



**By HERALD STAFF WRITER
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Using a seed that came from a dropped giant pumpkin four years ago, Circleville's Dr. Bob and Jo Liggett established a new Ohio record with a 1,524.5 pound giant at Wednesday's Pumpkin Show Weigh-In.

The giant, named Cream Puff by Mrs. Liggett because of its color, surpassed the previous state record by 3.5 pounds. More exciting to them and all local giant pumpkin growers — it is 1/2 pound heavier than the winner of the giant pumpkin weigh-off held earlier in the month in Half Moon Bay, Calif.



"The Liggetts are always raising the bar for us," said Joe Gerchy, a long-time competitor from South Bloomfield who placed fifth this year with his wife, Lisa.

"He won the Pumpkin Show several years with the first giant to top 1,000 pounds, held the Pumpkin Show record with a 1,353.5 pounder, won the Southern Ohio Giant Pumpkin Growers weigh-off in Chillicothe two weeks ago with a 1,368 pound giant, and placed fifth last weekend at Oakdale Nursery in Columbus with a 1,080 pounder," Gerchy said.

"I was not worried about the hot, dry summer weather until last month," said Dr. Liggett, whose wife, Jo, was in charge of watering and weeding the pumpkin patch during the growing season.

"In fact, we (giant pumpkin growers) now believe that hot, dry growing weather may be beneficial because it cuts down disease problems," he said.

Their giant for entry into last year's 100th anniversary Pumpkin Show succumbed to a viral disease prior to the judging.

Second place was earned by Ken Speakman with a personal best giant weighing 1,263.5 pounds. Speakman, a former Pumpkin Show winner, was the first grower to enter a giant topping 1,000 pounds the year the Liggetts won the event.

Last year's winners Karen Wiget and Buddy Conley placed third with a 1,113 pound giant. They won the event last year with a 1,324 pounder.

Caleb Miller, growing in his grandfather Ken Speakman's patch, placed fourth with a giant weighing 919 pounds, and the Gerchys were fifth.

Sixth place went to Carolyn Vanderpool at 837 pounds, followed by Larry Schaffer at 823 pounds, Darryl Crosby at 801.5 pounds, a Liggett reject at 686.5 pounds, Diane Geiger with a 603.5 pounder, Rick

Vanderpool at 579 pounds, Biff and BJ Bumgarner at 534 pounds, Seth Garrett at 532 pounds, Dave and Carol Douglas at 421.5, Susanne Hartig Hirth at 409.5 and 302.5, Cleo Conley, Buddy Conley cousin, at 345, Tony Vanderpool at 270, and Joe Nickoloff at 129.5 pounds.



The giant were taken from the growers' vehicles by straps and a lift, weighed, and placed on the display platform by members of the Circleville High School basketball team.

For those interested, the world record giant — and first ever over 1,600 pounds — was grown by Joe Jutras of N. Scituate, R.I., earlier in the year. It weighed 1,689 pounds. Previous world record was 1,502 pounds.

Next for the pumpkin growers is the 11 a.m. Friday presentation of the Nancy Martin Prettiest Pumpkin award. This will be conducted at the pumpkin display.