

HOLLAND'S LAND O' GIANTS



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We have our new DVD "How I Grew the World Champion 2,363" available at the 10% discount.

HOW I GREW THE 2,363 POUND PUMPKIN

By Joel Holland

Early Season and Patch Preparation

2017 was a year of contrast. Late Winter and Spring brought us record rains. In June the weather changed abruptly from cool and wet to warm and dry. In July and August we set a record of 55-days in a row without measurable rain. We received just .03-inches in the official rain gauge at Sea-Tac Airport that stopped the record, and then we went almost another rainless month. We really need it to be warm and dry here in Western Washington in order to be nationally competitive. When we have a wet summer it can stay cloudy and cool for extended periods, resulting in slow fruit growth. When I had the World Record in 1992, the summer was very similar to what we had in 2017.

Early on, I was behind, as evidenced by a 10-day delay in getting the cover crop turned under. I like to have the cloches set up on prepared soil before I start my seeds indoors. This season, because of the weather it was just not possible. I went ahead and started my seeds on April 18th, hoping for a dry spell in order to work the soil and erect the cloches before my usual set-out date of around May 5th.

One change I made in order to save time was to abandon the use of the 16' X 16' cloches. I decided to go with some pre-built 7' X 10' PVC frames that require less prepared soil area and also go up very quickly. The drawback to using these smaller units is that the plants outgrow them before the weather is conducive to having a plant out in the open. Soil heating cables helped overcome cool soil conditions.

I realized I had a special opportunity with the 2,145 McMullen plant. The plan for this plant was to prepare the soil around its 7' X 10' enclosure as soon as possible, and then construct a larger cloche over the top. The weather allowed me to accomplish this and the smaller cloche was removed and carried out one end of the larger temporary greenhouse.

About the middle of June it was as if a switch had been thrown, the days suddenly became warm and dry. I was still about a week behind in plant development. The decision was made to just set the 1st female on the main of each of my 6 plants and just go with that pumpkin, rather than proceed with a selection process. All females on the laterals were removed before opening. Once I was reasonably sure that the 1st female on the main was set, I removed subsequent females on that vine as well. Because I was able to set up the one larger cloche over the 2,145 plant, a nice early pollination date of June 24th was achieved about 10-feet out on the main. We have cool nights in Western Washington and the pumpkins typically start out slowly and take longer to reach maturity. Our warmest monthly average night lows are in July at 55.3-degrees and August at 55.7-degrees. This year we had many more nights in the low 60's than most seasons.

Plant Pattern and Spacing

The 6 plants were grown in a modified Christmas tree pattern. The plants were on 27-foot centers with 1-foot paths between each. This allowed laterals of 13-feet on each side of the mains that grew east to west. There was

10-feet of space behind the plant or to the East. The first set of laterals were each allowed to grow 3 or 4 tertiary vines and these filled in that space. The first set of laterals were actually angled back towards the east, so the tertiaries were shorter the farther they were out on those laterals. I feel having this 10-feet of cultivated fertilized soil allows more root development than when plants are back-to-back, or have a walkway or uncultivated area close behind the plant. I use a 16" X 8-foot strip of 5/8-inch outdoor plywood to access the east end of the plant. In front of the plant, or in the direction in which the main vine was growing there was 35-feet of cultivated area. Each plant didn't entirely use all of this space, but averaged between 900 and 1,000 square feet. Generally I turn the main at some point to grow south and treat it as the final lateral on that side. I keep each lateral between the base of the plant to near where the pumpkin is set and take every other one off past the pumpkin. I pinch the lateral bud that wants to grow right where the pumpkin is set right away, as well as the first one on each side of the fruit. I let the second lateral on either side of the pumpkin grow out 3 to 4-feet before heading them back. They will need to come off at some point, but early on they provide some shade for the small pumpkin. I feel taking every other lateral on each side off past the pumpkin helps transition the plant from vegetative growth and more into fruit development.

Weed control early on is accomplished by tilling out ahead of the plant in strips where Pumpkin Power and Mycorrhizae are added. I am careful to stay well out from where roots are developing and we have a segment on one of our DVDs concerning this. Later on and in between the laterals I use a scuffle hoe with about an 8-inch blade that can be run back and forth just under the surface. The weed free compost material I use to cover the vines also is helpful. I plant a winter cover crop so we don't get a lot of over-wintering type weeds and grasses.

Fertilizer Program

I decided to modify the fertilizer program that I have used for years, partly because I started out behind, and also knowing I had an excellent opportunity with the 2,145 McMullen seed. The plan was to increase the application rates on most of the granular products by 25% to 40%. I also intended to increase the frequency of my foliar applications from weekly to every 5-days, and also step-up the concentration by the same 25% to 40%. I used the fertilizer schedule as posted on our website, www.hollandsgiants.com, but with those modifications I have discussed. My soil is naturally lower than optimal in Potassium, Calcium, Magnesium, Sulphur, Boron and Manganese, so I addressed these issues over and above the fertilizer schedule. The Calcium and Magnesium were boosted with Dolopril Super Sweet at 3-pounds per 100-square feet. Our soil also tends to be acidic, so this helped raise the pH to be close to my target of 6.8. At this pH (potential Hydrogen) nutrient, availability is ideal and Mycorrhizal Fungi activity is strong at just under a neutral soil pH. Langbeinite was used at 2-pounds per 100-square feet to improve levels of Potassium, Magnesium, and Sulphur. Manganese and some additional Sulphur was supplied with an application of our Manganese Sulphate granular at 1-pound per 1,000-square feet. Boron was added to the foliar schedule, for this I used Solubor. Rather than apply it as a stand-alone spray, I combined it with every other application of Soluble Calcium Spray, as it helps with the uptake of this vital element. Because Manganese and Boron are micro-nutrients I didn't increase the concentration levels. The other foliar ingredient that didn't get a boost in concentration was the Amino-Acid Bio-Activator. Since it was being applied more frequently with the turbo-charged foliar regimen, I left the concentration at label recommendation. The Pumpkin Power 9-3-4 All-Organic was tilled into the growing beds at 2.5-pounds per 100-square feet. In the trench it was increased slightly from ¼-cup per 3-feet of vine to 1/3-cup. I sometimes combined sprays if time was short. The Soluble Seaweed Power 1-1-17 seemed to team up well with either the Soluble Calcium Powder or the Soluble Fish Powder 12-1-1. Normally I taper off with the Soluble Fish and start with the Blossom Booster & Fruit Finisher 0-52-34 on June 10th. As I was still running behind on plant size, I continued with Soluble Fish Powder 12-1-1 until June 20th. I slightly over-lapped and phased in the 0-52-34 beginning on June 15th.

Pests and Disease

We are fortunate in the Northwest as far as insect pests go. We have no squash vine borers, squash bugs and very few cucumber beetles. Black aphids can be a problem but they are easily controlled with our all-organic garlic based Bio-Repel, or the plant oil based Pest Out.

Our program for disease control centered on alternating sprays of Soluble Companion Powder, Actinovate and Fosphite. The Fosphite is known as a "Reduced Hazard Fungicide". Fosphite, a J.H. Biotech product that we distribute, is much more concentrated than products called Phosphites. Our Mycorrhizal Fungi program and Rootshield rounded out our strategy against disease. I did work more BioGrow Endo Plus, 4-species Myco into the soil than normal as well. Initially I tilled in 4-pounds per growing area. Whenever I tilled the soil out ahead of the plant I worked in BioGrow Endo Plus at 2-pounds per 100-square feet. In the trenches I used 2-Tablespoons at each leaf axil.

This season I made more use of our premium 9-species Soluble Myco called Soluble Maxx. On my plants that grew the 2,363 and the 1,790 I also wet down the trench area with the Soluble Maxx in addition to using the BioGrow Endo Plus at each leaf axil. All plants were watered in when set out with Soluble Maxx, which contains 9-species of Mycorrhizal Fungi in a matrix of fine Soluble Seaweed Powder. The Granular Rootshield was working into the soil at 2-pounds per planting site, plus 2-Tablespoons in each

planting hole. Two weeks after the plants were set out, a drench with the Soluble Rootshield was done around each small plant.

Watering

We had both soaker hoses under the 2,145 plant, plus Whizzers and Perfect Pin Nozzles above the canopy. Watering is accomplished with the use of a 1,550-gallon black plastic tank. The last thing I need is 55-degree F. water on the plants when it is more often than not, too cool to begin with! The black tank is a passive solar collector, but I have an active component as well. I position a submersible pump near the bottom of the tank. The water is circulated through about 400 feet of black or dark colored garden hose and then right back into the tank. The garden hose is laid out in a serpentine pattern along the edge of our long black asphalt driveway. In this way we can usually water the plants with 75-80-degree water. The tank itself is plumbed so water can be circulated by my 2-horse electric motor as well. The water in the tank tends to stratify, becoming over 100-degrees at the top, but remaining cool near the bottom. This circulating feature evens out the water temperature and also is useful in mixing water soluble fertilizers, fungicides or pest controls. Our DVDs show in detail how the plumbing and pump are set up to accomplish these tasks. A pressure modulating valve is part of the system as well. I can use the 2 horsepower motor to supply just a single sprinkler head by returning the excess flow right back to the tank, or flow 20 heads or more utilizing the full capacity of the pump which runs on 220 volts. A decision whether to use the overhead sprinklers or the soaker hoses was based on intuition. Early in the day, early in the season, during very warm weather, and whether I wanted to apply something to the leaves were factors in support of overhead. Later in the day, cool weather, and later in the season were considerations that favored use of the soaker hoses.

My Best Tools in Growing a World Champion Pumpkin of 2,363-Pounds

BioGrow Endo Plus and Soluble Maxx: **BioGrow** is the premium 4-species Mycorrhizae for growing giant pumpkins. We use it in the seed starting mix and in the planting hole. Till **BioGrow** into each bed and use 1 to 2-Tablespoons in the trench at each leaf axil. **Soluble Maxx** has 9-species of Mycorrhizae, and mixes with water. We use this at the base of each plant when young, and wet down the trench area before covering the vines.

Pumpkin Power 9 – 3 – 4: This All-Organic Fertilizer is formulated to grow giant pumpkins. The granular dust-free product is easy to spread and feeds all season. We use it in transplanting soil, and when setting the plants in the patch. Till it into the growing beds and use ¼-cup per 3-foot of vine when covering.

Soluble Seaweed Powder: The finest Seaweed available! No other comes close to our **Soluble Seaweed 1 – 1 -17:** It is indispensable in growing my 2,363 pound World Champion. It has 17% Potassium, 62-trace minerals and many growth promoting hormones. We use it when soaking seeds and at the base of young plants. We foliar spray every 5 to 7 days throughout the season.

Soluble Calcium Powder 5 – 0 - 15: This is the quickly available source of Calcium the fast-growing pumpkin needs to maintain strong cell structure and form thick walls that helps resist cracking and splitting. Our **Soluble Calcium Powder** helped our 2,363 World Champion Pumpkin weigh 11% heavy and have a flawless stem and blossom end.

48-foot Soil Warming Cables: Giant pumpkins need warm soil in the root zone in the cool Spring to do well. One cable per plant helps maintain a 74-degree temperature, which supports early season growth and nutrient availability. Our DVD “How I Grew a World Champion Pumpkin of 2,363 Pounds” demonstrates how to install the soil warming cable.

Nutri-Aid Blossom-Booster and Fruit Finisher 0 – 52 – 34: This is a great mid-to-late season fertilizer. Start about June 10th to encourage blossoming. After fruit set the 52% Phosphorus encourages healthy seed development, and the 34% Potassium supports the formation of the complex carbohydrates that make up the walls of the pumpkin.

My 2,363 pound pumpkin gained 500 pounds after September 1st and weighed over the chart. I foliar fed every 5 days throughout this time period with **Nutri-Aid 0 – 52 – 34.**

Soluble Fish Powder 1 – 1 – 12: This provides the needed Nitrogen early in the season, so a strong plant big enough to support an early fruit set can be achieved. Natural **Fish Powder** provides the Nitrogen in a safe-steady way which enables controlled healthy growth.

Whizzers and Perfect Pin Nozzles: The **Whizzers** are ideal for supplying a gentle even pattern of water in an open area. The **Perfect Pin Nozzles** are great for providing a fine overhead spray for watering and/or cooling inside a cloche or greenhouse.

Actinovate and Companion Wettable Powder: Alternating sprays of these biological fungicides, along with Fosphite are my main tools to fight disease in my patch.

HOLLAND'S LAND O'GIANTS PRICE LIST

PRODUCT	SIZE	PRICE* (Incl. U.S.shipping)	QUANTITY	TOTAL
		DVD PACKAGES		
Package #1	3 seeds	33.00		
Package #2	6 seeds	64.00		
Package #3	9 seeds	105.00		
		BOOKS		
Farmer Mike's Giant Pumpkins Child's Book	w/priority ship	14.00		
		MYCORRHIZAE PRODUCTS		
BioGrow Endo Plus	1-pound	18.00		
BioGrow Endo Plus	3-pound	43.00		
BioGrow Endo Plus	5-pound	64.00		
BioGrow Endo Plus	15-pound	142.00		
BioGrow Endo Plus	23-pound	199.00		
BioGrow Endo Plus	46-pound	385.00		
Hydro-Sol	1-pound	34.00		
Hydro-Sol	3-pound	72.00		
Hydro-Sol	5-pound	114.00		
Soluble MAXX	1-pound	48.00		
Soluble MAXX	3-pound	129.00		
Soluble MAXX	5-pound	199.00		
Promot Plus	1-gallon	88.00		
Promot Plus	2.5-gallon	175.00		
Azotobacter	2-ounces	14.00		
Azotobacter	1-pound	52.00		
		FERTILIZERS		
Aqua Power Liquid Fish	1-gallon	36.00		
Aqua Power Liquid Fish	2.5-gallon	72.00		
Pumpkin Power	1-pound	17.00		
Pumpkin Power	5-pound	26.00		
Pumpkin Power	10-pound	35.00		
Pumpkin Power	20-pound	55.00		
Pumpkin Power	60-pound	155.00		
Pumpkin Power	144-pound	352.00		
Spring Wake-Up!	1-pound	17.00		
Spring Wake-Up!	5-pound	24.00		
Spring Wake-Up!	10-pound	32.00		
Spring Wake-Up!	20-pound	49.00		
Spring Wake-Up!	40-pound	90.00		
Solubor	1-pound	19.00		
Solubor	3-pound	47.00		
Solubor	5-pound	68.00		
Gran. Steam. Bonemeal	1-pound	18.00		
Gran. Steam. Bonemeal	5-pound	28.00		
Gran. Steam. Bonemeal	10-pound	40.00		
Gran. Steam. Bonemeal	25-pound	65.00		
Sol. Seaweed Powder	10.7-oz.	19.00		
Sol. Seaweed Powder	2.5-pound	43.00		
Sol. Seaweed Powder	5-pound	74.00		
Sol. Seaweed Powder	10-pound	129.00		
Sol. Seaweed Powder	16-pound	196.00		
Sol. Seaweed Powder	32-pound	365.00		
Sol. Fish Powder	1-pound	19.00		
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Sol. Biomin Calcium Pwdr	1-pound	20.00		
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Sol. Biomin Calcium Pwdr	10-pound	98.00		
Sol. Biomin Calcium Pwdr	22-pound	188.00		
Biomin Calcium Conc.	1-gallon	56.00		
Biomin Calcium Conc.	2.5-gallon	102.00		
Biomin Copper Conc.	1-gallon	56.00		
Biomin Copper Conc.	2.5-gallon	102.00		
Biomin Iron Conc.	1-gallon	56.00		
Biomin Iron Conc.	2.5-gallon	102.00		
Biomin Manganese Conc.	1-gallon	56.00		
Biomin Manganese Conc.	2.5-gallon	102.00		
Biomin Boron Conc.	1-gallon	56.00		
Biomin Boron Conc.	2.5-gallon	102.00		
Biomin Zinc Conc.	1-gallon	56.00		
Biomin Zinc Conc.	2.5-gallon	102.00		
Biomin Magnesium Conc	1-gallon	56.00		

Biomin Magnesium Conc	2.5-gallon	102.00		
Biomin Excel Conc.	1-gallon	58.00		
Biomin Excel Conc.	2.5-gallon	108.00		
Biomin Cal-Boro Conc.	1-gallon	58.00		
Biomin Cal-Boro Conc.	2.5-gallon	108.00		
Ful-Max	1-gallon	62.00		
Ful-Max	2.5-gallon	112.00		
Sol. Rhizone Powder	1-pound	50.00		
Sol. Rhizone Powder	3-pound	127.00		
Nutri-Aid 20-20-20	1-pound	16.00		
Nutri-Aid 20-20-20	5-pound	27.00		
Nutri-Aid 20-20-20	10-pound	43.00		
Nutri-Aid Blossom Boost 0-52-34	5-pound	27.00		
Nutri-Aid Blossom Boost 0-52-34	10-pound	44.00		
Nutri-Aid Blossom Boost 0-52-34	20-pound	78.00		
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Dolopril Super Sweet	16-pound	27.00		
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Calcium Sulphate	10-pound	27.00		
Calcium Sulphate	18-pound	35.00		
Calcium Nitrate	1-pound	17.00		
Calcium Nitrate	5-pound	26.00		
Calcium Nitrate	10-pound	37.00		
Calcium Nitrate	20-pound	54.00		
Soil Balancer-B pH adjuster	1-gallon	46.00		
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Langbeinite 0-0-21 +	25-pound	52.00		
Langbeinite 0-0-21 +	35-pound	65.00		
Chick-A-Doo 4-3-3/7% calc.	5-pound	17.00		
Chick-A-Doo 4-3-3/7% calc.	12-pound	24.00		
Chick-A-Doo 4-3-3/7% calc.	20-pound	33.00		
Osmocote Time-Release	1-pound	18.00		
Osmocote Time-Release	5-pound	28.00		
Osmocote Time-Release	10-pound	39.00		
Osmocote Time-Release	20-pound	54.00		
		GROWING SUPPLIES		
ROOTSHIELD + Sol. Powder	1-pound	142.00		
ROOTSHIELD + Sol. Powder	3-pound	299.00		
ROOTSHIELD + Granular	1-pound	44.00		
ROOTSHIELD + Granular	5-pound	139.00		
ROOTSHIELD + Granular	10-pound	216.00		
Actinovate Fungicide	2-ounces	24.00		
Actinovate Fungicide	16-ounces	146.00		

Tall Corn Seed	40 in a pkt	9.00		
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Watermelon 200#-250#	6 in a pkt	12.00		
Watermelon 250#-290#	6 in a pkt	17.00		
Sunflower Seeds G.S. Giant	30 in a pkt	7.50		
Sunflower Seed Sonny Boy	30 in a pkt	7.50		

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