

Dave Stelts

Every time I meet Dave Stelts, I become more impressed with him. Every time I meet him, I like him more. The first time we met, I came away with very good feelings about this fun loving, humorous man. Never would I have deduced from that first meeting that he would become one of the best growers in the world, and one of the most innovative and committed individuals I've ever encountered in this sport.

When he first gained prominence in competitive giant pumpkin circles with his 801.5 in 1997, I was very, very, surprised. I really had not considered that here was a grower with great potential. Talking with him and his friends, I slowly began to gain insight into what drives this man to succeed. He does nothing in half-measures, leaves nothing to chance, and is always ready to gamble everything on what he believes strongly in.

In 2001, Dave showed the world what he was pursuing – a new world record 1140 pound pumpkin, and only the second pumpkin ever grown over 1100 pounds.

Other growers began to emulate his cultural practices, and almost every grower in the Ohio Valley Giant Pumpkin Growers' association started growing pumpkins with more zeal, using many of Dave's ideas. Much of the increase in average weights of the OVGPG has been a direct result of pruning plants more heavily, and pushing the AG like it has never been pushed before – something Dave had been doing for quite a few years. The "food factory" approach to growing giant pumpkins has much of its origin in the Stelts' patch.

Dave's good nature is legendary in Ohio, and his willingness to help any grower in need is equally appreciated and respected by all that know him.



TOMATO		SQUASH		PUMPKINS	
Frank Anderson 2.86	Bob Miller 4.47	Allen Kozanore 457	Sherla Thoms 700	Eric Layton 2815	Jack Tennes 4575
Ernie Cook 2.45	Larry Welby 3.30	Michele Andolina 3915	Billy L'man 4265	Dave Bowman 2325	Chas. L'man 511
Jan Kilbert 2.54	Tom Swift 3.80	Dell Pector 3075	Dale L'man 4505	Dick Snyder 2325	Josh Jackson 4515
Wagon Miller	Joe Jorg 4.85	Gene Mettle 3955	Neil L'man 7295	Jerry Kilbert 4005	Lloyd Rose 5385
Tom Howard 3.08	Tom Jorg 5.80	Frank Lasterman 445	Jerry Rose 6775	Joan Clayton 251	Joan Gibson 614
George Bell 2.80	McNelly 2.99	Bill Mordhauser 553	Tom Parks 720	Richard Cook 3825	Alan Gibson 628
Tim McNelly 3.02	Jack Beard 5.05	Jan Kilbert 478	Tom Parks 717		
WILLIAMS 1.79	Irene Layton 2.85	Mike Angehuzzi 4295	Nic. Welby 134.5		
Paul Cook 2.95	Ferry Evans 3015	Christine Wyckoff 4835	Kathy Andolina 2405		
Paul Anderson 1.94	Frank Scott 417	Sherry Alligretto 4255	Tim Parks 717		
Richard Thomas 2.24	Phon Powell 465	587	Jack L'man 7095		
Paul Cook 1.79	Kirkland Cook 2475	Tom Adams 5115	Neil L'man 783		
Paul Howard 1.04		Ken Rable 5905	Fred Calai 7415		
CONN FIELD		Matt Alligretto 5905	Mary Calai 7985		
Tommy Gibb 1.05		Dempsey L'man 5605	Fred Calai 8495		
McNelly 3.40		Jack Tennes 4575	Winston 8135		
Abbie 795		511	Dave Stelts 1140		
Walterman 625		614	Wanda Wyckoff 8135		
		628	Wanda Wyckoff 8135		



Left: Dave holds the coveted "Green Jacket," and Oooh, baby! The season begins for the 2001, 1053.5. Above: the check, the scoreboard and the pose with the new world record 2001, 1140.