

Pumpkinfest Gets Into Full Swing at “Seedling Sunday”

May 17, “Seedling Sunday,” is the official start of the 2015 Damariscotta Pumpkinfest and Regatta™. While many area residents have been busy getting flower and vegetable gardens prepped for the summer season, 55 Great Salt Bay Third Graders took a field trip to Pinkham’s Plantation, where they learned about growing pumpkins—from sanding and soaking the seeds, to amending the soil to ensure maximum growth. These young Squashbucklers helped get the seeds and pots ready for Seedling Sunday, when approximately 600 FREE seedlings will be given to volunteer growers.

Several stations were set up for the children to learn various tasks associated with seed planting and maintenance for maximum growth. They filled pots in which the seeds will be planted, sanded the giant seeds, and visited the compost pile, all the while learning about growing pumpkins. They learned about material that is used to make compost and the value of earthworms to a healthy garden, and even learned about turning the giant pumpkins into the boats that race in the regatta.

This year, thanks to the generosity of Pumpkinfest’s newest sponsor, Johnny’s Selected Seeds, Pumpkinfest is excited to announce the availability of Derby-sized “Racer™” Pumpkin plantlets! For those planning to enter this year’s Pumpkin Derby, Johnny’s Seeds “Racer™” seedlings—which will grow into blocky, sturdy stemmed, midsize pumpkins, which typically weigh between 12-16 pounds—will be available. Contestants are reminded that those who grow their own Pumpkin Derby Racers win special prizes, so be sure to pick up your Derby seedling and get started growing your Racer.

On Seedling Sunday, volunteer-growers can adopt the Atlantic Giant Pumpkin seedlings and grow pumpkins that will become the granddaddies of the pumpkin patch. These giants will be featured as pumpkin boats in the regatta, ammunition in the hurl/catapult/drop, and turned into works of art and displayed on Main Street in the Twin Villages and beyond during Pumpkinfest.

Join the fun by becoming a Pumpkinfest Squashbuckler on “Seedling Sunday,” May 17. Visit Pinkham’s Plantation, 431 Biscay Road in Damariscotta, to get a FREE Giant Atlantic Pumpkin seedling and a Johnny’s Selected Seeds “Racer™” Pumpkin plantlet, and instructions for growing a Pumpkinfest Pumpkin. Bring a five-gallon container to get free super-enriched compost to give your seedling a healthy start.

Pumpkinfest & Regatta™ is a 50 (C)(3) organization whose mission is to promote education to citizens of all ages regarding the specific agricultural science required to grow giant pumpkins, and to provide local non-profit organizations with opportunities for dissemination of information on their activities and fundraising. For more information, visit www.damariscottapumpkifest.com or follow us at www.facebook.com/damariscottapumpkifest.com, or www.twitter.com/squashbuckler. Pumpkinfest is pleased to have *Lincoln County News* as its official news organization sponsor for the 2015 festival.

