

# The Monster Pumpkin

Growing huge, ginormous pumpkins.

**Genre:** Events, Food and Drink, History, Nature



## Growers who turn everyday pumpkins into vegetable monsters!

Unlike real monsters, the monster pumpkin doesn't have rows of sharp teeth, googly eyes, or giant claws. It doesn't even have any monster-type features other than its mammoth size which makes many people call it a "monster". A pumpkin that weighs a massive 2,7092 kg. (2,702 pounds) is definitely gigantic and out of this world. It's bigger than a small car!



**Pumpkins can grow to be hundreds and even thousands of kilos given the right environment.**



This gigantic pumpkin was grown in 2021 by Italian farmer Stefano Cutrupi. He wasn't interested in growing the average butternut pumpkin that you see every day in supermarkets. Oh no, Cutrupi wanted to grow the world's heaviest pumpkin and he knew he had to beat the previous world champion, a Belgian farmer Mathias Willemejns, whose pumpkin weighed in at a massive 1190 kgs (2624 pounds)!

## Winning the World's Heaviest Pumpkin Award

When Cutrupi's pumpkin was weighed by judges, the judges were amazed. Not only had Cutrupi's pumpkin weighed more than the previous winner in 2016, but Cutrupi's pumpkin was also twice the size!



**Stefano Cutrupi's pumpkin won the 10th Campionato della Zuccone pumpkin festival as the heaviest pumpkin.**

His pumpkin, unbelievably, weighed 1500 kilograms more than the previous winner. Cutrupi was more than overjoyed upon hearing how much his pumpkin weighed. He said delightfully "I screamed until I lost my voice".

Cutrupi was awarded the prestigious produce honor of the world's Heaviest Pumpkin by Guinness World Records for 2021. An incredible feat for pumpkin growers everywhere.

# How to Grow the World's Heaviest Pumpkin

What can you do if you want your own pumpkin big enough to fill your entire backyard ... lots of hard work and a bit of luck from nature? Cutrupi followed the first part of the prize-winning instructions, but unusually high temperatures in Italy in 2021 threatened the success of his pumpkin-growing ambitions.

Temperatures in Italy reached between 33 and 40°C (91-104°F) from mid-June through mid-August. These were not ideal pumpkin growing conditions. Nevertheless, Cutrupi jumped into action. He knew he had to cool, mist, and water his prized pumpkin to keep it happy and growing. In other words, he gave the pumpkin his complete attention, making sure it felt good all the time.



**Catrupi gave his pumpkin the most attention and care, giving it every chance of success.**

There's no one strategy for growing a monster pumpkin that will win awards around the globe, but it does have a lot to do with experience. Things like choosing the correct seed, preparing the ideal soil conditions, and even when to harvest the pumpkin once it's grown all need careful consideration. It's a lot of work that is based on years of experience!

Growing world-champion pumpkins isn't just about throwing a seed in the ground and hoping for the best. It's 90% hard work and 10%, "Let's pray that this will work."



**Pumpkins need the ideal conditions to help them grow to their maximum potential.**

For Cutrupi, he spent fourteen years trying to create a monster, and with heaps of hard work and dedication, his efforts finally bore fruit (or heaps of pumpkin!). For farmers and pumpkin growers worldwide, the thrill of seeing how big you can grow your fruits and vegetables has fueled growing competition since the mid-1970s.

The Half Moon Bay Pumpkin Competition started in 1974 in Circleville Ohio, which funnily enough is dubbed "The Pumpkin Capital of the World". It only makes sense that they'd have one of the most successful and well-respected pumpkin competitions in the world.



**Stefano Cutrupi's pumpkin won the 10th Campionato della Zuccone pumpkin festival.**



As long as there are growing competitions, there will be people pushing themselves (and their tiny seeds) to reach staggering heights, lengths and weights. Turning everyday pumpkins into vegetable monsters! Hopefully one day, with enough effort and determination, you will see a massive orange monster in your garden!

 **Good to Think About**



1. What did Cutrupi need to do to get the pumpkin to grow to such an enormous size?

---

---

2. Why did Cutrupi enter the competition? What was he trying to achieve?

---

---

3. What challenges did Cutrupi face when trying to get his pumpkin to grow to such an enormous size?

---

---

---

4. Why do people participate in fruit and vegetable competitions?

---

4. If you could grow a vegetable to be an enormous size, which vegetable would you choose and why?

---

---

---

---

## Key Vocabulary

- monster
- mammoth
- gigantic
- massive
- prestigious
- ambition
- champion
- competition
- staggering
- determination



LiteracyPlanet's  
**My Words**

