

Squash: Stella Blue (*C. maxima*)



Before Flowering
Rogue plants:
Low vigour (5-10% of population)
Off-type growth habit



Early Fruit stage
Select fruits:
Round, flattened shape
Rogue fruits:
Off-type shape at ovary stage



At Fruit Maturity & Harvest
Select fruits:
Blue ribbed exterior
2-6lbs, grow on 6-8' vines
Taste (exceptionally sweet and nutty flavor).



Starting & Ending Population size

Starting population size: 35 (Stable seed stock)
60+ (Poor seed stock)

Harvest population size: Fruits for seed production should be harvested from a minimum of **20 plants**.

A note on seed maturity

After harvest, it is best to let the fruit ripen for at least 1 month before extracting seeds as they continue to draw nutrition from the flesh.

Further Roguing & Selection Information

Before plants begin to flower: Off-type plants should first be rouged at the vegetative stage, paying particular attention to low vigour and off-type growth habit. Stella Blue squash is a vining variety; therefore, remove any plants demonstrating bush habits. Alternatively, when a bush-type variety produces one or more plants with runners, remove those plants before flowering occurs.

Early fruit stage: Pay attention to the shape of the earliest fruits. Off-type fruits may be detected at the ovary stage even before the flower opens. As long as the population size is large enough, the appearance of an off-type plant after flowering is not a cause for concern as long as the off-type is removed promptly.

At fruit maturity and harvest: As with roguing other crops, remember that occasionally a fruit will be deformed (usually for environmental reasons), in which case the fruit is still usable for seed provided that the other fruits borne on the same plant are true to type. Select fruits with an exceptionally sweet and nutty flavour.

After one month of storage: As fruits continue to ripen in storage, and seeds fully mature, rogue out any fruits showing signs of rot or disease.

***These are suggested tips and strategies for selecting a true to type Stella Blue squash, you are welcome to look for other characteristics that you find appealing or suit your farm, market or growing condition. Please make note of it if you do so.

