

## **Giant pumpkin of 601.8 kg wins in Heidelberg**

Jacob du Plessis, from Vyeboom in Villiersdorp, was crowned the 2019 champion at the 9<sup>th</sup> annual Giant Pumpkin Festival in Heidelberg this weekend with a pumpkin weighing in at an astonishing 601.8 kg.

His monster pumpkin was just short of the current South African record of 613 kg, held by Peet Joubert of Centurion, Gauteng.

“It’s third time lucky! The furthest I have come in the competition before was in 2017 when I came fourth with a pumpkin of over 300 kg. I knew my pumpkin was a contender for one of the top three places, but was still surprised when it came out tops,” said Du Plessis.

Second and third place went to husband and wife duo, Piet and Elizna Lotz from Riversdale, with pumpkins weighing 510.6 kg and 460.8 kg respectively.

The winning pumpkin was grown from pumpkin seeds specially harvested from one of last year’s biggest pumpkins at the Heidelberg Giant Pumpkin Competition, proudly sponsored by Shoprite and Checkers for the past nine years.

Along with the sought-after title of Champion of the 2019 Giant Pumpkin Competition, Du Plessis also received R17 500 in cash. Second and third place received R8 000 and R4 000 respectively. Prize money was sponsored by Shoprite and Checkers and additional prizes were also awarded for the prettiest and ugliest pumpkins.

The two-day Pumpkin Festival is a one-of-a-kind event with a variety of stalls and activities for the entire family including a MTB race, trail run, golf competition, bowling competition, 4X4 challenge, potjiekos competition, fun fair and live music.

In keeping with Heidelberg’s strong community spirit, all proceeds from the festival will be ploughed back into the town.

Previous winners of this Giant Pumpkin Competition held annually in the Western Cape:

<b>YEAR</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>WEIGHT OF PUMPKIN</b>
2018	Piet Lotz	532,4 kg
2017	Corné van Greunen	519,5 kg
2016	Louwrens van Deventer	373 kg
2015	Pinkie Swart	483,6 kg
2014	Pinkie Swart	497,5 kg (SA record at the time)
2013	Johan du Plessis	417,5 kg
2012	Henry du Plessis	390 kg
2011	Johan du Plessis	349,2 kg

**ENDS**