



# THE GREAT PUMPKIN PROBLEM



**THE PROBLEM:** There is a shortage of canned pumpkin and pie filling this year!

## **The Facts:**

- ~ The name of the company that makes the canned pumpkin and pie filling is "Libby's". Libby's grows more pumpkins than anyone else and is in charge of most of the canned pumpkin & pie filling in this country.
- ~ Libby's uses leftover pumpkins from last year's crop to make pumpkin and pie filling which they put in cans and then sell for the next Thanksgiving.
- ~ It was very rainy and wet during last year's growing season which means that not as many pumpkins grew. Libby's didn't have many leftover pumpkins this year, so this year there is a shortage of canned pumpkin and pie filling.
- ~ Libby's is only sending small amounts of canned pumpkin to each store.
- ~ Some grocery shoppers are finding some empty shelves where the canned pumpkin and the pumpkin pie filling should be in grocery stores. But some supermarkets say that they will have enough for everyone.
- ~ If your store does have canned pumpkin, it will probably be a bit more expensive this year. It should cost around \$1.59 for a 15-ounce can and \$2.59 for a 29-ounce can. That's slightly more expensive than last year.
- ~ Most pumpkins in this country come from Illinois, Pennsylvania, and California.
- ~ Halloween pumpkins aren't the same pumpkins used for pie filling. There is a type of pumpkin called the "Select Dickinson" pumpkin and it makes the best pies. It is smaller, heavier and sweeter than a Halloween pumpkin.
- ~ We could have a similar problem next year. It has been wet and rainy in the town of Morton -- the Illinois town where Libby's has 5,000 acres of pumpkin fields.
- ~ Other things that make a good pie: butternut squash, mashed canned yams, cooked calabazas, mashed cooked carrots and the sweet potato.

## **Other Neat Pumpkin Facts:**

- ~ Total U.S. pumpkin production in 2008 was valued at \$141 million.
- ~ Pumpkins contain Potassium and Vitamin A.
- ~ The annual pumpkin harvest is in September and October.
- ~ Pumpkin flowers are edible.
- ~ Pumpkins are used to make soups, pies and breads.
- ~ The largest pumpkin pie ever made was over five feet in diameter and weighed over 350 pounds. It used 80 pounds of cooked pumpkin, 36 pounds of sugar, 12 dozen eggs and took six hours to bake.
- ~ The name pumpkin originated from "pepon" – the Greek word for "large melon."
- ~ Pumpkins are 90 percent water.
- ~ Pumpkins are fruit.
- ~ Eighty percent of the pumpkin supply in the United States is available in October.
- ~ Early American colonists sliced off pumpkin tops; removed seeds and filled the insides with milk, spices and honey. This was baked in hot ashes and is the origin of pumpkin pie.



*Facts gathered from:*

*<http://urbanext.illinois.edu/pumpkins/facts.cfm> and <http://latimes.com/business/la-fi-pumpkin10-2009oct10,0,3694102.story>*