



Al and Barb Sarver with their three prize-winning Bedford County pumpkins.

The Great Pumpkin With A Whole Patch Of Giant Peers

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BEDFORD (Bedford Co.) — When the "Great Pumpkin" visits the home of Barbara and Alfred Sarver of Manns Choice RD 1, it meets a whole patch of giant peers.

Al and Barbara Sarver have been raising and entering pumpkins in the competition at the annual Pumpkin Festival at Old Bedford Village for the past four years.

Grown on two acres of farmland in the southern part of Bedford County, the pumpkins are an Atlantic Giant and Prize Winners cross. Al says he uses the largest pumpkins each year for seed.

This year, as in years previous, the Sarver pumpkins placed first in Bedford County competition. "We usually get beaten by a few pounds by pumpkins from elsewhere," Barb says. "But, the judges always say that if they were judging for beauty, ours would win all awards."

A deep golden color puts the Sarver pumpkins in the asthenic spotlight.

This year, the Sarver entries weighed in at 262, 200 and 182 pounds. One of the entries was that of Lisa Daulton, a niece of the Sarvers who enjoys helping with the pumpkins each summer.

Al credits Miracle Grow and cow manure with the success of his pumpkin patch. He also waters on a daily basis if there is no rain.

The Sarvers are very aware of the role pumpkins play in today's health conscious diets.

Pumpkins are an excellent source of vitamin A and if the added fat and sugar are kept low, it is surprisingly low in calories.

The big orange fruit plays an important role in Thanksgiving and, while we are all used to the traditional pumpkin pie dessert, there are many other ways to use pumpkin in our daily diets.

Baked pumpkin halves can be stuffed with meat, rice, or vegetables.

Grate raw pumpkin into your Thanksgiving stuffing or substitute pumpkin in any recipe that calls for winter squash.

The easiest way to cook a pumpkin or winter squash is to halve it, scoop out the seeds and stringy pulp and bake the rest in the rind until tender.

Sprinkle the halves with spice,

cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, allspice, or mace, and microwave cut side down or warp in plastic until tender, 6 to 7 minutes per pound.

Of course, these suggestions work better with pumpkins smaller than those raised by the Sarvers.

Barbara Sarver does can pumpkin and might choose one of the following recipes for her Thanksgiving dessert.

VELVETY PUMPKIN CHIFFON PIE

1 baked 10-inch pastry shell
1 envelope unflavored gelatine
1/4 cup cold water
3 eggs, separated
3/4 cup brown sugar, packed
1 1/3 cups mashed, cooked pumpkin
2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup milk
1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
6 tablespoons sugar
1 cup heavy cream, whipped
1/4 cup slivered almonds
1/4 cup chopped dates
3 tablespoons crystallized ginger

Bake and cool pastry shell. Soften gelatine in water. Beat egg yolks; add brown sugar, pumpkin, pumpkin pie spice and salt. Mix well, then stir in milk. Cook over medium heat, stirring until it begins to boil. Then cook 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Add softened gelatine, stirring until melted. Cool.

Beat until smooth and add almonds, chopped dates, and ginger. Beat egg whites with cream of tartar until soft peaks form. Add the 6 tablespoons of sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, beating until stiff but not dry. Fold into pumpkin mixture. Chill. Top with whipped cream.

HEART HEALTHY PUMPKIN PIE

1 9-inch baked pie shell
1/2 cup firmly packed brown sugar
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground ginger
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 Pinch of ground cloves
1 16 ounce can pumpkin puree
1 1/4 cups evaporated skim milk
3 large egg whites
Preheat oven to 350°F
Bake pie crust until lightly browned, about 10 minutes.

Remove from oven and let cool to room temperature.

Preheat oven to 450°F.

In a large bowl, beat all filling ingredients until no lumps remain. Pour into pie shell and bake 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 325°F and bake 50 minutes until a knife comes out clean.

PUMPKIN TART WITH GINGER MERINGUE

1 pie shell
1 tablespoon currant jelly
2 eggs
3/4 cup cream
1/3 cup sugar
3/4 cup cooked pumpkin puree
1/2 teaspoon ginger
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
meringue topping
2 to 3 egg whites
1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
1/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon crushed candied ginger.

Preheat the oven to 400°. Brush the pie shell with currant jelly.

Beat together the eggs, cream, and sugar. Beat in the pumpkin and spices. Pour into the prepared shell and bake for 10 minutes. Lower the oven temperature to 350 and bake for 25 to 30 minutes until the filling is set. Chill the pie.

Beat the whites until foamy and add the cream of tartar. Beat until just stiff and beat in the sugar. Beat until stiff peaks form and the whites are shiny. Preheat the oven to 450°.

Cover the chilled pie with the meringue. Be sure to spread the topping over the edges of the pie or it will shrink from the edges while browning. Sprinkle with 1 teaspoon crushed candied ginger. Bake for 4 to 5 minutes until the meringue is browned. Cool and serve.



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