



GIANT PUMPKIN GROWING TIPS

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Thanks very much to Danny Dill for giving us some extra information for this Tips page!

Growing Area Preparation

Growing pumpkins in compost is ideal because of its high organic content (good source of nutrients) and because of its ability to readily drain water. Pumpkin plants are often grown on small cone shaped piles of compost so that the vines can grow around them. They can also be planted in rows as long as there is a lot of room between the plants. Make sure your pumpkin plant is in an area that gets lots of sunlight. As the pumpkin grows, its foliage will help protect it from the sun.

Planting your "soon to be" Giant Pumpkin

Start your seeds indoors around the middle or end of April, not much earlier! Your pumpkin will only grow for so long, so even if you have excellent weather earlier in the season, your pumpkin may stop growing long before the weighing... Pumpkin seeds should be planted **tip down**, approximately 1 inch down into a 4 inch peat pot with 1 seed per pot. Germination should occur in 10-12 days.

When ready to transfer outside:

- Remember to only transplant your seedling when the soil has warmed up and to protect it from cool nights and winds
- Your pumpkin plants need lots of room to grow! It's been recommended to provide about 400 square feet for each plant, but if this is not feasible, be sure to leave a few feet in between one and the next.

Watering your Giant Pumpkin

Pumpkins should only be watered every few days. They don't like extremely wet compost but make sure to give them a good soak when you do water them.

When it Flowers...

Each plant produces both male and female flowers. Use male flowers from the plant to pollinate the female flowers. Then protect female flowers from bees and other pollinators (by covering with a Ziploc bag) to ensure a successful pollination.

TLC tips for your Giant Pumpkin

Giant Pumpkin vines have a tendency to be more fragile than their smaller brothers' and sisters' so training the vine to grow a particular way is a good idea. It is recommended that the vine be moved approximately 85 degrees away from the pumpkin. Once the vine has reached approximately 3 feet in length, you can turn it around (carefully, don't break the stem) to grow back in its original direction. As the plant grows outwards, vines should be buried at leaf axils to encourage growth of secondary roots both for stability and for nutrient uptake.

When it's too hot and sunny, you might want to protect your Giant Pumpkin with a shade-tent.

Using these techniques you will surely be a winner! Included are a few other websites which may be of some assistance.

http://www.gardenplantcare.com/pumpkin_tips.shtml

<http://www.pumpkingrowingtips.com/>

<http://www.backyardgardener.com/secert.html>

Good Luck and Happy Growing ☺