

2009 Pumpkin Winners

Pumpkin sets Show Record



1,635.5 lbs. - Dr. Bob Liggett

By HERALD EDITOR
DAVID AMEY

Queen BES, the giant grown by Dr. Bob and Jo Liggett, set a Pumpkin Show record of 1,635.5 pounds at Wednesday's Giant Pumpkin Weigh-In.

But, it did not live up to the expectations of the Liggetts, who were looking for a new world record.

BES was expected to weigh 1,839 pounds, based on a circumference measurement of 214 inches by Tony Vanderpool, director of the Southern Ohio Giant Pumpkin Growers Association, who measured the giant Tuesday night after it was harvested. "Certainly, we're a little disappointed," Dr. Bob said. "However, our goal has always been to win the Pumpkin Show weigh-off, and we were successful."

The Liggetts won their first annual contest in 1994, followed with wins in 1995, 1996, 2002, 2004, 2007, and 2008. His winning entry in 2004 was the first local pumpkin to top 1,000 pounds at 1,353, and his winning entry in 2007 at 1,524.5 pounds set a state record.

The current world record giant at 1,725 pounds was set earlier in the year at a weigh-in in Canfield, Ohio, and there have been 337 giants exceeding 1,000 pounds and 20 state records set across the United States.

"About a month ago, Queen BES was estimated to weigh 1,696 pounds by measurement," Liggett told about 100 spectators who gathered to watch the extraction.

Queen BES was named by Jo Liggett for their grandson, Brandan Erik Stevens, son of Erik and Carrie Stevens, Jackson, Miss.

Second place in Wednesday's judging was earned by Darryl Crosby, a 10-year grower from Tarlton, whose giant tipped the scales at 1,244.5 pounds.

"I am really hoping for a 1,200-pounder," he said, noting that his personal best had been a 1,117-pounder at the New Bremen weigh-off earlier this year.

Also, he had a continuing battle with aphids in his pumpkin patch this growing season. "That slowed us down a little," he said, even though the patch produced three pumpkins in excess of 1,000 pounds.

"Goose bumps on goose bumps" is the feeling described by Dean Park of Chillicothe when his giant weighed in at 1,068 pounds — the first ever 1,000 pounder for the grower of 31 years.

That pumpkin earned him a third place finish at the Pumpkin Show.

On the other end of the spectrum was Gary Liff, a first-year grower from Williamsport.

Liff, who owns Limbs & Leaves Tree Farm, captured fourth place with a 927.5 pound giant on his 61st birthday.

"It involves a lot of time and a lot of work," he said. "But it is worth it."

Liff's first pumpkin weighed 908.5 pounds at the Oakland Nursery weigh-off several weeks ago.