

'Orange Bulldog' A New Virus Resistant Pumpkin / Winter Squash

For Ornamental And Culinary Uses

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Pumpkins and squash are difficult to produce in the Southeast, particularly for the fall market. Aphid transmitted viruses can be devastating on this crop and often can result in complete crop failure. Even with an aggressive program to control aphids, it can be impossible to control these diseases. Because aphid transmitted viruses can be spread so quickly, just a few insects can quickly devastate the crop.

The University of Georgia has released a new pumpkin / winter squash named 'Orange Bulldog'. This pumpkin has been developed from germplasm collected in the jungles of South America with greater levels of resistance to viruses than conventional pumpkins. In tests in south Georgia, this pumpkin has consistently produced greater yields than conventional pumpkins it was tested against in fall production. In many cases the conventional pumpkins produced no fruit because the plants were killed by viruses before flowering while 'Orange Bulldog' produced 13,000 to 20,000 pound per acre.

The fruit average about 10 pounds with a distinct suture and most are suitable for carving, having an open internal cavity. The color ranges from a salmon color to a burnt orange. Size and shape are irregular, but the fruit have sold well in market trials in Georgia and Alabama. The fruit are yellow when immature and can be harvested at this

stage and cooked like summer squash. The fruit can also be cooked and puréed into a pumpkin pie filling and baked like butternut squash, producing excellent pies and vegetable dishes.

‘Orange Bulldog’ gives growers a new variety that will produce more consistently during high virus pressure as occurs in the fall. The vines hold up particularly well and also have tolerance to both powdery mildew and downy mildew. This variety should have a particularly good fit for roadside marketers and pick-your-own operations where good vine cover is crucial.

For best results, growers should follow their extension service recommendations for production. This should include adequate fertilization and water. In addition, a good fungicide program will increase vine protection and regular scouting for insects should be done. Certain insects such as whiteflies can be problematic in the fall in our region and control measures should be promptly instituted if they are present.

Pumpkin production in south Georgia has been highly restricted with inconsistent results. ‘Orange Bulldog’ should go a long way in alleviating this problem. Seed is available for sale from the Georgia Seed Development Commission in both small and large volumes with prices reflective of quantity purchased. Their website is

<http://www.gsdc.com/> or you can call (706) 542-5640.



'Orange Bulldog' under field production. Reidsville, Ga., Fall 2006



'Orange Bulldog' fruit.



'Orange Bulldog' harvest.