



JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

Dallas residents Jennifer Hodgdon, left, Arron Hodgdon and Scott Hodgdon search for a medium-sized pumpkin on Saturday at Beal Pumpkin Patch.

PUMPKIN HUNTING

Dallas Christmas tree farm opens first pumpkin patch running through October

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — The on-and-off rain Saturday didn't dampen the excitement of Beal Pumpkin Patch's opening day.

"It'd been pretty quiet so far," co-owner Don Beal said as he walks down a dirt road to the pumpkin patch.

Quiet is OK with Don and his wife, Jo Ann Beal. This is the first year they expanded their Dallas Christmas tree farm to include pumpkin season, and they spent part of the first day setting up.

Jo Ann said as they considered offering the pumpkin patch, they heard from several people in the community that Dallas needed a local option for those who didn't want to drive far or battle large crowds.

"This, I think is the perfect setup for them," Jo Ann said. "It's a little trip. They can just come out here."

Check it out

The pumpkin patch is open each Saturday and Sunday in October, ending on Oct. 30, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 700 Oak Villa Road, Dallas.

School field trips can be reserved during week days.

The pumpkin patch is situated in an open field at the farm.

Visitors walking down the short road from the parking lot emerge from behind a barn to see the landscape dotted with bright orange gourds.

The Beals aren't trying to emulate the big harvest festivals of other farms in the area, but they are offering food — popcorn, chips and hot dogs — and family games.

The "I-Spy Trail," a short oak-forested loop on which players try to locate objects within the trees, is one of Jo



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Beal Pumpkin Patch co-owner Jo Ann Beal, right, talks with customers Saturday afternoon by the gift shop at the farm. This is the first year Jo Ann and her husband, Don Beal, have offered a pumpkin patch.

Ann's favorite activities. They also have face painting and a gift shop selling seasonal items and Halloween decorations she made by hand.

Starting this weekend, Dallas FFA members will bring animals for a petting

zoo. "We're never going to be that big," Don said. "We're a local farm, but we will keep adding things every year."

For the first year, the Beals didn't grow their own pumpkins, choosing to buy them

from local farmers — including the Wall Farm in Perrydale — while testing the waters.

If the month goes well, next year, Beal Pumpkin Patch will grow its own pumpkins.

For now, though, the couple is looking forward to watching customers hunt for the perfect potential jack-o-lantern.

"We just really look forward to having the kids come out," Jo Ann said.



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