"/> Watermelon <input type="text"/> Field Pkn.				
Weight:	<input type="text"/>				
Exhibition Only?	<input type="checkbox"/>				
DMG?	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Seed (Mother):	<input type="text"/>				
Pollinator (Father):	<input type="text"/>				
Date Seed Started:	<input type="text"/>				
Date Set Outside:	<input type="text"/>				
Date Pollinated:	<input type="text"/>				
Date Removed:	<input type="text"/>				
Number Lobes:	<input type="text"/>				
Plant Size:	<input type="text"/> Square Feet				
Vine Type:	<input type="text"/> Main.....Secondary...				
(choose one)					
Feet on Vine:	<input type="text"/>				
Notes:	<input type="text"/>				
Side-to-Side	End-to-End	Circumference	Total OTT	Est. Weight	% Chart
Measurements (inches):	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
*Measurements will be made by weighoff crew *					

I ensure the quality of my entered fruit by attesting to the spirit of fairness of competition and fellowship while adhering to all GPC rules and regulations. I have cultivated, nurtured and tended for this pumpkin from planting to harvest.

Signature

The measurements also should be recorded; the 3 measure system is what is used in determining the estimated weight. Here is a breakdown and an illustration

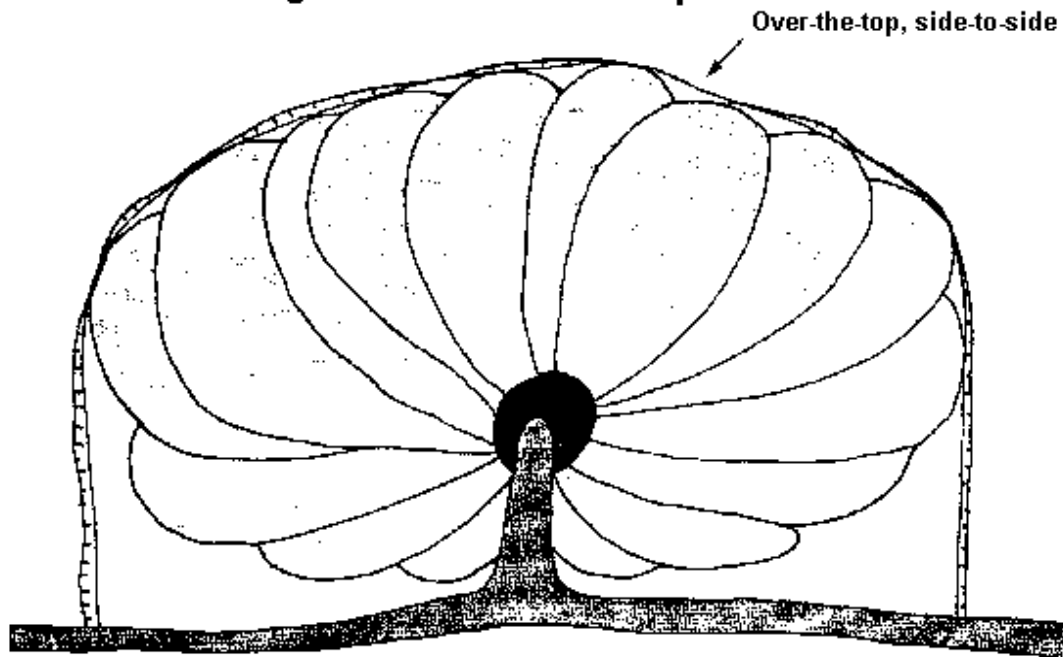
To calculate your pumpkin weight, you need to obtain three measurements.

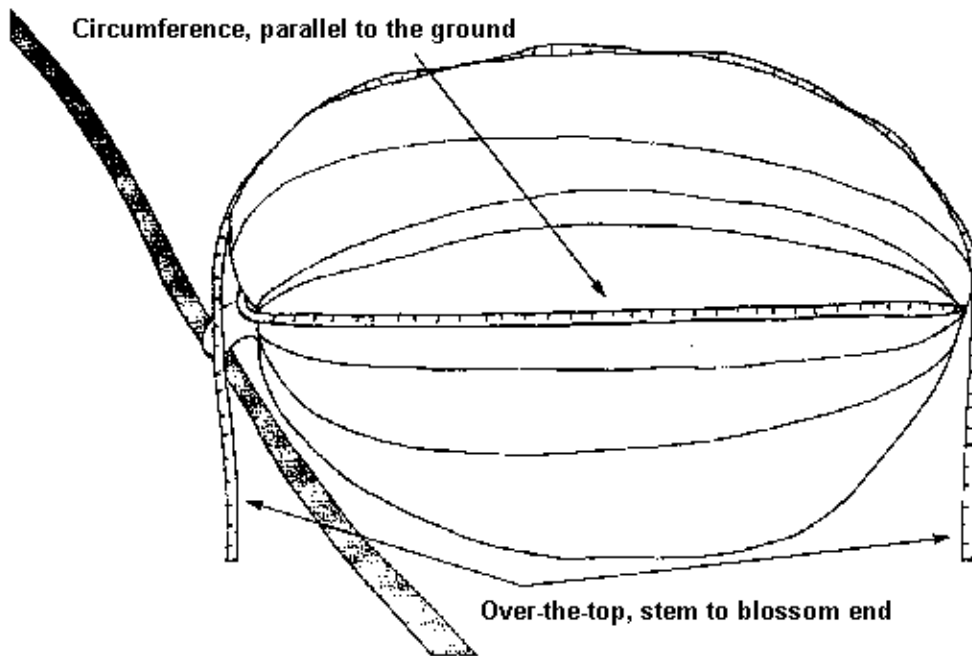
Measure the circumference of the fruit parallel to the ground at stem height. This is measurement number 1.

Now place your tape at the plant stem to the ground and to the blossom end to the ground. What is the distance from ground to ground? This is measurement number 2.

Now place your tape perpendicular to the plant stem at the widest portion of the pumpkin. Place the tape at the ground on both sides at this wide spot. Is it perpendicular to the plant stem? Now measure the distance from ground contact to ground contact. This is measurement number 3.

Add the three measurements and find your total and estimated weight on the Over-the-Top chart.





Take the circumference measurement only and find your weight on the Circumference Chart.

The circumference measurement should be taken where you have the largest circumference. It will not always be parallel to the ground. It may be above or below the stem and above or below the blossom point. On most large pumpkins the largest circumference is not at the stem/ blossom level. The largest circumference is necessary to obtain the most accurate weight estimate as most of the circumference measurements used to obtain the weight equations were largest circumference

Here are two videos on how to measure OTT:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cd1S8gUC-Ew>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAY498hHkc4>

1) Judges

Article 1 Section 5 Paragraph B & C

B. Each site will be responsible for providing no less than 3 and no more than 5 judges.

C. Judges for a weigh-off will consist of any combination of the following: club/grower representative, site coordinator, site representative, and two experienced growers.

Each site **must** have a minimum of 3 judges to inspect and check over each fruit.

These judges should have a good knowledge of agriculture/gardening and be thoroughly informed of all GPC rules and standard practices. Some sites use growers, some use agriculture related representatives. Fair and unbiased is the key to selecting your judges.

2) Securing a Scale for Weigh off Day and Weighing the Fruit

This is the single most important item you need at your Weigh off.

Article I Section 11 Paragraph B:

The above mentioned representatives will also assume responsibility of ensuring the integrity of the fruits and that scales have been calibrated by a recognized weights and measurement business or government agency prior to the weigh-off.

Generally the fruits are weighed from smallest to biggest.

Each fruit is brought to the scale by forklift or similar machine.

To achieve the accurate weight and fairness between entries, all lifting and moving items should be removed once the fruit is on the scale. This includes the lifting ring and ties or the lifting tarp. Only the naked fruit on a platform scale will be considered for the official weight. Anything else will be considered exhibition only.

Article II Section 2 paragraphs A & B:

- A. A certified scale is one that has been inspected and certified by a governmental agency and must have a current certification sticker attached to the scale. Scales that have been certified by other qualified agencies for commercial purposes as "legal for trade" are also acceptable.*
- B. All sites should use a 4' X 4' platform scale or larger, sitting level on a solid stable surface.*

The GPC would prefer a scale to be calibrated to .5 of a pound, weights given in 1 pound increments are acceptable but not preferred.

Most sites rent these from a local scale company, and have the company come and set up the scale. Also it's a good idea to have a representative from the company present during the weigh off, as a precaution, just in case there are scale related issues. If a scale representative cannot be present make sure you get a number for emergency service.

Make sure to have your scale placed on a very sturdy, stable structure if you are locating it above ground, as they need to be on a very solid base. Same attention should be used if placing the scale on the ground to be sure there is a very stable foundation.

Here's a video about scale certification:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BETp0fWPch8>

Also it is almost a necessity to have at least 1 digital display for the crowd to see the weight as the fruit is placed on the scale:



3) Unloading of Exhibits

Securing at least one fork lift and a lifting harness is a given, as you will be bombarded by multiple entrants arriving at the same time. It is a good practice to off load the fruit once the grower has registered.

To help the equipment operators moving the fruit on site please view this YouTube video:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7c-r9G0cLjg&feature=channel_video_title

Here are some videos to help you get your site organized:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNRUO6Z2Zwl>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOeYx0k7tw0>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8Y3hXZ2k>

4) Inspecting of the fruit. (Pumpkins and Squash)

Article II – Section 3 and 4:

3) *No foreign material (fungicides, caulking material, dirt, etc.) is permitted to be included in the weighing.*

1. *Vines must be trimmed to within one inch of the stem of the fruit.*
2. *The stem itself will not be applicable to judging as stated below.*
3. *The specimen must be sound, healthy, and undamaged.*
 - a) *Entries must be free of rot.*
 - b) *Entries must be free of holes or cracks into the interior cavity of the fruit.*
 - c) *Entries must be free of damaged areas that are greater than 3 inches in diameter and greater than 3 inches deep. Any single damaged area greater than 3 inches deep will classify the fruit as damaged (DMG). The dimensions of the damage will be measured after all soft material has been removed with a spoon, if needed.*
 - d) *If there are more than two damaged areas, the pumpkin will be disqualified even if each is smaller than described in 4C.*
 - e) *Small damaged areas are acceptable if naturally healed over with new rind, also known as natural scabs or new cantalouping.*

The judge may probe any crack, hole or opening into a pumpkin, which visually appears that it may extend into the interior cavity (**in the presence of the grower only**). A probe (can be any type of hard wire or plastic ziptie - as long as it is rigid and won't bend too easily) must be provided to the judge to probe suspect openings. An opening where the probe meets no resistance into the interior cavity will disqualify that entry from competition.

Here's a video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tTbLjdYO2lw>

Small damage that heals during the season to new rind is allowed. Examples can be seen in these pictures:



The picture blow shows late season mouse bites to the outer skin. This level of damage would be acceptable as it does not significantly impact the flesh, or tunnel into the fruit.



5) Color of fruit

Article III Section 1

Squash will be classified as follows – 100% of the following colors or color combinations green, blue, and gray. The surface area of the fruit as grown in the garden, not including the portion that was in contact with, or close proximity to the ground will be considered. This area will include the area between the ribs, around the stem, and the blossom end. This will not include any netting (cantaloping), any discoloration caused by the close proximity to the ground, or minimal amounts of striping or mottling associated with some squash. Mottling may appear as white to cream or beige to bronze.

A) Pumpkins will be all fruit not classified as squash

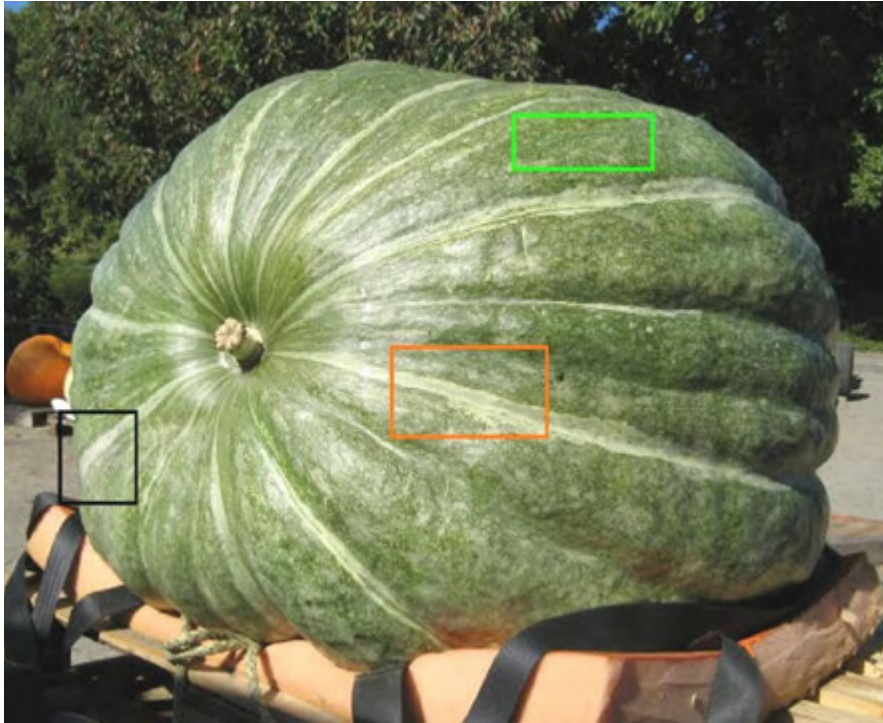
There has been much discussion over the years on the proper classification of squash. It must be understood that competitive giant squash in general terms are the same variety as giant pumpkin, the Atlantic Giant Variety. The variety is sometimes referred to as "Show King Squash"

named by the late Howard Dill. The rules were changed in 2004 from a percentage green basis to the 100% classification in current GPC rule. This definition is recognised by The Guinness Book of World Records. The purpose of such a tightly defined rule is to promote the purity of True Green Squash and to create a fair and level playing field in the sport.

The following is a discussion, explanation and clarification of the above rule.

- 1) **100% green, blue or grey.** This does not include white, yellow, cream or orange. The presence of any of these colors immediately classifies the specimen as a pumpkin.
- 2) **Not including the portion that was in contact with, or in close proximity to the ground will be considered.** This allows for the area on the bottom of the fruit to have some white. This is the area immediately in contact with the ground which may have been buried in sand. This area is often white or has an absence of green.
- 3) **This area will include the area between the ribs, around the stem, and the blossom end.** This allows for some white in the base of the ribs, immediately around the stem and the blossom end.
- 4) **This will not include any netting (cantalouping).** Calloused netting (cantalouping) that appears lighter in color (i.e. white, beige or cream), on the surface of the specimen will be allowed. It is very important for the judge to differentiate between this allowable cantalouping and off colors that are not allowed.
- 5) **Minimal amounts of striping or mottling associated with some squash.** These characteristics are allowed. The striping referred to here is in the base of the ribs, not on top of the ribs. Mottling may appear as white to cream or beige to bronze.

Pictures and Examples



Above is an excellent example of a True Green squash as defined by the color rule. This fruit clearly shows striping and some mottling as described in the rule.



This example of a True Green Squash shows light colored Cantalouping, some mottling and some white striping that is acceptable.



This example shows acceptable mottling on the surface of the squash.



This specimen was classified as squash under the old rules but would now be classified as a pumpkin, due to the presence of orange.



This fruit although has cantalouping, clearly has pink/ orange showing through and would be classified as a pumpkin.



This specimen clearly has white showing through and on the top of the ribs, not in the base and would be classified as a pumpkin.



This specimen also has way too much white/ cream and would be classified as a Pumpkin.

Thumb Rule:

If the color of the specimen is at all questionable, it should be classified as a pumpkin.

The Howard Dill Award

This award is given to the prettiest pumpkin at the weigh off, determined by your judges or other unbiased method – some sites use crowd voting or an independent panel.

Some sites have a size minimum for this - 500 lbs, as an example. This will be a site preference; you may decide to have no minimum.

This award should be for the giant pumpkin class. The qualities to look for are a good



orange / red color and symmetry. A few good looking specimens are pictured below.



So what's left now?

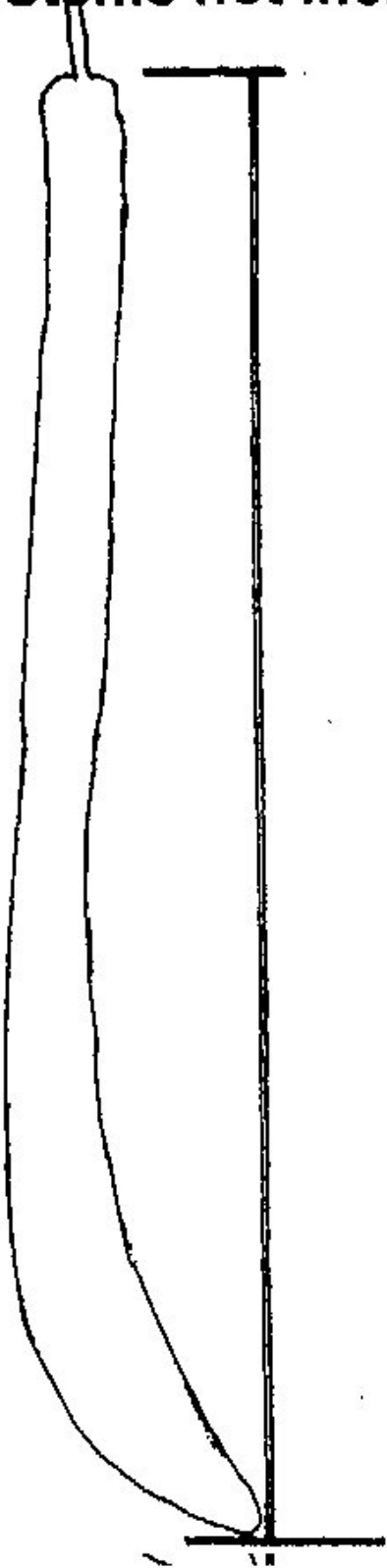
It's time to present the awards to the growers, the plaques, ribbons and monetary winnings (if you have). Your weigh off is now complete and the most important thing left to do, is get all your information sent in to the GPC and BigPumpkins.com via the data upload program. If there is an internet connection available at the site, please try to enter weights and synch with the web as they are being weighed. People around the world will be watching!

Other fruits and Vegetables at Your Weigh Off

Please refer to our official document for a complete listing of all rules regarding other vegetables.

<http://greatpumpkincommonwealth.com/rules.php>

Stems not included



Long Gourds

Long Gourds are to be measured for straight length, not weight. No part of the stem will be considered in the total length of the specimen.

Field pumpkins

These fruit are to be inspected and judged much the same as the giant pumpkins and squash (i.e. trimmed vines, no holes into cavity). They are NOT subject to the color rule – field pumpkins which are still partially or totally green can still be entered into the field pumpkin category legally. Field pumpkins are *cucurbita pepo*, as opposed to “giant” pumpkins, which are *c. maxima*. The defining characteristic of *c. pepo* is a hard, dark green stem.

Varieties such as Prizewinner and Big Max are *c. maxima* and do not have hard green stems. These varieties are not allowed to be entered as field pumpkins



Field Pumpkin

Watermelon

Watermelons are to be judged by weight.

Their outer surface must be clean of all dirt and debris, and there should be no cracking of the surface or penetrations to the interior pink flesh of the fruit.

Be sure to clip the vine to within an inch of the stem.

Tomato

Tomatoes in varying states of maturity are acceptable from immature greens to ripen reds. A scale of appropriate sensitivity must be used.