

The Art of Growing

Gimungus

Pumpkins

Adam Blalock

TSU Nursery Extension

Otis L. Floyd Nursery Research Center

McMinnville, TN



Hot Chelle
Race
Live in Concert
September
October 4th
5pm
Call for tickets
1-800-789-2287
hachelle.org

HOME HALF GUEST

2009
6510 POUNDS
NEGGA

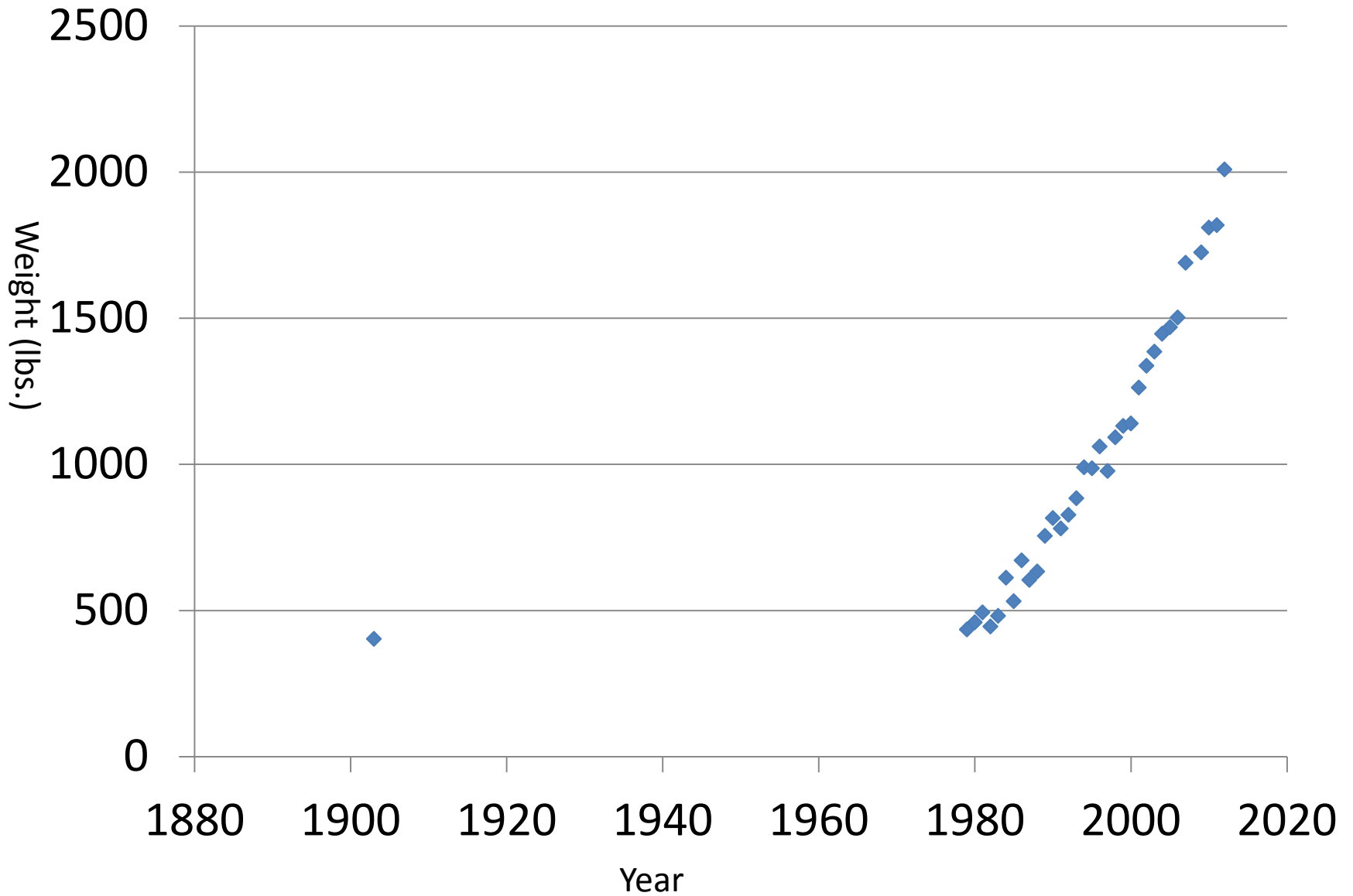
Team-Pumpkin
working together
grow giant pumpkins

2012
to the
of
American Egg...
...

Some Giant Pumpkin History

- 1903 – World record set at 403lbs.
- Howard Dill – The Godfather of pumpkins
 - 1978 – made a chance cross of the ‘Goodrich Giant’ and ‘Genuine Mammoth’
 - 1979 – broke the 76 year old world record using seeds from that cross!
- 2012 – the world record now stands at 2,009 pounds!!!

Largest Pumpkins Grown Per Year



The 3 most common questions a giant pumpkin grower will hear.

1. How many pumpkin pies will that make?
2. Did you feed it milk?
3. How did you grow it?

How do you Grow a Giant Pumpkin?

1. Get the best seeds you can
2. Get your soil into the best condition you can
3. Use the best cultural practices you can

1. Get the Best Seeds You Can



Never Underestimate the Power of Genetics

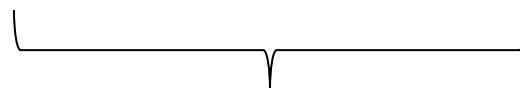


Pumpkins weight



1046.5

Blalock,



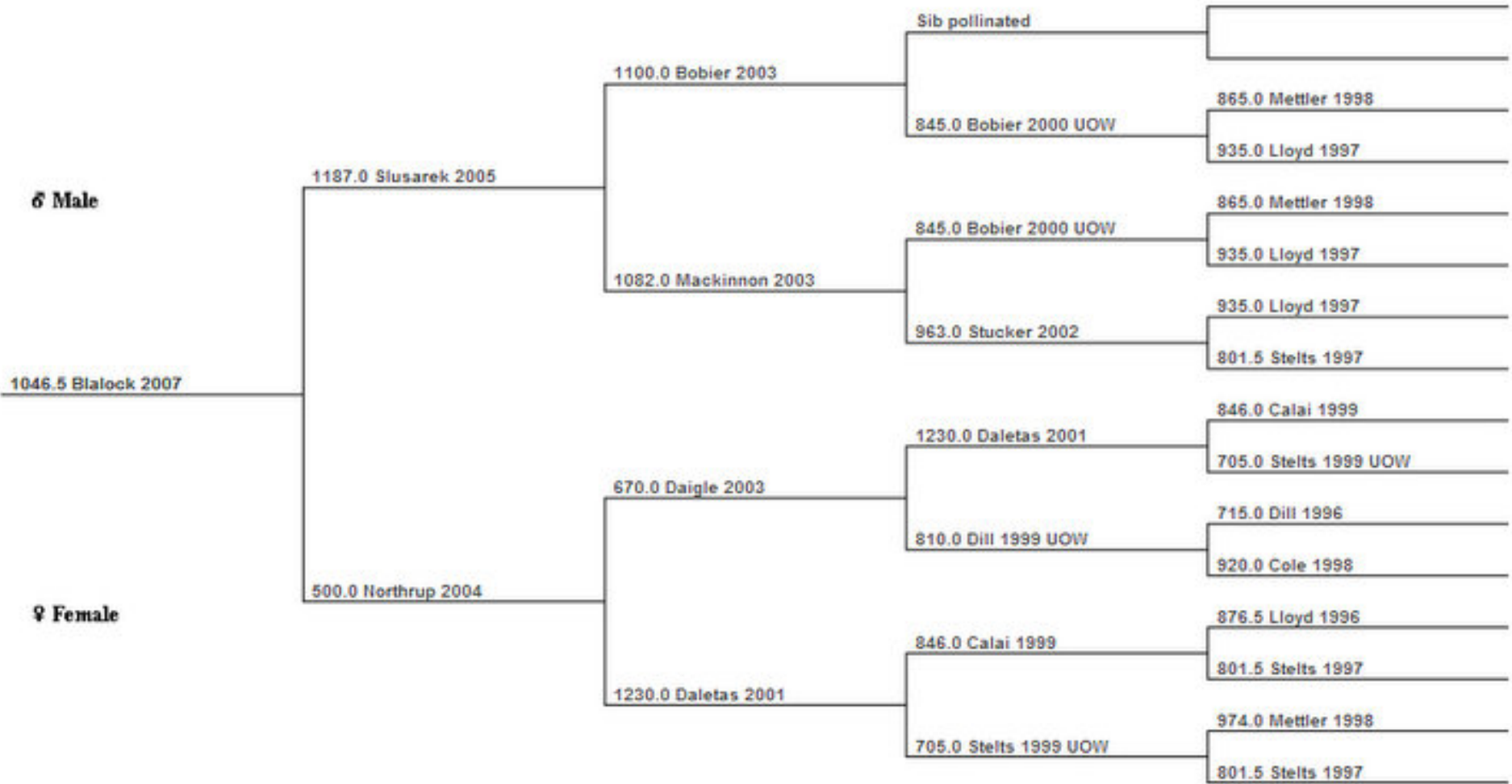
Growers last name

Year grown



2007

Each Seed Will Have a Family Tree



Click on the tree nodes to display the options menu for that p

Seeds

- **New Seeds**
 - Seeds with no known progeny
 - High risk but...
 - Potential for high reward
- **Proven Seeds**
 - Seeds at least 2 years old
 - Seeds with known progeny
 - Hard to get



2. Get your soil into the best condition you can

- Soil is critical!
- Well drained and high in organic matter
- Old manure, leaves, and compost added annually
 - 5+ cu. yd. per 1,000 sq. ft.!
- pH between 6.5 and 6.8
- Calcium and Magnesium must not be lacking
- Limit competition from neighboring trees or plants

My Soil Amendments Before the Plants go in

- 16-16-16 or 10-20-20
- Gypsum – Calcium Sulfate
- Calcium Nitrate
- Ironite[®] – trace minerals
- Kelp meal – seaweed







Germinating the Seeds

- 85 degrees consistent
- Use high quality sterile seed starting mix
- Media should be moist, not wet
- Planted pointy end down about $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ inch
- Filing on the rounded side of the seed can help with shedding the seed coat once germinated
- Don't forget to label and record.



'94 1 1

3. Cultural Practices

- Avoid soil compaction at all costs
- Maintain a WEED FREE garden
- Train the vines correctly – Christmas tree pattern
- Bury vines – they will root at each leaf axil
- Maximize drainage under fruit – Sand
- Erect a shade structure over the fruit
- Place white towels over fruit, soak with calcium
- Mist when temperatures are above 90 deg.
- Fertigate 2x per week
 - Once with an organic fish and/or seaweed fertilizer
 - Once with a balanced waters soluble fertilizer like 15-30-15, 20-20-20





898

1033.5

Black







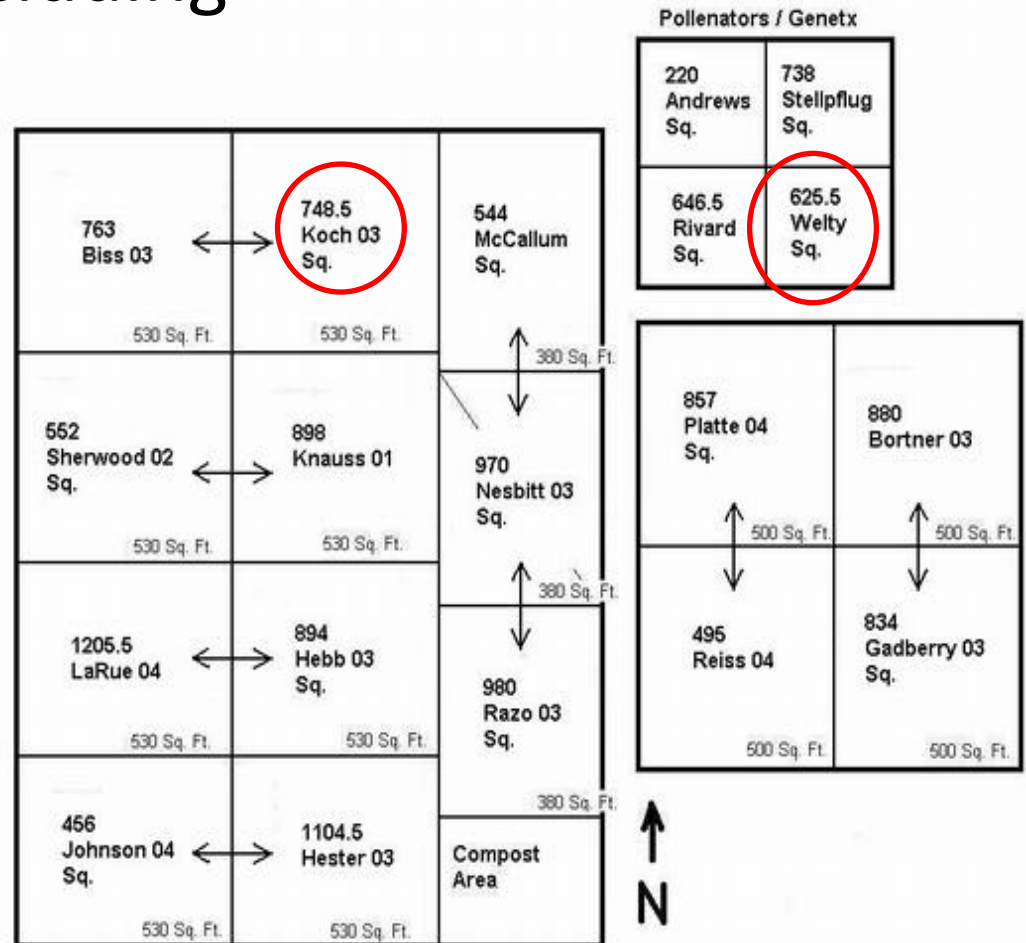
The Story of my Northwest Record Squash in 2007

- Story ends in 2007
- Began in 2005



2005

- Grew 20 plants including
 - The 748.5 Koch
 - The 625.5 Welty



July 09, 2005

625.5 Welty – small but
% heavy fruit



748.5 Koch – big but
% light squash

625.5 Welty
July 17, 2005

#25
7-15-05
625.5
x
748.5
L5



625.5 Welty
September 25, 2005



633 pounds

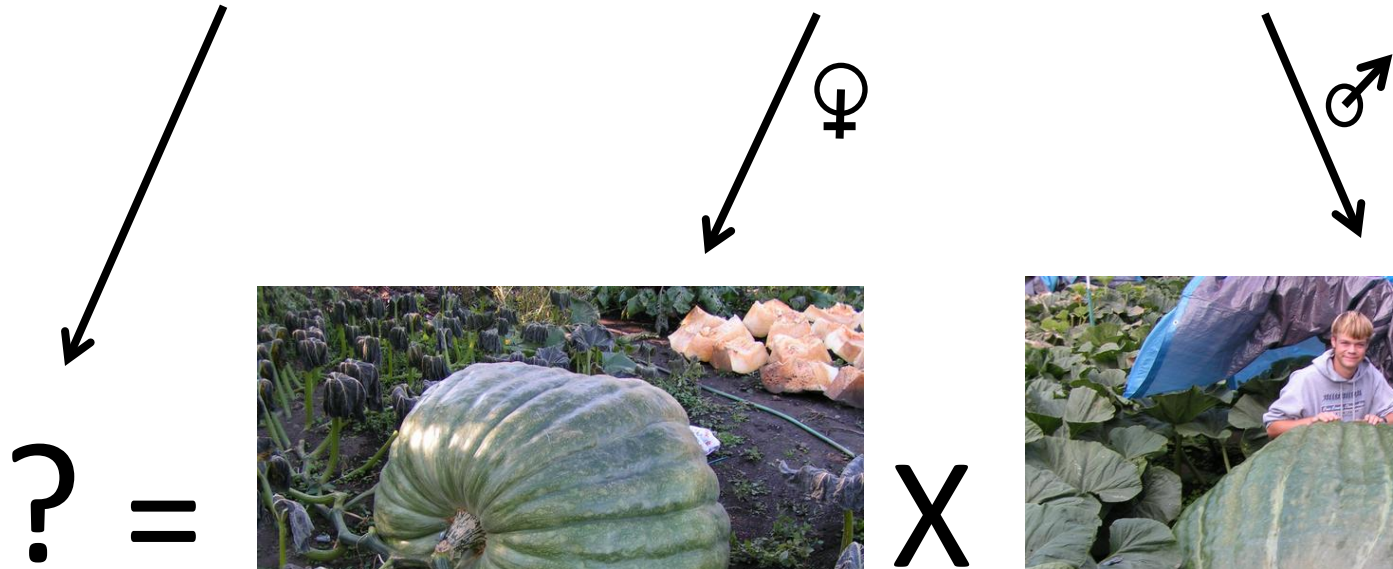
748.5 Koch
September 17, 2005



961 pounds

The 633 Blalock, 2005

633 Blalock, 2005 (625.5 Welty x 748.5 Koch)



633 lbs.
~20% +



961.5 lbs.
~10% -

The 2007 Season

May 05, 2007



633 A

May 21, 2007



June 04, 2007



June 29, 2007



July 07, 2007



July 07, 2007

711
633
x
218
5L



July 18, 2007



July 30, 2007

Est. 140 lbs.



August 26, 2007



September 8, 2007

Est. 970 lbs.

(Still growing over 10lb./day!)



September 29, 2007

Est. 1,121 lbs.



October 7, 2007

Loading the Monster



October 07, 2007

The ropes are stretched taught from the extreme weight!



October 8, 2007

To be weighed...



1129.5



SCALE SERVICES
MAVERICK WEIGHING SYSTEMS
503-625-6869







The End

Questions

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TSU Nursery Research Center









August 7, 2007
Casualties!

