



**Contact:** Meghan Flynn  
 Stew Leonard's  
 203.750.6106  
[mflynn@stewleonards.com](mailto:mflynn@stewleonards.com)

**WILL THE WORLD'S LARGEST PUMPKIN BE CROWNED AT THE  
 WORLD'S LARGEST DAIRY STORE? FIND OUT AT THE GIANT  
 PUMPKIN WEIGH OFF!**

*Stew Leonard's Hosts the Connecticut Giant Squash &  
 Pumpkin Grower Association Annual Weigh-Off*  
 September 28, Noon to 4:00 PM at Stew Leonard's Norwalk Store

NORWALK, Conn., September 8, 2008 – Puny pumpkins need not apply to the fourth annual Connecticut Giant Squash & Pumpkin Growers Association Weigh-Off, being held for the first time at Stew Leonard's Norwalk store, located at 100 Westport Avenue.

The store's pumpkin patch will part to make room for these 1,000-plus-pounders on Sunday, September 28, as hopeful growers bring their giant gourds to be weighed in at this official Great Pumpkin Commonwealth sanctioned event.

Prize money will be awarded for the pudgiest and prettiest pumpkins and sizeable squash:

	Pumpkins	Squash
First Place:	\$2,500	\$500
Second Place:	\$1,000	\$400
Third Place:	\$500	\$300
Prettiest:	\$150	

People wishing to enter their pumpkin can fill out a registration form onsite the day of the event, or online at [www.ctpumpkin.com](http://www.ctpumpkin.com). There is a \$20.00 entrance fee to cover the association's expenses. Contestants can begin arriving at 7:00 A.M. Official weighing begins at Noon and is expected to conclude by 4:00 P.M.. Prizes will be awarded immediately following the weigh-off.

The event is free to the public. There will be a "Guess the Weight" contest for a chance to win \$100.00 to the person who comes closest to guessing the weight of the biggest pumpkin. In addition, Stew's Halloween Hayride Spooktacular, a 15-minute family-friendly hayride, will open for the Halloween season. The Garden Center is transformed into a sea of orange, with more than 50,000 Connecticut-grown pumpkins available to choose from to make the perfect jack-o-lantern, along with Halloween decorations, corn stalks and hay bales.

A lot of care goes into growing giant pumpkins, with farmers spending at least two hours a day tending to their plants, feeding them kelp and fish, and covering them up with quilts at night to keep them warm. Many spend so much time with them, that they give their pumpkins names.

"This year was challenging from a weather standpoint, with the hail we had in the spring, and some of the cooler nights in August, which slows down the pumpkins' weight gain," said Ray Leonzi, former state record holder and president of the Connecticut Giant Squash & Pumpkin Growers Association. "During peak growing season, the pumpkins put on between 30 and 40 pounds a day and require up to 300 gallons of water a day."

Pumpkin Fun Facts

- The World Record for a giant pumpkin is 1,689 pounds grown in Rhode Island.
- The name pumpkin originated from "pepon", the Greek word for "large melon."
- Pumpkins are 90 percent water.
- The Connecticut field variety is the traditional American pumpkin.
- Pumpkins are fruit, not vegetables. They are an excellent source of fiber and vitamin A.
- The average pumpkin contains roughly 1 cup of seeds.
- Pumpkins take between 90 and 120 days to grow, and are typically planted between the last week of May and the middle of June. Eighty percent of the pumpkin supply in the United States is available in October.

About The Connecticut Giant Squash & Pumpkin Growers Association

The Connecticut Giant Squash & Pumpkin Growers Association's mission is to further the sport of competitive giant squash and pumpkin growing. They involve and assist hobbyist growers to expand the overall interest in these amazing fruit. The association is non-profit, so all proceeds from the organization's fundraisers go towards educational efforts for its members as well as funding events. For more information, visit [www.ctpumpkin.com](http://www.ctpumpkin.com).

About Stew Leonard's

Stew Leonard's, a family-owned and operated grocery founded in 1969, has four stores in Norwalk, Danbury, and Newington, Conn. and Yonkers, NY. The company was named among FORTUNE magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work for in America" for the past seven consecutive years. For more information, visit Stew Leonard's website at [www.stewleonards.com](http://www.stewleonards.com).