

Beat: Arts

WITH BRITISH PUMPKINS OCTOBER IS THE CRUELLEST MONTH FOR PUMPKIN GROWERS

INCREASED PRICES BY 30% THIS YEAR

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USPA NEWS - This year, like every year, British farmers faced all kinds of challenges to grow and produce the quality food we enjoy everyday, from unpredictable weather, to crop pests and volatile market prices. But pumpkin grower and chair of the horticulture board of the National Farmers' Union Guy Poskitt...

This year, like every year, British farmers faced all kinds of challenges to grow and produce the quality food we enjoy everyday, from unpredictable weather, to crop pests and volatile market prices. But pumpkin grower and chair of the horticulture board of the National Farmers' Union Guy Poskitt says there's 'definitely' a national shortage. A shortage of late-summer sunshine over his farm near Selby, North Yorkshire, stopped many of Poskitt's pumpkins from ripening.

In Essex though, farmers have had better luck this season and report that they've harvested a healthy crop of pumpkins and still have plenty to share with families across the country. The pumpkin shortage scare this Halloween has brought some people back to the British tradition of carving a humble turnip - it's a bit more challenging but sure to be equally spooky.

If you're at the sharp end of the shortage, English Heritage recommends the old ways: traditionally, turnips were carved into scary faces and placed near doorways to frighten away evil spirits. A folk tale about Jack, cursed to roam the earth with only a burning coal inside a hollowed-out turnip to light the way, is the origin of the Jack-o'-lantern.

Ruby BIRD

<http://www.portfolio.uspa24.com/>

Yasmina BEDDOU

<http://www.yasmina-beddou.uspa24.com/>

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Editorial program service of General News Agency:

United Press Association, Inc.
3651 Lindell Road, Suite D168
Las Vegas, NV 89103, USA

(702) 943.0321 Local
(702) 943.0233 Facsimile
info@unitedpressassociation.org
info@gna24.com
www.gna24.com