

News Release
For Immediate Release

Will the world record be squashed this year?

Half Moon Bay's heavyweight championship of gargantuan gourds is Monday, Oct. 9
Kay Rogers CEA-FCS, Dallam & Hartley Counties Texas A&M AgriLife Extension
October 2, 2017



Defending Half Moon Bay champion Cindy Tobeck's Goliath 1,910 pound weigh-off champion mega-gourd obliterated a formidable field of heavyweight contenders in winning the 2016 Safeway World Championship Pumpkin Weigh-Off. Legendary Gourd Growing Greats and their astonishing, mind-boggling, Volkswagen-sized orange orbs gather on the morning of Monday, October 9 for the 44th Annual Safeway World Championship Pumpkin Weigh-Off. The grand champion mega-gourd, along with the top four pumpkins from the weigh-off, will be on display at the world-famous Half Moon Bay Art & Pumpkin Festival on October 14-15 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Miramar Events)

HALF MOON BAY, Calif. — Will the world record be squashed in Half Moon Bay this year? No weigh? Weigh! Bring it on beefy, burly behemoths! The excitement is building in Pumpkintown as the World's Greatest Gourd Growers and their astounding, mind-boggling, Volkswagen-sized orange orbs hope to crush the world record on the morning of Monday, October 9 at the 44th Annual Safeway World Championship Pumpkin Weigh-Off — in the World Pumpkin Capital of Half Moon Bay, California – the kick-off to Half Moon Bay's world-famous Art & Pumpkin Festival which takes place October 14-15.

Educational programs of the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service are open to all people without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status. The Texas A&M University System, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the County Commissioners Courts of Texas Cooperating.

In a new twist this year: weigh-off organizers and title sponsor Safeway are offering a beefed up top prize of \$7 per pound. Also at stake are thousands of dollars in prize money doled out to the top 20 and the big carrot: a \$30,000 total mega-prize for a new world record pumpkin entered at Half Moon Bay — considered the “Super Bowl of Weigh-Offs”.

A host of accomplished, grizzled veteran growers will be contending for the coveted title, the \$30,000 world record prize and thousands of dollars in additional prize money. In a unique pay-by-the-pound system, the winner will take home a hefty \$7 per pound for the champion mega-pumpkin plus a starring role in the world-famous Half Moon Bay Art & Pumpkin Festival, Oct. 14-15 (including a free weekend at the posh, pumpkin-centric Ritz-Carlton on the stunningly beautiful Half Moon Bay coast).

To receive the \$30,000 world record prize, the grower must break and hold the world record at the conclusion of the Half Moon Bay weigh-off. If two or more growers happen to break the world record at Half Moon Bay, the prize money would go to the grower of the heaviest pumpkin. The current world record is 2,624-pounds set in 2016 at a weigh-off in Germany.

Defending Half Moon Bay champion Cindy Tobeck’s Goliath 1910-pound weigh-off champion mega-gourd obliterated a formidable field of heavyweight contenders in winning the 2016 Safeway World Championship Pumpkin Weigh-Off. Tobeck, from Littlerock WA, is expected to return to defend her title and contend for the \$30,000 world record prize.

Beauty will share center stage withl beefy brawn — a special \$500 prize will be awarded to the “most beautiful pumpkin” as judged by the audience based on color, shape and size.

It’s always a sight to behold. Every year on weigh-off reckoning day the streets around downtown Half Moon Bay are lined with sagging, overloaded trucks crammed with burly orange behemoths quietly awaiting their place of destiny in the worldwide media spotlight or the Libby’s canning factory, their massive roots firmly planted in buckets of water to prevent weight loss as fans ooh and aah at their sheer, stunning enormity.

Using forklifts and harnesses, the monster gourds will be carefully placed on a 5-ton capacity digital scale under the watchful eye of officials from the San Mateo County Agricultural Commissioner’s Office of Weights, Sealers, and Measures.

The official weighing will take place On Monday, October 9th from 7 a.m. to 11 a.m. on the I.D.E.S. Grounds, 735 Main Street in Half Moon Bay.

The champion pumpkin, along with the top four pumpkins overall, will be on display at the Half Moon Bay Art & Pumpkin Festival on October 14-15 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For information on the weigh-off and festival, call 650-726-9652 or visit www.miramarevents.com

—Safeway World Championship Pumpkin Weigh-Off