

Jerry Rose

Jerry has been growing since he was 12 years old, starting in 1981, and has spent all of those 22 years “putting in his dues.” We met in 1998 at the Ottawa/St. Lawrence Growers’ Seminar in Ottawa, Canada, where he was honored with fourteen other growers in attendance with the distinction of having grown a pumpkin over 700 pounds. That was a huge accomplishment back then, with less than 100 growers in the world capable of making that claim. His 816 in 1995 completed a string of three straight years in which he broke the Ohio state record each year. I have always been impressed with his knowledge and his consistent improvement.

However, things were not always so “rosy” for Jerry Rose. His first entry in a local fair at the age of 12 weighed just 59 pounds, but he

struck-up a friendship with an old-timer who spent the next few years showing him the ropes. I’ve always insisted that the mentor/student relationship is one of the best ways to learn giant pumpkin growing, and Jerry proved that by battling his mentor every year until he finally surpassed him in 1989 with a 292 pounder. His mentor, Ansel Rhodes, could not have been happier.

In 1989, Jerry went to the WPC weigh off in Collins, NY, (a mecca of giant pumpkin growing), met some of the top growers in the world, saw the first pumpkin ever grown over 700 pounds, Gordon Thomson’s world record 755, and began many friendships that exist to this day – all of which lead to better seeds and better information. Jerry’s affable way personifies the personality of giant pumpkin growers.



In spite of his dogged attempts at controlling disease in a patch that was devoted to giant pumpkins for many years, Jerry finally moved

to a knew patch, free from pythium and fusarium buildup. and grew his personal best of 960 in 2001. He says, “I’m back,” and with that, take notice Ohio and world.

