



> **Money P6**  
Female first for prize



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AUTUMN HARVEST **P4**

# Families flock to pumpkin fest



*Hanna Appleton pulls a wagon full of pumpkins with Ben Kucher at the Prairie Gardens and Greenhouses Haunted Pumpkin Festival near Bon Accord.*

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AGRI-FOODS

## HARVEST

# Bumper crop of pumpkins

**KRISTY BROWNLEE, 24 HOURS** — Since Tam Andersen was a child, she has grown pumpkins.

Now the Bon Accord horticulturist surrounds herself with the orange squash on a full-scale family farm — harvesting 7,000 pumpkins this year alone.

“I’ve taken it to the next level. They’re big and glorious. It’s a hoot connecting with (my) childhood,” said Andersen, owner of Prairie Gardens & Greenhouses in Bon Accord, 25 km north of Edmonton.

To coincide with the harvest, the Andersen family kicked off their 14th annual Haunted Pumpkin Festival this month.

The farm yields 26 pumpkin varieties on seven acres.

Some have goose bumps speckled on them, others are ghostly white and some are blue.



PHOTO: SUN MEDIA

*Gabrielle Gow searches through pumpkins for sale at the Prairie Gardens and Greenhouses Haunted Pumpkin Festival near Bon Accord yesterday.*

“They are warty super freaks,” Andersen, 47, said yesterday of the bumpy pumpkins.

Northern Alberta doesn’t offer ideal conditions for growing pumpkins due to short summers and cold nights, said Andersen.

Only selected pumpkin varieties that mature quickly can

be grown due to the province’s short season.

“It takes all summer,” said Andersen.

At the festival, people pay \$2 to see a soccer-ball sized pumpkin fired up to 300 metres out of a cannon, with proceeds going to the Youth Emergency Shelter Society.

The fair runs until Nov. 1.