



**CORNELL
COOPERATIVE
EXTENSION OF
ONEIDA COUNTY**

HOME GROWN FACTS

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GROWING PUMPKINS



With fertile soil and a long enough growing season, it's easy to grow your own Jack-o-lanterns -- if you have enough space. Choose varieties bred for flavor if you want to make pies.

Site Characteristics

Sunlight:

- full sun

Soil conditions:

- requires well-drained soil
- requires high fertility

Prefers well-drained, fertile, loose soil, high in organic matter with pH between 5.8 and 6.8. Plentiful and consistent moisture is needed from the time plants emerge until fruits begin to fill out.

Plant Traits

Lifecycle: annual

Tender annual

Ease-of-care: easy

If you have plenty of space, good soil and a long enough growing season, pumpkins are easy to grow.

Height: 1.5 to 3 feet

Spread: 5 to 15 feet

Most varieties grow on vines that spread 8 feet or more. Even smaller bush types spread 5 feet or more.

Bloom time:

- mid-summer
- late summer

Flower color: yellow

Foliage color: medium green

Foliage texture: coarse

Shape:

- low and trailing
- climbing / vine

Shape in flower: same as above

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Helping You Put Knowledge to Work

Cornell Cooperative Extension provides equal program and employment opportunities. NYS College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, NYS College of Human Ecology, and NYS College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell University, Cooperative Extension associations, county governing bodies, and U.S. Department of Agriculture, cooperating.

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Varieties

Whether they are *Cucurbita pepo* (the same species as summer squash) *C. moschata*, *C. argyrosperma* or *C. maxima*, most pumpkin varieties produce sprawling vines. If space is tight, there are a few bush or semi-bush varieties that take less space.

If you plan to make pies rather than Jack-o-lanterns, look for varieties bred for flavor (most are *C. moschata*). Ornamental types (most are *C. pepo*) range from tennis-ball-sized novelties (great for kids to decorate with paint) to behemoths weighing hundreds of pounds (most are of these giants are *C. maxima*). Lumina is a white pumpkin that is also great for painting.

Some varieties, such as Baby Bear, have very thin seed hulls, making them a great choice if you plan to toast the seeds for snacks.

Some larger varieties require long growing seasons and may not mature in cooler areas of New York.

Some varieties recommended for New York include:

Mini: Baby Boo, Jack-be-Little, Munchkin

Small: Baby Bear, Baby Pam, Lil' Ironsides, Lumina, Small Sugar, Snackjack

Medium to Large: Autumn Gold, Gold Rush, Howden, Howdy Doody, Jackpot, Magic Lantern, Racer, Rocket, Spooktacular, Tom Fox

Giant: Atlantic Giant, Big Max, Prizewinner

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