

Meijer Strengthens Commitment to Local, Offers Freshest Pumpkin Assortment for Halloween

Majority of retailer's harvest goes from pumpkin patch to store in just a day or two

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Oct. 4, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- Meijer has a longstanding commitment to its local growers that stems beyond offering customers [fresh asparagus](#) and squash. The Midwest retailer also partners with family-owned farms across its six-state footprint to bring in the freshest pumpkin assortment.

As families prepare for Halloween, the retailer expects to sell more than 500,000 locally grown pumpkins for carving or decorating, with more than 95 percent arriving at a Meijer store just a day or two after harvest from a nearby pumpkin patch.

"Everything we do for fall harvest starts with understanding what will make the season great for families, so partnering with local growers allows us to add a pumpkin-patch feeling to the shopping experience," said Sedric Wytch, Meijer Produce Buyer. "Carving or decorating jack-o'-lanterns tops everyone's Halloween activity list, so having the largest and freshest pumpkins available captures the imagination and brings families together."

While the retailer has purchased from local growers big and small since the company's inception in 1934, its efforts to buy produce locally continue to expand significantly. Today, the retailer works with more than 200 local growers across the Midwest to shorten the time and distance from the fields to the checkout lane.

Wytch said Michigan, Ohio and Illinois rank among top pumpkin harvesting states. In Michigan, the most notable local growers for pumpkins and other fall harvest produce are Heritage Farms and Todd Greiner Farms. In Illinois and Wisconsin, customers benefit from J & J Dill and Alsum Farms, while Mouzin Brothers Farms and Walcher Farms provide for stores in Indiana and Ohio.

"The fall harvest is especially symbolic this year after being away from grandparents and relatives," said Tony Grice from Heritage Farming Enterprises in Fremont, Mich. "Whether you're carving with teenagers or decorating with toddlers, those are the type of memories that bring families together."


According to Grice, the best pumpkins for carving feature a healthy orange color and a firm stem. The average pumpkin can last 2-3 weeks when carved or as many as 5 weeks if decorated. Extreme temperatures also speed up decomposition, so Meijer recommends bringing jack-o'-lanterns indoors during uncharacteristically warm days or when temperatures drop close to freezing.

While their first big shipments of the harvest arrived in stores recently, many local farmers still have plenty of pumpkins on their vines just waiting for the perfect time to deliver to Meijer stores. This means customers can expect new pumpkins at their stores on each shopping trip. Additionally, gourds, ornamental corn, various varieties of ornamental pumpkins, mini-pumpkins, and pumpkins specifically grown for pie making are expected to be available throughout the fall season.

About Meijer: Meijer is a Grand Rapids, Mich.-based retailer that operates 257 supercenters and grocery stores throughout Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Kentucky and Wisconsin. A privately-owned and family-operated company since 1934, Meijer pioneered the "one-stop shopping" concept and has evolved through the years to include expanded fresh produce and meat departments, as well as pharmacies, comprehensive apparel departments, pet departments, garden centers, toys and electronics. For additional information on Meijer, please visit www.meijer.com. Follow Meijer on Twitter at twitter.com/Meijer and twitter.com/MeijerPR or become a fan at www.facebook.com/meijer.

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