

Introducing 'Orange Bulldog'



A new, virus-resistant pumpkin, specifically developed for ornamental fall and Halloween displays. Credit: George E. Boyhan, Univ. of Georgia

Move over 'Longface', 'Spooktacular' and 'Trickster' - there's a new face in the pumpkin patch. Welcome 'Orange Bulldog', a new variety of the familiar fall fruit that may soon be available to consumers and wholesale pumpkin growers. Researchers at the University of Georgia recently introduced the new, virus-resistant pumpkin, specifically developed for ornamental fall and Halloween displays.

Dr. Gerard Krewer from the Department of Horticulture at the University of Georgia's College of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences, collected pumpkin seeds in remote areas of Brazil in 1996. The Brazilian seeds were then planted in laboratories, hybridized, and ultimately used to develop 'Orange Bulldog'.

Dr. George Boyhan, Assistant Professor and Extension Horticulturist at the University of Georgia and lead author of the study published in the October 2007 issue of HortScience, explained that pumpkins have not been readily available in southern states because conventional pumpkins are highly susceptible to viruses and often die before they produce fruit.

The research team set out to develop a virus-resistant pumpkin with bright orange color and an open cavity that would be suitable for Halloween carving. According to Boyhan, 'Orange Bulldog' seeds "consistently produced fruit during fall production, whereas commercial pumpkin cultivars often succumb to severe virus infections before fruiting."

Although 'Orange Bulldog' is not yet available to growers or the public, Boyhan's team hopes that a commercial supplier will soon handle the seeds and make the new pumpkin available to pick-your-own pumpkin growers and consumers.

Source: American Society for Horticultural Science

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