



## University of Vermont Extension 4-H Pumpkin Challenge Record

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Age: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Youth Participant – check all that apply:

I am a first time gardener

I have gardened 2-3 years

I have 4 or more years gardening experience

Family members or other adults will help me with the 4-H Pumpkin Challenge

**Be sure to check out our Facebook page at: [Vermont 4-H Pumpkin Trial](#)**

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

University of Vermont Extension – Cultivating Healthy Communities

Written and compiled by Martha Edwards Manning, Franklin / Grand Isle County 4-H Educator

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### **Why keep a Pumpkin Record?**

- You will be able to set and record goals for yourself.
- Keeping records will help you remember:
  - how you utilized your space
  - the fun you had
  - new skills that you learned or would like to learn
  - any amendments that were made to the soil
- The information in your record will give you a chance to look back on your year and help you decide what you want to change for next year.
- Your record will be a way to share your project with others.

### **Record Book Instructions**

- Read through this record book before you start recording information.
- Keep your record book up to date. (It makes record keeping easier).
- If you have questions, ask for help from other members, your parents, leaders or 4-H staff, or other gardeners
- Be creative; make the record book interesting and add your own personal touch. Photos are an easy way to add detail, color, and detail to your record.



4-H: Your first class at the University of Vermont

**TWO GOALS I HAVE FOR MY PUMPKIN PROJECT:** (COMPLETE AT THE BEGINNING OF YOUR PROJECT)

(Example: I would like to learn about cucumber beetles)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

**NEW SKILLS I WOULD LIKE TO LEARN:** (COMPLETE AT THE BEGINNING OF YOUR PROJECT)

(Example: I would like to learn to make compost tea.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

**SUMMARY OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS** – (COMPLETE AT THE END OF THE GROWING SEASON) What goals have you accomplished? If you have not accomplished one or more, please explain. What have you learned? Tell about your experiences this year.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Hypothesize:** Before you plant your pumpkin seeds estimate how many pounds you think your heaviest pumpkin will be at the end of the season: \_\_\_\_\_ pounds

**Actual weight at harvest:** \_\_\_\_\_ pounds

**How close were you to your estimate?** \_\_\_\_\_

**General Information**

1. What is the size of your garden area in feet?

Length \_\_\_\_\_ feet      Width \_\_\_\_\_ feet

*4-H Life Skills – Goal Setting, Decision Making*

*4-H Science Skills – Communication, Design Solutions, Hypothesize, Compare*

## (Optional Activity) Taking a Soil Sample\*

If you choose to take a soil sample you want to take a uniform sample. By collecting a number of cores (individual samples) your final sample will better represent the average condition. It is recommended that you take a minimum of 10 cores for a home garden. You may be able to borrow a soil auger or probe from your local Extension office. By simply pushing the soil probe into the soil and lifting, the core can then be dropped into a bucket. Once all the cores have been collected mix well and then fill the bag in the soil kit with approximately 1 cup of soil. Complete the questionnaire and place with bag of soil in mailer with your payment. Remember it may take a couple of weeks or more for the results to be mailed back to you. Samples taken in the spring may take a month for you to get the results. Be sure to use the test kit for gardens – not the one for farm fields.

### Soil Sample Results:

What was the:

pH of your soil? \_\_\_\_\_ Pumpkins prefer a pH of 6.0- 6.8

Available Phosphorus \_\_\_\_\_ ppm P      \_\_\_\_\_ Low      \_\_\_\_\_ Med      \_\_\_\_\_ High

Potassium \_\_\_\_\_ ppm K      \_\_\_\_\_ Low      \_\_\_\_\_ Med      \_\_\_\_\_ High

Magnesium \_\_\_\_\_ ppm Mg      \_\_\_\_\_ Low      \_\_\_\_\_ Med      \_\_\_\_\_ High

What general recommendations were made:

*\*Soil test kits are available at your local University of Vermont Extension offices. These tests will indicate soil fertility and nutrient levels. If you choose to do a soil test ask for the Vegetable soil test kit. The soil sample is then collected and mailed for testing. The results will indicate soil pH, fertility and levels of Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Potassium as well as some micronutrients A payment of \$14 is mailed with the soil.*

## Soil Preparation

1. How did you prepare the soil before planting? Did you apply any fertilizer or compost at the time of tilling? Did you have to remove rocks or other debris?

**Planting Table** - If you do not know the variety write “MYSTERY” or Unknown.

Date Year	What was Planted	Plant Variety	Days to Harvest	Yield			Next	
				Poor	Good	Super	Yes	No
		Big Moose						

*4-H Life Skills – Keeping records, Critical thinking, Planning organizing*

*4-H Science Skills – Use Tools, Observe, Question, Evaluate*

## Pumpkin Patch / Garden Map

Draw a map of your garden. Are there other types of vegetables growing in your garden?

### Weeds

1. How do you control weeds in your pumpkin patch? Do you pull them or use some type of mulch? How often do you weed? Once the leaves formed a canopy did you need to weed as often?

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**Pests and Diseases**— Record the types of pests or diseases you identify in your garden and record methods used to control them. Have an adult help you with the identification and method to controls used.

Date	Pest or Disease Identified	Control Used	Did Your Method Work

*4-H Life Skills – Problem solving, Empathy, Sharing*

*4-H Science Skills – Develop Solutions, Observe, and Problem solve*

## Service Learning

Whether your pumpkin patch / garden is large or small you can use your project to help others in your community. Here are a few ideas. Please put a check beside any that you do.

- Donate pumpkins to a local non-profit
- Conduct a lesson to teach younger children where food comes from
- Help with the vegetable department at the local fair
- Help at a community dinner
- Help younger youth with their gardens
- Visit a nursing home or day care and teach others about gardening – bring samples to share
- Volunteer at a local community garden or farmers market
- Other (Please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

## Pumpkin Patch Visit– ask a neighbor or fellow gardener to offer input

This section should be filled out by your garden visitor. Ask them to rate your garden using this rubric. Place a check in the appropriate box of the rubric. Visit should be done late in growing season.

Date of visit: \_\_\_\_\_ Name of person doing visit: \_\_\_\_\_

	Situation	Excellent	Good	Needs Work
1	Pumpkin record	Up to date and complete at the time of visit	Nearly complete at the time of visit	Not up to date or pages incomplete
2	Space	Space used efficiently or creatively, plants spaced properly for varieties	Plants too far apart or overcrowded	Overcrowding may result in decreased harvest
3	Insect damage	None or minimal insect damage present	Minimal damage – can identify methods to control damage – steps have been taken to reduce damage	Damage not under control – take steps to minimize damage
4	Presence of disease	None or minimal disease damage present	Minimal damage – can identify methods to control damage – steps have been taken to reduce disease	Damage not under control – take steps to minimize damage
5	Weed control	Minimal weeds present	Some weeds present – spend more time weeding or try using mulch or other methods to control weeds	Weeds may be limiting the growth of the desired plants
6	Harvest Outlook	Pumpkins looks great – Outlook is for an above average harvest	Pumpkins looks average – Outlook is for an average harvest	Harvest Outlook is not great at this time – try to spend more time in your garden

## Project Summary

1. How did you use your pumpkins? Did you grow your pumpkins for decoration only?
2. Did you preserve or store any of the seeds for later use?
3. What changes would you like to make in your garden next year?
4. What did you find to be the most challenging about growing the pumpkins? Why?
5. Did you bring your pumpkin(s) to the weigh-in?
6. Did family members or other adults help you with the 4-H Pumpkin Challenge? Who were they?
7. How did your “helpers” help? What did they do to help you?
8. Approximately how many hours did you spend working on the Pumpkin Challenge this year?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Hours
9. Did you have fun participating in this project?
10. Would you recommend this project to others?

Participant signature \_\_\_\_\_ Parent or  
Guardian signature \_\_\_\_\_

## **Pictures**

Pictures help to tell a story. Include pictures of various stages of the project. (Example: Include pictures of Preparing the soil, planting, weeding, hoeing, harvesting and weighing.) If you are being helped with the 4-H Pumpkin Challenge by members of your family or others, be sure to take pictures of you working with them, too. Ask someone to help you with this part so that you and your helpers can be in the pictures.

