



**DAMARISCOTTA PUMPKINFEST & REGATTA - 2018**  
[www.damariscottapumpkinfest.com](http://www.damariscottapumpkinfest.com)

**DAMARISCOTTA PUMPKINFEST'S "PUMPKINBOAT REGATTA" will be held at noon on Columbus Day, Monday, October 8, 2018**  
**Damariscotta Pumpkinfest's events, (PARADE/DERBY/HURL/HUNT-DROP) will be held during Columbus Day Weekend: October 5-8, 2018.**

Damariscotta Pumpkinfest & Regatta™ is a uniquely spirited event that provides education to young and old, and also an economic boost to this rural, coastal community. Our intent is to expand annually, as has been done since the first two pumpkinboats raced one another in 2007. There's no limit to where imagination can take this "Only in Maine!" festival.

Damariscotta Pumpkinfest & Regatta™ ([www.DamariscottaPumpkinfest.com](http://www.DamariscottaPumpkinfest.com)) is an innovative program that promotes horticultural education to gardeners of all ages regarding the specific agricultural science required to grow Atlantic Giant Pumpkins. This program culminates in a family-oriented festival, held for ten days in early October thorough Columbus Day weekend each year to showcase the pumpkin growers results in a number of creative ways. Damariscotta is a small Maine town whose economic basis is fishing and tourism. This year, Pumpkinfest is expected to attract between 10-15,000 visitors.

The educational mission of Pumpkinfest is accomplished in a number of ways. Each Spring, 50 third-grade students at Great Salt Bay School volunteer their time to fill 600 pots with soil and amendments for this year's seeds. More than 400 volunteer-growers grow those plants which are distributed free of charge during "Seedling Sunday". Detailed, written growing instructions are provided during that event, in addition to monthly "Pumpkinfest newsletter" tips and techniques. In addition, horticultural presentations are given to intergenerational partnerships of retirees and local school children who are interested in learning about growing giant pumpkins.

Quantifiable pumpkin evaluation measures include weight data collected at the annual October weigh-off -which is officially sanctioned by the Great Pumpkin Commonwealth (GPC) ([www.GreatPumpkinCommonwealth.com](http://www.GreatPumpkinCommonwealth.com)). Detailed data is collected on the genetics of the free Atlantic Giant Pumpkin plants which are distributed each Spring at Seedling Sunday, and which then return to the weigh-off in October as 200-1,750 pound pumpkins. Seeds from the largest, hardiest pumpkins are dried & planted in the subsequent year, for the purpose of high grading the overall stock.

Pumpkinfest draws visitors to the mid-coast region, and the entire state of Maine, via widely-publicized events such as:

- The Pumpkinboat Regatta, featuring numerous 400-1,200 pound, hollowed-out pumpkins with motors attached or paddled, piloted by volunteer captains, racing one another in the Damariscotta Harbor. This event is live-fed into the local theater;
- A downtown display of 65+ volunteer-carved and decorated giant pumpkins lining Main Street in Damariscotta & Newcastle;
- The Pumpkin "Soapbox-style" Derby, with competitions for kids and adults;
- The ever popular Pumpkin Dessert Contest and Pumpkin Pie Eating Contests;
- The infamous 180' Pumpkin Drop onto a stack of junked cars; and
- The Giant Pumpkin Parade, featuring the winning pumpkin (the largest fruit in the State of Maine) from the weigh-off.

The Columbus Day weekend events, a true "slice of small town Americana" are supported by the entire community. Damariscotta Pumpkinfest™ has no paid-staff. Instead, nearly one hundred local businesses and over 400 volunteer-growers support this community event with both their time and money. Volunteers engineer and build the boats, artists and sculptors create the downtown displays, and farmers grow "ammunition" for the hunt/drop. The Maine Maritime Museum' historic wooden-boat building crew competes in the regatta. The Boothbay Railroad Village and Visit Freeport also participate. The sense of wonder in the eyes of the children who attend the events of Damariscotta Pumpkinfest™ is a joy to behold !

National television coverage was generated in 2013, when the regatta was extensively featured on the "CBS News – Sunday Morning" show, and in 2012 when the ABC talk show, "The Chew", highlighted Damariscotta Pumpkinfest™. In addition, The Discovery Channel, The Travel Channel, New York One, German Public Radio, and Deutsche Welle, among others, have covered Pumpkinfest. The Damariscotta Pumpkinfest & Regatta™ web site experiences more than 30,000 visits during the week of the festival, and nearly 75,000 visits during each year. Prior year's visitors have come from New England, CA, TX, NYC, the UK and Europe.

To receive press releases on upcoming Pumpkinfest events, please contact:

[info@damariscottapumpkinfest.com](mailto:info@damariscottapumpkinfest.com)

**Damariscotta Pumpkinfest & Regatta™**

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