

ANOTHER
HERB HERBERT
FACT SHEET

SPECIAL INTEREST HERBS

GOURMET VEGETABLES

PUMPKIN 'BIG MAX'



DESCRIPTION

The Big Max pumpkin is really the big kahuna of the pumpkin patch. It's the professional pumpkin grower's first choice for big results. It has smooth, light orange skin that sometimes shows pink splashes, and is great for decoration carving at Halloween, or making pumpkin pies. Often found canned, it's reliable for all types of cooking. This variety often grows up to 70in/178cm around, and can easily weigh up to 100 lbs/45kgs. Pumpkin vines love to spread out and they have huge brushy green leaves. Any one vine will grow up to 30 feet long and have many tendrils that sprawl out from the main stem. This doesn't mean the you can't grow anything next to it, but be aware that they are a sprawling vine and you don't want to plant anything too near that will get caught in their undergrowth. They will creep over fences and buildings if you let them, stabilizing the huge weight of the vine with their tightly curling tendrils.



USES

The Big Max Pumpkin is a great vegetable to grow if you have children that show a green thumb. Their sheer size is loads of fun, they are fast growing and are great for cooking and carving.

Mashed, steamed, roasted or stewed, they're a delicious addition to any meal.



GROWTH

Pumpkin seeds grow best in little mounds about 3ft/1m in diameter. You can put multiple seeds in each mound but it's important to thin the vines out as they grow. For the best big result, grow one pumpkin per vine. Recommended that you plant the seed about 1in/1.5cm deep and a seedling will take about 5-10 days to appear. Thin the patch out as they grow and only keep the strongest plants as this variety needs lots of space. Give it plenty of water and make sure there is lots of fertilizer in the soil. Choose a sunny spots that gets at least 6 hours of sunlight per day.

It will take about 120 days for the fruit to mature. About 80 to 90 per cent of every pumpkin is water so it's essential that the plant is well watered. Its huge leaves will protect it from sun dehydration and also act as a great ground cover to prevent weeds from springing up. To help an even, roundish fruit to grow, square the bottom of the fruit against the ground. Try to handle the fruit as little as possible.



CULTIVATION

There are a few signs that a pumpkin is ripe for the picking. The first is that the leaves of the vine will begin to look tired and tattered. This shows the vine is ready to return to the ground. The second is that the fruit will have turned a deep orange color, like a fiery sunset orange. When you cut the fruit from the vine, leave about 5 in/13cm of stem attached to the fruit. This will help the pumpkin maintain its freshness. Allow it to ripen in the sun for about 10 days after picking, but cover it at night if the frost is coming in.



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