

Pumpkin Production Basics

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THINGS TO CONSIDER

- Soil Fertility
- Cover crops
- Planting Date
- Equipment
- Variety Selection
- Common Diseases
- Common Insects
- Marketing Options



SOIL SAMPLING

- Pumpkins need a pH of 5.8 to 6.6 for optimum growth
- A routine soil test package includes plant-available levels of P, K, Ca, Mg, Zn, Mn, Cu, Fe, B, plus soil pH and estimated CEC, along with fertilizer and lime recommendations for the specified crop
- <https://www.soiltest.vt.edu/fees-and-forms.html>



RECOMMENDED COVER CROPS

- Small grains (Rye or Wheat)
- Corn Stubble



- Cover Crops retain moisture in the soil, reduce weed pressure, and help keep soil off fruit preventing decay



PLANTING DATES AND FERTILIZATION

- Planting date will depend on Market, but most are planted late May and first two weeks of June
- Soil needs to be 60 degrees F if not corn maggot injury can occur
- Plant in Single rows 30 to 40 inches apart with 8 to 12 feet between rows
- Fertilizer
 - 80-150-150 broadcast
 - 40-75-75 banded or in row



EQUIPMENT NEEDED

- **Tractor**
 - Needs enough horsepower to pull your selected planter and sprayer
- **Planter**
 - No – till corn planter
- **Irrigation**
 - Traveling Reel
 - Over Head
 - Drip
- **Sprayer**
 - Orchard blast gives best coverage, but others can be used
 - Will also need a pesticide applicator license
- **Transport Vehicle to deliver pumpkins**



VARIETY SELECTION

[HTTPS://EXTENSION.PSU.EDU/PUMPKIN-PRODUCTION](https://extension.psu.edu/pumpkin-production)

*HYBRID VARIETY, POWDERY.

PVP = PLANT VARIETY PROTECTION; PMT = POWDERY MILDEW TOLERANT; PMR = POWDERY MILDEW RESISTANT; ZYMV = ZUCCHINI YELLOW MOSAIC VIRUS RESISTANT; PR = *PHYTOPHORA* RESISTANT; WMV = WATERMELON MOSAIC VIRUS RESISTANT

Recommended pumpkin cultivars

| Variety | Days to maturity | Fruit size (lb) |
|------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| Apprentice* (hard-shell type) | 90 | <1 |
| Munchkin | 100 | <1 |
| Baby Boo (PVP, small, white fruit) | 95 | <1 |
| Rockafellow* | 95 | 2.5-3 |
| Baby Pam (excellent for pies) | 100 | 3-4 |
| Snowball* (white) | 90 | 1-2 |
| Mystic Plus (PMT) | 90 | 5-7 |
| Hybrid Pam | 95 | 5-7 |
| Ironman (PMT, hard-shelled) | 115 | 3-4 |
| Magician* (PMR, ZYMV) | 98 | 8-16 |
| Magic Lantern* | 100 | 16-24 |
| Apollo (PM) | 100 | 18-32 |
| Cotton Candy (white) | 110 | 5-12 |
| Sorcerer* | 115 | 18-25 |
| New Moon (white) | 85 | 35-45 |
| Hannibal* | 95 | 18-25 |
| Apogee (PMR) | 95 | 40-50 |
| Gladiator* (PMT) | 100 | 20-30 |
| Aladdin* (PMT) | 100 | 20-30 |
| Solid Gold* | 100 | 25-28 |
| Growers Giant* | 100 | 50-200 |
| Monstar Smash | 120 | 50-150 |
| Prizewinner* | 120 | 100-300 |



SEED TREATMENTS

- Standard – Thiram
- Premium – FarMore FI400 – 3 fungicides + insecticide
 - Mefenoxam, azoxystrobin, fludioxonil, and thiamethoxam



COMMON DISEASE'S

- Powdery Mildew



Plectosorium- Dr. Ridout



Downy Mildew- Dr. Rideout



Anthracnose




Lesions of anthracnose of pumpkin are slightly sunken and exhibit concentric rings caused by the dark fungus growing on the pumpkin

<https://ag.purdue.edu/arge/swpap/Documents/Anthracnose%20of%20Pumpkin.pdf>



PRODUCTION GUIDES

Home Grounds and Animals
PUBLICATION 456-018



2020 PEST MANAGEMENT GUIDE

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2019 Mid-Atlantic Commercial Vegetable Production Recommendations

456-420




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SOUTHEASTERN VEGETABLE EXTENSION WORKERS



SOUTHEASTERN U.S. 2020 VEGETABLE CROP HANDBOOK



“Everything you need on the dashboard of your truck.”



<https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/456/456-018/456-018.html>



PUMPKIN DISEASE PROGRAM

STEVE RIDEOUT & DAVID LANGSTON

VIRGINIA TECH

**USE CERTIFIED SEED
SEED TRTS**

**CLEAN FIELD
ROTATE**



| | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---------|---|---|---|-------|---|-------|---|
| Protectants → | C | S | C | S | C | S | M | S | M |
| Powdery M → | | | T | | T | | P | | |
| DM/Phyt → | | Alerts? | | | | O | | O | R |
| Plec/Anth → | | CQ/IS | | | | CQ/IS | | CQ/IS | |

KEY:

Protectants → C=chlorothalonil, S=sulfur, M=mancozeb

Powdery M → T=Torino, P=Proline, Quintec

DM/Phyt → O=Orondis; R=Ranman/Revus, Presidio, Previcur, Zampro

Plec/Anth → CQ=Cabrio or Quadris; IS=Inspire Super

Applications of a copper containing material may be warranted if bacterial diseases present



COMMON PUMPKIN INSECTS

- Need a regular Scouting Schedule to determine when to spray



Cucumber beetles



Aphids



squash vine borer



Seed Corn Maggot



Pickle Worm

<https://www.bing.com/images>



MARKETING

- Wholesale
 - Need to line up buyer in advance
 - Need more labor for harvesting
- Agritourism / U-pick
 - Need to advertise to draw in potential customers
 - Must be willing for producers to come on your property / operation
 - Insurance
 - Less labor to harvest
- Farmers Markets / Roadside Stand
 - Need to determine location and sale dates
 - Requires more labor than a u-pick



A photograph of a large basket filled with various pumpkins and gourds. The basket is made of a dark metal mesh. The pumpkins are in shades of orange, white, and light green. Some have dark green stems. In the background, there are some dried corn cobs. The text "Thank You" is overlaid in the center in a bold, orange font.

Thank You