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I. NOTES OF INTEREST

A. Vegetable Crops Calendar.


II. COMMERCIAL VEGETABLES

A. Advisory Board Sets Priorities.

The SW FL Vegetable Research and Extension Advisory Board is made up of vegetable growers and allied support industry personnel whose directive is to help the SW FL Research & Education Center, and Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry and Lee county vegetable extension personnel determine the attitudes and opinions prevalent in the vegetable industry. The Board (13 members) reviews research and extension programming and offers advice to keep the mandates in line with the needs of the local industry. At the March meeting the board prioritized the areas where they believe the greatest research emphasis should be put.

Priority #

1. Methylbromide alternatives - the search for a replacement (or systems approach) for this soon to be banned soil fumigant and suspected ozone depleter was top priority.

2. Whitefly/Virus - Sweetpotato whitefly and Tomato Mottle Virus were responsible for $125 million in crop losses in 1992 and possibly more in 1994.

3. Drip irrigation - more research in this area of technology and the efficiency thereof was requested.

4. Thrips palmi - few chemical controls exist for this devastating insect pest of southeastern FL and it is moving west!

5. Water use issues & regulations - less water for agriculture, ground water contamination, and dwindling land/water associations all concern growers.

6. Broad mite control - this winter insect pest that scars pepper fruit rendering it commercially unusable has few chemical controls.

7. Soil amendments - composts, sludges, etc. that may benefit production through fertilizer reduction, increased water holding capacity, and more need further investigation.

8. Greater Cucurbit crop emphasis - more research on cucumbers, squash, watermelons, and others.

9. Variety trials - small scale trials give growers some indication of which of the many varieties might be best to grow.

10. Freeze protection - what proven methods are available when they are needed?

11. Retention area maintenance - how can we better maintain storm reservoirs?

Those of us in vegetable programs at the SWFREC appreciate these inputs and will begin to direct research into those priority areas not already under consideration.

(Vavrina, Vegetarian 94-05)
B. Pumpkin Varieties for Florida.

Pumpkins are grown mostly for sale during October and November for decorative purposes. Statistical data on production in Florida are not available, but it is estimated that only a few hundred acres are grown in the entire state. Production from this acreage is not nearly enough to satisfy the demand, hence considerable tonnage is shipped into the state, primarily from the midwest.

Previous evaluations of pumpkin varieties have been made in Florida but a number of new varieties have been released since those trials were conducted. Because of the potential for increased pumpkin production in Florida, an evaluation of 40 commercially-available varieties and six advanced experimental lines was conducted in the summer and fall of 1993 on a commercial farm in Manatee County.

Entries in this trial were mostly typical Halloween pumpkin (Cucurbita pepo) types even though fruit size ranged from miniature to very large.

Six varieties; 'Big Max', 'Big Moon', 'Cinderella', 'Prizewinner', 'Rouge Vif D'Etampes', and 'Snowball', although frequently grown and used as pumpkins, are actually squash (Cucurbita maxima). 'Buckskin' appeared to be still another species (Cucurbita moschata).

This trial was conducted on a commercial farm in Manatee County using practices employed by the grower for pumpkin production. Beds were formed in early July by incorporating 200 lbs 2-18-4 (N-P-K) per acre and banding 1200 lbs 10-0-20 per acre on each shoulder of the bed prior to application of white on black polyethylene mulch. The final beds were 8 inches high and 36 inches wide and were on 13 ft centers. On 21-22 July, pumpkin seeds were planted through holes punched in the polyethylene mulch at 2 ft in-row spacing for short-vined varieties - 'Baby Bear', 'Baby Boo', 'Baby Pam', 'Jack-Be-Little', 'Jack-Be-Quick', 'Little Lantern', 'Munchkin', 'Oz', and 'Sweetie Pie' and 3 ft in-row spacing for all other entries. Because of space limitations, five plant plots were used for all of the experimental entries, 'Buckskin', 'Cinderella', 'Rouge Vif D'Etampes', 'Spirit', and 'Trick or Treat'; ten plant plots were used for all of the other varieties. Each plot was replicated three times in a randomized block design. Yields were converted to a per acre basis prior to statistical analysis to correct for different plot sizes.

Pumpkins were harvested 6 to 20 October. The miniature and very small-fruited pumpkins were counted and weighed in bulk and larger fruit were weighed individually. Five representative fruit from each plot were selected for measurement with calipers and fruit rind color was assessed by comparison with the RHS Colour Chart. Later, these colors were converted to a 0 (light yellow) to 5 (dark orange) scale for statistical analysis.

The number of fruit produced per acre ranged from 484 for 'Thomas Halloween' to 18,093 for 'Baby Boo'. Thirty-four other entries produced a similar number of fruit as 'Thomas Halloween', whereas only 'Jack-Be-Little' and 'Jack-Be-Quick' produced as many fruit as 'Baby Boo'. The number of fruit produced per plant varied from 0.4 for 'Thomas Halloween' to 10.8 for 'Baby Boo' and 'Jack-Be-Little'. Thirty-three other entries had fruit production per plant similar to that of 'Thomas Halloween', whereas 'Jack-Be-Quick' and PUXP 2001 produced as many fruit per plant as 'Baby Boo' and 'Jack-Be-Little'. Fruit yield varied from 37.1 cwt/acre for 'Oz' to 279.7 cwt/acre for 'Prizewinner'. Thirty-two other entries had yields similar to those of 'Oz', whereas only 'Cinderella' yielded as well as 'Prizewinner'. Average fruit weight ranged from 0.2 lb for 'Baby Boo' to
35.3 lb for 'Prizewinner'. Fourteen other entries had average fruit weight similar to that of 'Baby Boo', whereas only 'Big Moon' and 'Atlantic Giant' were as heavy as 'Prizewinner'. Eighteen entries had fruit with height:width ratios of 1 or greater, whereas 28 entries produced fruit with height:width ratios less than 1. The range was 0.53 for 'Rouge Vif D'Etampe' to 1.32 for 'October'. Rind color was lightest in 'Atlantic Giant', 'Big Moon', and 'Jack-Be-Quick' and darkest in 'Baby Pam', HMX 2690, 'Howden', and JSS9032Fl in the yellow/orange rind entries. Six other entries had similar light color and 22 other entries had similar dark rind color. 'Baby Boo' and 'Snowball' had white rinds and 'Buckskin' had a buff colored rind.

Pumpkin yields in this trial are typical of those obtained in most previous trials in Florida but lower than those obtained at this location in 1992. The general pattern of the highest per acre yields being produced by entries that produce very large fruit and the largest number of fruit being produced by entries that produce miniature fruit was repeated in this trial.

Pumpkins of any size and shape are saleable for decorative purposes. For the jack-o-lantern trade, however, pumpkins weighing at least 8 lbs and not more than 18 lbs are preferred. Larger fruit are useful for individual display purposes and smaller fruit often are used in combination with other pumpkins and fall decorations. In almost all cases, a bright or deep orange color is preferred to a light orange or yellow.

Outstanding entries based on productivity, rind color, and suitability for the decorative market in each size class were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size Class</th>
<th>Miniatures</th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Large</th>
<th>Very Large</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Baby Boo</td>
<td>Baby Bear</td>
<td>Autumn Gold</td>
<td>Aspen</td>
<td>Big Max</td>
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<tr>
<td>&lt; 1 lb</td>
<td>HMX 2692</td>
<td>Little Lantern</td>
<td>Big Autumn</td>
<td>Big Tom</td>
<td>Big Moon</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jack-Be-Little</td>
<td>Spooktacular</td>
<td>Funny Face</td>
<td>Connecticut Field</td>
<td>Prizewinner</td>
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<td></td>
<td>HMX 2688</td>
<td>JumpinJack</td>
<td>(Maynard, Vegetarian 94-05)</td>
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<td>5.1-10.0 lb</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>JSS9032Fl</td>
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<tr>
<td>10.1-20.0 lb</td>
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<tr>
<td>&gt;20.0 lb</td>
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III. VEGETABLE GARDENING

A. The Garden and Landscape Section - FSHS.

Paper presentations are needed for the 1994 Garden and Landscape Section of the Florida State Horticultural Society. The Annual Meeting will be held October 30 - November 1, 1994, at the Clarion Plaza Hotel, 9700 International Drive, Orlando. Papers are scheduled for Monday, Oct. 31, and Tuesday, Nov. 1.

The senior author and anyone giving the paper must be a member of the Society. (regular dues: $25.00). Also, the speaker must be registered at the meeting ($50.00).

Twenty-five papers are needed in this section. To present a paper, send a 150-word abstract to sectional vice-president Jim Stephens (PO Box 110690, Gainesville 32611) by June 1st.

1) Use a space 4 inches long by 6.5 inches wide. 
2) First line(s) are for authors' names/affiliation. 
3) Underline author names and asterisk the name giving paper. 
4) Single space.

The Garden and Landscape Section was established in 1972 and organized similar to other Sections of the Society. Its purpose was and is to provide growers, advanced hobbyists, and technical and non-technical members the opportunity to publish.

According to John Popenoe of Fairchild Tropical Garden (1972), the FSHS originally was a society of amateurs and horticulturists from all walks of life and covering all phases of horticulture. Papers were presented by hobby or business growers rather than by researchers. Much valuable information was gained from keen observation.

Popenoe noted that over the years, Florida horticulture became more professionalized so the Society's Sections became more scientific and rigid in requirements. The gradual changes tended to discourage the amateur from taking an active part in the proceedings. He felt that his backyard observations compared unfavorably with a scientifically designed experiment. Yet, astute horticulturists realize that the field is so large that there will always be a place for the observation of amateurs.

That first year (1972) six papers were given in The Garden and Landscape Section. The first paper presented was by Horticulture Extension Agent Louis Daigle, and was all about how to have a superior lawn in South Florida. It was not until 7 years later that a paper on vegetables appeared. Herb Bryan and Bill Stall introduced gardeners to a simple method for fluid-drilling pregerminated seeds (FSHS 1978).

During the period 1972 through 1992, there have been 332 papers presented in the Section. Of these, 90 percent related to ornamental horticulture, directly, or indirectly (see Table 1).

In keeping with the original intent of this Section, I would like to encourage all Extension agents, Master Gardeners, and other amateur horticulturists to share results of trial gardens, horticultural projects, and general observations about plants in typical garden and landscape situations. Almost any topic relating to horticulture has potential value for other readers.

As the Sectional VP, I can help you or anyone you know decide if your subject for a paper is of value. Please call me at 904 392-1928 ext 209 or send in your abstract by June 1.

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<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>12.9 per yr</td>
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<td>.6 per yr</td>
<td>1.2 per yr</td>
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(Stephens, Vegetarian 94-05)
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