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The IPM Scout

POWDERY MILDEW-RESISTANT CULTIVARS

*Dr. Anthony P. Keinath, Assoc. Prof.
Vegetable Pathologist ~ Clemson University*



Several new powdery-mildew resistant pumpkins have come on the market in the last three years. 'Mystic Plus,' pictured here, is new for 2001. A question I received about powdery mildew resistant culti-

vars prompted me to write this summary of those that are available in 2001.

| Cultivar | Company | Size (lb) | Maturity (days) | Previous Name |
|-----------------|------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| Autumn King | Seeds by Design ¹ | 25-30 | 105 | RWS 5668 |
| Magic Lantern | Harris Moran ² | 16-24 | 115 | HMX 5683 |
| Merlin | Harris Moran | 15-25 | 115 | HMX 5680 |
| Mystic Plus | Harris Seeds ³ | 7-8 | 105 | PMT ⁴ Mystic |
| Touch of Autumn | Rupp Seeds ² | 3.5-4 | 95 | PMT Peek-A-Boo |

¹Breeder. Available from Siegers Seed Co., 616-786-4999; <http://www.siegers.com>

²See **Cultivar Corner** for contact information.

³Harris Seeds, commercial 1-800-544-7938, home garden 1-800-514-4441; <http://www.harriseseeds.com>

⁴Powdery Mildew Tolerant.

Some seed companies call these cultivars "powdery mildew tolerant." That seems to be their way of saying the cultivars are "moderately resistant," a more accurate description of their reaction to powdery mildew. These cultivars have genes inserted by conventional breeding that make them resist powdery mildew infection. However, this resistance is not completely effective; that is, these cultivars still get some powdery mildew, but not as much as susceptible cultivars get.

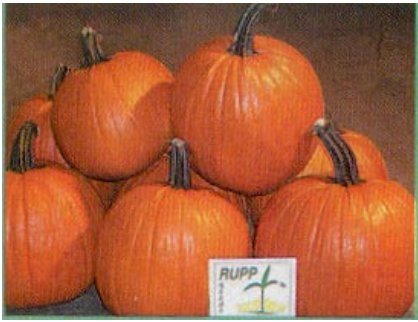
This leads to the question: How much fungicide should be applied to powdery-mildew resistant cultivars? As of yet, there is no good answer, other than "not as much" as to susceptible cultivars. As a rule of thumb, it should be possible to use the lowest application rate and/or the longest spray interval recommended for a given fungicide with powdery mildew-resistant cultivars. Based on tests done around the country, it is still necessary to use a fungicide with systemic activity against powdery mildew on these resistant cultivars. Nova, Quadris, or Flint should be used at least every other application in areas with high powdery mildew pressure.

Cultivar Corner



'Lil' Pump-Ke-Mon' is a unique white mini-pumpkin with orange and green stripes from Harris Moran. Its 1- to 2-lb. fruit have the typical flattened, ribbed mini-pumpkin

shape. This mini-pumpkin is sure to be an attention-grabber at farm markets. Go to <http://www.harrismoran.com/html/dealers.htm> to find a dealer in your area, or call 1-800-320-HMSC (4672).



'Gold Medal' is a new hybrid from Rupp Seeds. It is a large pumpkin, with fruit averaging 41 pounds over three years of trials. It matures in 100 days and

yields slightly better than 'Gold Rush,' a previous Rupp Seeds release. Phone 419-337-1841.

'Gold Gem' is another new hybrid cultivar from Rupp Seeds. It's fruit are 22 pounds and slightly squat in shape but "darker orange than Howden." 'Gold Gem' matures in 105 days.

'Neon' is a new cultivar from Hollar Seeds. This very short-season cultivar matures in only 65 days. The plants are semi-bush. The handles are wide and



very dark green to black. The fruit have a round, jack-o-lantern shape and weigh 7 to 8 lb. Note that the fruit do not appear to be as deep orange

as some of the other new cultivars. Go to <http://www.hollarseeds.com> and click on "New for 2001" to see another picture. Order online or phone 719-254-7411.



'Rock Star' is a mid-season, large pumpkin from Johnny's Selected Seeds. The blocky, upright fruit weigh 22 to 28 lb and mature in 98 days. The

vines are "vigorous" and adapted to a range of growing conditions. The fruit are reported to hold well in the field and on display. Go to <http://www.johnnyseeds.com/> or phone 207- 437-4395 for commercial orders, 207-437-4301 for home garden orders.



Ask the Great Pumpkin

Q: For the first time this year I experienced *Phytophthora* fruit rot on a small scale. I am concerned since we only have 30 acres and need to protect the soil from disease.

GP: You are right to be concerned! The *Phytophthora* fungus that causes fruit and crown rot can survive many years in soil. A number of different fungicides, biological control agents, composts, and even solarization have not given much control of this disease. The three most important things you can do are to rotate your pumpkins away from the infested field, manage the drainage, and avoid spreading the fungus to other fields.

Do not plant pumpkin, any other cucurbit, pepper, eggplant, or tomato in this field for as long as you can rotate away from these susceptible vegetables. Check to see where in the field the disease started. I suspect that it is in a low spot, since you only had a small amount of disease. If you need to use the field for a susceptible crop, do not plant the area you know is infested. Consider planting on raised beds to increase water drainage after rains. Remember that the fungus can be spread to other parts of your farm if noticeable amounts of soil stick to tractor tires.

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Editor and Contributor.....**Anthony P. Keinath**
 Production Assistants.....Ginny DuBose & Harriett Hall
 Pumpkin Webmaster.....Bob Polomski

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