If you are interested in growing a giant watermelon or pumpkin for the national weigh-off at Robert’s Family Farm on September 17, 2016, here are some helpful hints.

—Seeds can be picked up at the Meade County Extension Office from 8—4:30; Monday—Friday.
—According to Frank Mudd grower of multiple state records, from the day the seed is planted it takes 5 months for a watermelon to mature and 4 months for a pumpkin to reach its maximum weight. For example, to grow a giant watermelon for this contest the seeds need to be planted around April 17. Therefore, seeds will have to be started indoors.
—Seeds need warm soils above 80°F to germinate. Mr. Mudd says he has his best success on germination when the temperature is 96°F.
—Soil testing is recommended and can be done through the Extension Office free of charge. Soil pH should be 6.0-6.5, fertilizer should be applied according to the soil test with sidedressing with extra Nitrogen during the growing season.
—In general, each plant needs a 256 square feet (16ft X 16ft) area in order to reach its maximum potential.
—More hints during the growing season will be forth coming.
—For more info, contact the Meade County Extension Office and we’ll be happy to answer what questions we can or direct you to Mr. Mudd or the Meade County Tourism. Depending on what is needed.

Good Luck and we hope to see you weigh a giant in September.

Sincerely,
Andy Mills

Meade County Extension Agent for Agriculture & Natural Resources

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The Great Pumpkin Pursuit
September 17, 2016