Field Pumpkins--the growing hobby

The GPC FP category has shown an amazing growth in the last few years and I predict that will not end any time soon. By simply using the GPC official FP lists on BP.com we can see the growth as follows:

2012 - 247 FPs, 2011 – 177 FPs, 2010 – 109 FPs, 2009 – 84 FPs, 2008 – none listed

The next big question is, where do these FPs come from? I’ll answer this by showing the best mothers and grand parents of 2012 and also by showing the original varieties.

**Best mothers** - I made pedigrees for the 32 official FPs down to the 110 pound level and then found the four ”repeat” mothers as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother(s)</th>
<th>Father(s)</th>
<th>Number of FPs</th>
<th>Average Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>81 Wolf 09 – 150 Razo 11 – 162 MacKinnon 11 – 103 MacKinnon 11</td>
<td>88 Leland 06 x 145 McInnis 07 x 142 McInnis 10 x 154 Orr 09</td>
<td>11 FPs</td>
<td>ave. wt. = 129 lbs</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>= 130 lbs</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>= 131 lbs</td>
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<td>= 173 lbs</td>
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</table>

These four mothers accounted for 21 of the top 32 FPs, the other 11 had “single” mothers and are not included in this study.

**Repeat Grand Parents** – looking at the mother’s parents, I find there are five FPs that account for 52 of the 64 grand parents. They are the 145 McInnis 07, 88 Leland 06, 81 Wolf 09, 142 McInnis 10 and 154 Orr 09.

Now if we look at the background of the Leland, McInnis and Orr FPs, then we will know where most of the 2012 FP gene pool originated.

88 Leland 06 - Phat Jack 142 and 145 McInnis – Gold Rush and Howden 154 Orr 09 – McInnis, Conestoga Special, Fat or Phat Albert

This is the information given to me directly or indirectly by the growers but I would welcome any additions or corrections. When I look these varieties up on the internet I find that the seed companies give weights from 20 to over 50 pounds. Yet now Quinn Werner has the world record at 209 pounds and the top five in the GPC average 170 pounds.

Overall the whole story is fascinating:
- in three years the # of FPs has tripled from 84 to 247
- growers have quickly focused in on a few of the best gene lines and seeds
- plants producing 20-50 pound fruit have evolved to the 200 pound level

In summary, an amazing success story and one that will be exciting to watch with each new season.

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