

**Fred Calai**

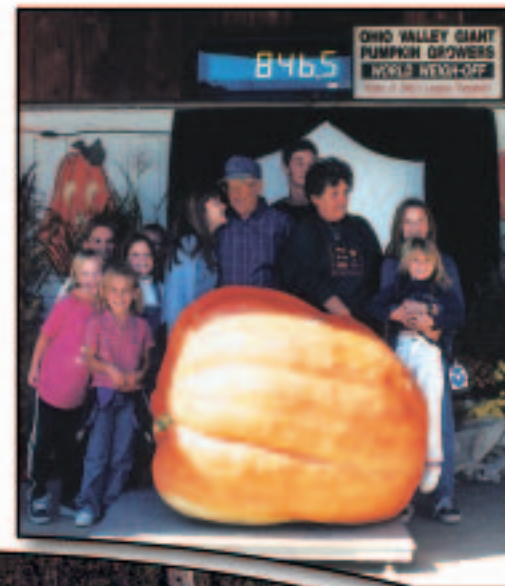
If Fred Calai of Canfield, Ohio had only grown giant pumpkins in 2002, and never put another seed in the ground, he would still be considered one of the finest giant pumpkin growers of all time. What a year he had in 2002!

Very few giant pumpkin growers can make the statement that they have grown multiple 1000 pounders. Geneva Emmons and Kirk Mombert have done it 4 times, and Brett Hester, Steve Daletas, Paul Handy, and Joe Pukos have all done it 3 times. Some of these growers spread their accomplishment over more than one year, but none has ever brought 3, 1000+ pound fruit to a single weigh off. On October 5, 2002, Fred Calai showed up at Parks' Garden Center in Canfield, Ohio for the GPC weigh off with a mega load. Later in the day it would be confirmed that he had grown a 1074 pound pumpkin (which finished 2nd in Ohio, 12th in the GPC, and moved him into 33rd place, all-time in the world), a 1049.5 pound pumpkin, and a 1056.5 pound squash. The squash is the second largest ever grown in the world.

He has also held the Ohio state record with his now famous 846 in 1999. The 846 produced 18 pumpkins over 700 pounds in 2002 including: five, 800-pounders; three, 900-pounders; two, 1000-pounders; and four, 1100 pounders. The 846 is a 801.5 Stelts x 876.5 Lloyd cross – which incidentally is the same cross that produced his 2002, 1074. The 846 Calai has produced 57 official pumpkins over 700 pounds, and the offspring have done incredibly well in their own right – setting standards for size, shape, and color that will remain integral characteristics of the Atlantic Giant.

Fred has donated thousands of his seeds to association raffles, sales, and auctions, and is described by all who have met him as kind, generous, and extremely supportive. He is the epitome of good sportsmanship in this sport.

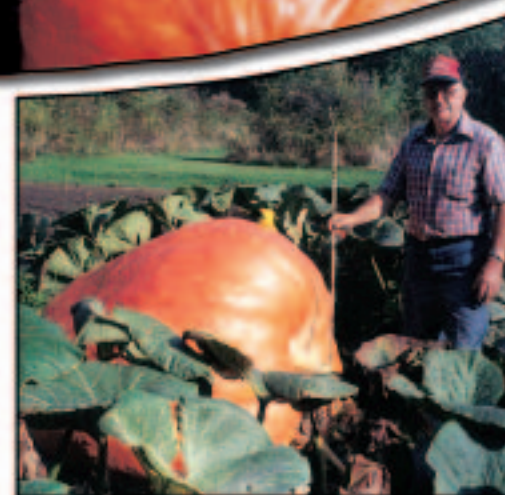
Fred has served as director of the Ohio Valley Giant Pumpkin Growers, and has been a tireless worker since the beginning of the organization. He also helped develop the Canfield weigh off track-lifter for pumpkins – a distinction that will not be forgotten by anyone who has ever volunteered to be on a giant pumpkin lifting team.



Top left: Fred's adoring family and the 1999, 846.  
Top right: Fred in the patch with his 2002, 1056.5 squash.  
Middle: Fred with the famous 846 again.



Below: Fred stands in the patch and then at the weigh off with his 2002, 1074. Extremely tall, with broad shoulders and great color – devoid of limiting dill rings or stem problems – the 1074 should get quite a run in 2003!



1999, 846