

# Perfect pumpkin patch

*Wheaton preschoolers reap the benefits of hard work in the garden*

Jefferson Preschool students in Wheaton have been waiting all summer and fall for this big day — when they would harvest their garden.

Last spring for a science project, the students planted a garden of pumpkins, gourds and melons.

Teachers Kris Stoffels and Marlene Byron planned the activities for their students to track the science of growing plants as well as to develop social and critical thinking skills.



PHOTOS BY MARCELLE BRIGHT/mbright@dailyherald.com

Above, Zack Dudrek of Wheaton gets ready to carry a pumpkin while his teacher, Marlene Byron, stands behind him to help in the Jefferson Preschool pumpkin patch in Wheaton. Top left, teachers Kris Stoffels, left, and Byron weigh Maggie Ciszewski, 4, to see if she weighs more or less than one of their pumpkins that weighed 21 pounds. Maggie weighed more than the pumpkin. Bottom left, preschool children search for pumpkins in the patch they planted last spring on the school grounds in Wheaton.