

May 4, 2019

Minden farmer reclaims pump-king throne with 254.5kg gourd

Minden's Tony Frohloff and his 254.5kg pumpkin have smashed the competition out of the veggie patch to win the Royal Queensland Show's (Ekka) Giant Pumpkin Competition supported by Pillow Talk at the Brisbane Showgrounds today.

Tony's more than a quarter of a tonne gourd saw him reclaim the Champion Heaviest Pumpkin of Show title he last won in 2017, taking home \$1,000 in prize money. He also took out second place with his 210kg entry.

Tony's Dad and biggest rival Geoff Frohloff came third with a 169.5kg whopper, but he still holds the 261.5kg Ekka record set in 2015.

Tony Frohloff said he might have smashed the record if it wasn't for a case of surface rot.

"It was unfortunate I had to pick my pumpkin a week early because of rot," he said

"If it was left on the vine for another week like planned, I might now be the record holder.

"I'm still happy with how big I managed to get the pumpkin considering the very dry growing conditions this year – some days I spent 1 ½ hours watering it."

Tony's rein as pump-king was briefly brought to an end by neighbour Steven Fritz last year, who grew a 206kg monster.

Steven wasn't able to enter this year, but instead coached his nine year old niece Kyla-Shaye Fritz to a win in the Youth class, with her gourd tipping the scales at 58.5kg.

Meanwhile in the Schools class, Bowenville State School came out on top with a 38kg pumpkin, outgrowing Newmarket State School and Calvary Christian College who tied for second with 25kg pumpkins.

RNA Chief Executive Brendan Christou said it was great to see the next generation of green thumbs getting involved.

"Growing giant pumpkins is a fun way to teach children about agriculture, so it was pleasing to receive entries from six schools this year," he said.

"It was also fantastic to see how dedicated the growers were – Michael Wills drove his pumpkin 10 hours from Emerald to enter the competition."

The giant pumpkin competition is one of the Ekka's most iconic agricultural events, dating back to the very first show in 1876.

Some of the giant pumpkins will roll back into the Brisbane Showgrounds in August, to be displayed in the Agricultural Hall presented by seqwater during Ekka.

Those who want to try their luck next year, can sign up for some free Giant Atlantic Pumpkin seeds at the show.

The giant pumpkin competition signals the official countdown to Ekka, which is now just 97 days away.

2019 GIANT PUMPKIN COMPETITION RESULTS

Champion Heaviest Pumpkin of Show – Tony Frohloff - 254.5kg

Class 1 – Open:

- 1st Tony Frohloff - 254.5kg
- 2nd Tony Frohloff - 210kg
- 3rd Geoff Frohloff – 169.5kg

Class 2 – School:

- 1st Bowenville State School - 38kg
- 2nd Newmarket State School - 25kg
- 2nd Calvary Christian College - 25kg

Class 3 – Youth:

- 1st Kyla-Shaye Fritz - 58.5kg

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