

M A S S A C H U S E T T S

SUGAR BUSH NEWS

The Newsletter of the Massachusetts Maple Producers Association

Come to Verona!

MMPA is once again sponsoring a bus to provide free transportation for any member who wishes to attend the New York State Maple Conference in Verona, NY, on Saturday, January 5. This is always an excellent conference and members who have attended in the past have learned a great deal. See <http://maple.dnr.cornell.edu/> for full details on all of the workshops, covering everything from research to marketing to production to forestry and more.

Contact winton@massmaple.org or 413-628-3912 to reserve your space on the bus. MMPA will register everyone going on the bus as a group, so don't register directly with the folks in NY.

Kickoff: March 4

The MMPA March is Maple Month Kickoff will be held on Monday, March 4 at 10:00 a.m. at Red Bucket Sugar Shack in Worthington.

MMPA Annual Meeting January 19 • 9:00 - 3:00

The 2013 Annual Meeting, trade show and workshop will be held on Saturday, January 19, from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at Mohawk High School in Buckland.

Our guest will be Glenn Goodrich from the Goodrich Maple Farm. Glenn will present "Technology and Tools in the Sugarhouse." Glenn will discuss the range of tools available to producers for the sugarhouse, and answer questions about the most efficient use and advantages/disadvantages of each. He'll cover reverse osmosis, evaporators, filter presses, filling and packaging, and more.

The trade show will feature a range of dealers from the maple industry. As in past years, members can bring syrup for an anonymous tasting and can bring hydrometers for free testing. The business meeting in the morning will include a recap of the year's events and an election of board member (email winton@massmaple.org if you're interested in serving), and we'll enjoy a great barbeque lunch. Register today!

New Mass Maple Jugs!

The newly redesigned jugs available exclusively to MMPA members are now available at the warehouse and dealers. The new design features nutrition information and a clear, classic sugaring image.

There are quantities of the older-style jugs still available as well, at 2011 prices.

Nutrition Facts	
Serving Size 4 tbsp (60mL)	
Servings Per Container 16	
Amount Per Serving	
Calories 200	
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Sodium 7mg	0%
Total Carbohydrates 53g	18%
Sugars 53g	
Protein 0g	0%



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ASSOCIATION

Pure Massachusetts Maple Syrup

...is a 100% natural product, made by boiling down the sap collected from maple trees. Maple syrup is not only a perfect topping for pancakes, waffles, and French toast, but also delicious as a glaze for ham or salmon, and as an ingredient in dressings and marinades.

Visit the Massachusetts Maple Producers Association website at www.massmaple.org to learn about all things maple, where to purchase maple products, and when sugarhouses are open.

Refrigerate After Opening



Notes from the President...

The summer picnic in New Salem was well attended. Thanks to the Hamiltons for a great day. The test sampling of maple soda was well received. Everyone agreed we should add soda at our Big E booth this year.

The Big E booth was under new management this year. Andy Schmidt did a good job and all went well. Next year Andy will do it again and with one year under his belt it should be even better. It's never too early to sign up for a few shifts.

In October Winton and I went to the annual NAMSC and IMSI meetings in Mystic, CT. We were joined by several MMPA Members for some of the technical sessions and trade show. The technical sessions were held to 30 minutes each and were more interesting than in the past. The new grading system has been moved back a year (more from Winton at the annual meeting).

It must be time to start working on lines and repairs to the equipment. Some producers are adding new bushes

and expanding sugar bushes this year. My new evaporator from Sunshine Metal Works was delivered and I test fired with water last week. Still some minor adjustments before it's ready.

Plans are set for the trip to Verona on the first Saturday in January. The Association will provide a bus again and it will show up on time, I'm sure. Plan to make the trip for a great day of seminars and great trade show.

The MMPA annual meeting is on the 3rd Saturday of January -- same place, same time. We will have a new catering company this year. These people will do a bar-beque lunch.

Ed Parker, President



Massachusetts Maple Producers Association Board of Directors

The Massachusetts Maple Producers Association is a non-profit organization representing more than 250 producers in our state. The Association is governed by a board of directors, and daily operations are conducted by a coordinator who serves at the discretion of the board. If you have any questions, problems or suggestions, please let one of the following people hear from you. The board relies on your input to keep them informed on issues of importance to you.

Name	Term Expires	E-mail Address	Town
Paul Zononi	2014	pzononi@massmaple.org	Haydenville
Cynthia Cranston	2013	ccranston@massmaple.org	Ashfield
Keith Bardwell - Secretary	2015*	kbardwell@massmaple.org	Whatley
Chip Williams	2013	cwilliams@massmaple.org	Deerfield
Stan Zawalick	2014	szawalick@massmaple.org	Florence
Ed Parker – President	2014*	eparker@massmaple.org	Granby
Andy Schmidt - Vice President	2013	windsorhill5@yahoo.com	Windsor
Pat Delaney	2013	pdelaney@massmaple.org	Belchertown
Missy Leab	2015	missy@iokavalleyfarm.com	Hancock

*Those Directors with a * next to their term expiration date will have served two consecutive terms as directors, and cannot be re-elected without at least a one year break.*

Containers

Mass Maple Warehouse	212 Reynolds Rd., Shelburne, MA 01370	413-625-2900
Devon Lane Farm Supply	357 Daniel Shays Hwy., Belchertown, MA	413-323-6336
North Hadley Sugar Shack	181 River Drive, Rte. 47, Hadley, MA	413-585-8820
Red Bucket Sugar Shack	Kinne Brook Rd., Worthington, MA 01098	413-238-7710
Bascom Maple Farms	56 Sugarhouse Road, Alstead, NH 03602	603-835-6361

Main Office

Winton Pitcoff - Coordinator/Treasurer	winton@massmaple.org	Plainfield
Mass Maple Association office	PO Box 6, Plainfield, MA 01070	413-628-3912
E-mail: info@massmaple.org	Mass Maple Website: www.massmaple.org	

Classified Ads

For Sale: Gasoline engine powered tubing washer. 11 HP B&S engine, 12 cfm air, 5 gpm water, 2500 psi pump. Washer is on wheels. Will push an air/water mixture 4000 ft. with ease. \$600.00. I am selling this unit because I no longer tap trees located a distance off the farm, so I'm changing over to an electric powered washer I can run right from the sugarhouse.

500 gallon Cherry-Burrell stainless steel dairy bulk tank. Fully covered w/2 SS doors on top. \$500.

300 gallon galvanized stock tank, w/cover, 1.5" bottom drain. Approx. 10x 3 ft, and 2 ft. deep. \$100.

5 barrel (150 gallon) Grimm flat bottom galvanized sap tank. Approx. 4x3x2, with 1" bottom drain. \$80.

Assorted vacuum pumps: 9cfm Surge piston pump, no motor; Surge SP-22 piston pump no motor; 2 Sihi 3808 30cfm liquid ring pumps, no motors. Contact me for more information.

Located in Ashfield, call Tom 413-628-3268, or email tom@southfacefarm.com.

For Sale: We have two sap pumps available. We do not use them any more as we have switched to electric. Both are available: Diaphragm pumps, Powerpro motor (Honda knock-off), complete with manuals. The pumps were actively running until we put them away (they have been stored inside, covered in plastic). We used them to pump sap back 2400 feet uphill to the sugarhouse. These pumps are available for \$300 separately, or at \$500 for both. Contact JP Welch in Worthington at welch@justameretreefarm.com or call 413-238-5902.

For Sale: Roof jack for 8" pipe, 7/12 pitch, side mount. Stainless steel. \$75. Call Ed: 413-467-7751.

For Sale: A 5X14 ft. Leader King evaporator bought in 1995. Aluminum hood, parallel flow pre-heater, two Carlin model 601 oil burners. A total of three syrup pans- one in very good working condition, the other two are spares (a bit warped but could get you through in an emergency). A 9 ft copper drop flue pan. \$5,000 OBO. Chip Williams 413-522-2887



Online Sugarhouse Directory

Remember that you can make changes to your online directory listing at any time. Check out the directory at <http://www.massmaple.org/directory.php> and if you have any changes contact Coordinator Winton Pitcoff at winton@massmaple.org or 413-628-3912, or mail changes to MMPA, PO Box 6, Plainfield, MA 01070. Please note that being a member of Mass Maple does not mean you are automatically included in the directory – you must let us know that your sugarhouse is open to the public and that you would like to be listed.

Do We Have Your Email Address?

If you haven't been getting emails from us, it's because we don't have your email address. Don't miss out on news and events between the printed newsletters. Send your email address to winton@massmaple.org.

MMPA on Facebook

If you use Facebook, look for the Massachusetts Maple Producers Association page and 'like' it. We use it for news and event notices.

In Memoriam: Leon Dufresne

Leon F. Dufresne passed away at home, with his family by his side, on July 20, 2012. Leon was born in Hawley, MA in 1922. He lived and worked on the family farm there, alongside his father and grandfather. One of their most important crops was maple syrup. Leon's father would drive the crop to Holyoke with his horse and wagon, and sell it there for \$0.50 per gallon. In December of 1941, Leon enlisted in the US Army, serving 35 months in Company C, 17th Armored Engineer Battalion as a Foreman for construction and repair of pontoon and trestle bridges in Africa, England, France, Belgium, Holland, and Germany. He received a Good Conduct Medal, and a European African Middle Eastern Theater Campaign Ribbon. He was honorably discharged in September of 1945. In 1946 he married Jeanette St. Pierre, whom he had met before the war. He embarked on a career as a carpenter and painter at the Northampton State Hospital, from which he retired in 1981. As an independent carpenter and painter, he worked on many local houses and landmark buildings. He went on to a second career, working with his son Keith, to revive a family business reaching back several generations, as maple sugar producers; a business which is thriving to this day.

Guidelines for Judging Massachusetts Maple Products

The following guidelines were adopted by the Massachusetts Maple Producers Board of Directors in August, 2012, and were distributed to local fairs around the state. Please feel free to distribute these to fairs or other contests that you work with.

MAPLE SYRUP

How Syrup Will Be Judged:

Step 1: Entries will be evaluated for acceptable density, color category, clarity, and flavor according to the following standards:

Density – Should be greater than or equal to 66.0 degrees Brix and less than or equal to 68.9 degrees Brix and will be determined by judges using a refractometer.

Color – Color category of entry must conform to color grade as determined by the judges using a spectrophotometer or an official grading kit.

Clarity – Should be clean and clear, with no visible impurities (cloudy, sand, etc.).

Flavor – Should be free of off-flavors and representative of grade category entered (i.e. a light syrup should taste appropriately for the light category, not like a medium).

Package – attractiveness, sanitary standards (sealed properly)

Entries judged as not conforming to the above standards will be disqualified. All entries judged acceptable receive the designation “excellent,” and progress to Step 2 for final judging.

Step 2: Entries judged acceptable in Step 1 will be judged and ranked according to “best” flavor by a panel of 3 judges. This flavor ranking will be the final and sole determinant of placement for awards.

MAPLE CANDY

Candy is not to be crystal-coated.

How Candy Will Be Judged:

Appearance – good uniform color, good shape/form.

Texture – hardness, no crystallization (not gritty), surface texture.

Flavor – representative of maple candy with no off flavors.

Package – attractiveness, sanitary standards.

MAPLE CREAM

No extended shelf life cream allowed.

How Cream Will Be Judged:

Appearance – no separation, no air bubbles, good color.

Texture – hardness, no crystallization (not gritty).

Flavor – representative of maple cream with no off

flavors.

Package – attractiveness, sanitary standards (sealed properly).

GRANULATED MAPLE SUGAR (“Indian Sugar”)

Enter one 8 ounce (250 g) plastic or glass container of granulated maple sugar

How Granulated Maple Sugar Will Be Judged:

Appearance – The creep test is used to rate granulated sugar. A small amount of the sugar is placed on a piece of paper in a conical mound. The more the sugar creeps towards the paper, the better. The more the creep, the drier the product. Powdery sugar will be penalized. As ‘proper’ granulated sugar is made from dark syrup, color is expected to be dark.

Texture – fine crystalline structure.

Flavor – representative of granulated maple sugar (same as other sugars) with no off flavors.

MAPLE NOVELTY PRODUCTS

Value-added product made from maple (sap or syrup)

Promotes maple, illustrates other uses

How Novelty Products Will Be Judged:

Promotion of Maple – consumer friendly product, effective promotion.

Appearance – acceptable for product prepared, clean, neat and tidy.

Flavor – representative of maple individually or in combination with specific ingredients & no off flavors.

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And don’t forget Mass Maple **tshirts** (\$10), **sweatshirts** (\$15), **hooded sweatshirts** (\$23) and **caps** (\$12). Limited quantities of some sizes, so order soon!

Everything’s available online, at:

<http://www.massmaple.org/buy.php>

In the Judge's Eye

By Henry Marckres and George Cook

What does it take to have a product that brings home the blue ribbon at contests? Is there some special inside knowledge that people have that helps them to be consistent winners?

First, the judges don't know whose product they are judging. The judges try to do as fair a job as possible. When some people win consistently, perhaps they know how to care for and prepare their entries to retain the top quality characteristics.

To determine the winners, judges usually check the clarity, density and color, and then taste the entry, setting aside any that have exceptional flavor. They will go back and taste these again to determine the winner. Some contests use a score sheet where each factor (clarity, color, flavor, etc.) is rated; then the totals are added to determine a winner.

Syrup – many people set aside pints of syrup during sugaring season that “stand out”. If you do this, keep your entry in glass and in the freezer. Remove the syrup from

the freezer two days before the contest. Remember, for best results; use only new, unused containers. Canning jars are okay but do not use mayonnaise jars, or peanut butter jars, or pickle jars. These are very hard to clean properly and may retain enough odor in the jar or cap to affect your syrup. Canning jars washed with detergent either in a dishwasher or by hand must be well rinsed with hot water.

When getting your entry ready for the contest, open the container and check the four basics: color, clarity, density and the most important TASTE! Have more than one person test the flavor of the syrup. Also, if you are heating syrup to send in, it should be filtered after heating. Always use a syrup filter, not what you find in the kitchen – never a coffee filter. Two other points to remember: 1. Send the required amount of product for the entry. 2. Take your name labels off. The entry tag will identify your product.

Maple Cream – Look for a smooth product with no crystals; spreadable, not too soft and runny but not too hard; and not separated; usually made from a Fancy or Medium Amber syrup. Don't use frosting containers to enter cream in.

Indian Sugar – Use a strong flavored syrup, some dark amber have too light of a flavor for Indian sugar. Watch the moisture content, a sugar should not be like cane sugar, but should have “creep”. It needs to have uniform sugar crystals.

Sugar Cakes – Whether you make large batches or small, watch the temperature of the product. Cakes should be well formed, not too hard or soft, and watch out for large crystals. Lighter flavor syrup may be better than strong flavor. Present them in an attractive display.

Maple Fudge – Use light flavored syrup. Fudge should be firm, not too hard or soft; should be able to be cur into squares. Watch for too many nuts, chopped too finely, or rancid flavor. Avoid recipes with too much butter. Remember, maple should be the prominent flavor.

Maple Specialty – Novel use of maple, any product that isn't covered by other categories. Make sure the maple flavor comes through.

One final reminder to leave you with...before you enter syrup, TASTE IT! This is the most important thing to do before entering it or making it into a product. Don't enter questionable syrup or products. Handle the entries as the special products they are.

Mass Maple Warehouse

212 Reynolds Road • Shelburne, MA 01370
413-625-2900

SUPPLIES: The warehouse is well stocked with all sizes of maple syrup jugs, maple cream jars. Other syrup containers stocked include three sizes of glass maple leaf bottles and five-gallon plastic containers for bulk packing. The warehouse also has cardboard cartons for all size of jugs, gift boxes and maple candy boxes. Many other materials are available: Posters, recipe booklets, coloring books, labels, hang tags, producer manuals, instructional and educational videos, etc.

HOURS: The warehouse is open seven days a week, on a “call ahead” basis only. During the maple season if no one can answer the phone, a message on the answering machine will indicate the hours for that day when someone will be home. Otherwise, please leave a message and someone will return your call. Please be sure to call ahead for everyone's convenience - don't be disappointed by arriving unannounced and finding no one there to assist you. Terms are cash or check only upon pick-up – no charges.

UPS: We can ship only full cases of jugs. You will be billed for the cost of the jugs plus UPS charges. Call in your order to the warehouse (413-625-2900) and we will send it out with a bill. Partial cases of jugs and glass of any quantity cannot be shipped safely.



Recent maple research of interest

The following are short summaries of some of the presentations made at the NAMSC/IMSI meeting in October.

Does Timing of Tap Removal Impact Tree Health?

Presenter: Dr. Gary Graham, State Maple Specialist, Ohio State University Extension

This project looked to see if timing of when taps were pulled at season's end had an impact on taphole closure and staining on the tree.

Evaluation of Spout Sanitation and High Vacuum without Pumps and Predicting Sap Yields in Vacuum Tubing

Presenter: Dr. Tim Perkins, UVM Director, Proctor Maple Research Center

This presentation provided an update of recent and ongoing research at the UVM Proctor Center, including spout/tubing sanitation practices and increased delivery in tubing systems.

Impacts of Reverse Osmosis on Syrup Composition and Flavor

Presenter: Dr. Abby van den Berg, Research Assistant Professor, University of VT Proctor Maple Research Center.

The use of reverse osmosis can substantially increase the speed, efficiency, and profitability of processing sap into

syrup. However, it is sometimes asked whether the use of RO has any impact on the quality or properties of the syrup produced. Results were presented of an experiment in which the composition and flavor of syrup produced simultaneously from raw sap and the same concentrated to 8% by RO were compared.

Modeling and Simulation of Sap Flow in Maple Trees

Presenter: John Stockie, Associate Professor, Dept. of Mathematics, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, BC

In this research project the aim is to develop a detailed mathematical model that captures the flow of both sap and heat within the maple tree. It began by addressing an outstanding fundamental question about the underlying causes of maple sap exudation and whether it is due to thawing of frozen sap, osmotic pressures between cell elements, or some other physical or biological process. Aided by our improved understanding of these cell-level processes, we can then "scale-up" our results to permit the study of the whole tree. Our ultimate goal is to develop a software package that provides physically accurate simulations of sap flow during harvest season and can be used to study the effect of changes in climate, sap harvesting strategies, etc.

Economics of Managing Maples for Syrup or Saw Timber Production

Presenter: Michael Farrell, Director Uihlein Forest, Cornell University

A Microsoft Excel spreadsheet was developed that allows

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users to determine the economic impact of managing an individual maple for saw timber production or leasing it for syrup production. This presentation provided an overview of this Net Present Value calculator and the many variables that determine whether it is more profitable to manage an individual tree for saw timber or maple production. Some of these variables include species (sugar or red maple), diameter, growth rate, stumpage and syrup prices, discount rate, property taxes, and the time horizon of the investment period. Participants gained an understanding of the many factors that determine the optimal use of a maple tree and learned how to utilize the NPV calculator and apply it to their own situations.

chanical and chemical methods exist for controlling alien plants, but the best solution for forest landowners is to prevent an infestation from occurring. In some areas, infestations are too advanced to be entirely eliminated; these situations call for prioritizing what can and cannot be reasonably accomplished. This presentation discussed identification and control strategies for certain key invasive plants likely to be found in our woods.



The Benefits Associated to Sanitation of the Maple Sap Collection System

Presenter: Luc Lagace, Head of Team, Centre Acer

This presentation highlighted the benefits of sanitizing the maple sap collection especially using isopropyl alcohol (IPA 70), on the microbial quality and yield of maple sap.

Identification of Fungal Contamination in Maple Syrup

Presenter: Beth Calder, University of Maine
Maple Syrup processors occasionally observe fungal contamination in their syrup containers and it is not known if they pose a health risk. Ongoing studies at the University of Maine have confirmed and identified fungal organisms in the contaminated syrup samples. Fungi were isolated from 32 syrup bottles from different processors in the U.S. Fungi were identified based on morphology and by comparing their DNA sequences from the ITS region and B tubulin gene to known sequences. Common genera were *Penicillium*, *Aspergillus*, and *Walleimia*. Some of the identified species are known to produce mycotoxins, and we are determining if these toxins are produced in syrup. Syrup is typically bottled at 82 C to decrease the risk of microbial contamination. Spores from some of the fungi were able to germinate after treatment at 70 C for 3 minutes. Maintaining higher syrup bottling temperatures may be one of the future recommendations to minimize fungal contamination in maple syrup.

Invasive Plants and Their Danger to Sugarbushes

Presenter: Tim Wilmot, Maple Specialist, University of Vermont Extension

While sugarmakers are understandably concerned about the potential devastation caused by insects, invasive plants are also serious threats to maple forests. Me-

Notes on Mass Maple Jugs

If you purchase Mass Maple jugs, 100% of the syrup put into those jugs **MUST** be from Massachusetts. If you buy in bulk and are unsure about where the entire product comes from, please do not use these jugs. The warehouse has Allstate jugs available.

If you sell in Mass Maple jugs, you **MUST** add a label or hang tag with the name and contact information for your sugarhouse. Federal regulations require this.

The artwork on the Mass Maple jugs is owned by MMPA and may not be copied, in whole or in part, for any reason. Photos of your jugs in advertising or on your website are acceptable.

All of the plastic jugs we sell are 100% BPA free.



New glass bottles available at warehouse

Members have noticed these etched glass jugs and some have begun bottling syrup in them. MMPA carried a limited amount at the Big E booth and they sold out quickly. The Association has purchased two pallets of these jugs to sell to our members, and they are available at the warehouse.

The jugs are sold in cases of 12. A case of the 500 ml size is \$34.20 and a case of the 250 ml size is \$24.

The etching is done by Artisan Printing of Vermont (www.apofvt.com), a company run by Vermont Sugarmaker Bill LaPorte.



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The North American Maple Syrup Council

All MMPA members are represented by the organization on the North American Maple Syrup Council.

Who we are:

The North American Maple Syrup Council, Inc. is an international network of maple syrup producer associations representing sixteen (16) commercial maple producing States and Canadian Provinces within North America. Each member state or provincial association appoints a Delegate and Alternate Delegate to represent their local interests at the Council.

The NAMSC or Council, as it is commonly referred to, is a non-profit organization established with the purpose of bringing together industry leaders, researchers and affiliated industry groups to share common interests, experience and knowledge for the betterment of the maple syrup industry. The NAMSC began as the National Maple Syrup Council in October 1959 and has grown and expanded over the years to serve the needs of its membership and industry.

What we do:

Communication & Education

The NAMSC communicates and collaborates regularly with officials of the International Maple Syrup Institute (IMSI) in coordinating efforts and resolving current industry issues. Their mission or purpose of these separate organizations varies in the maple industry. The NAMSC is primarily involved with maple research

and education and the IMSI focuses more on marketing and promotion of maple products.

Both organizations interact regularly with outside supporting organizations such as the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) who annually provide our industry with comprehensive production and market statistics, and the The Nature Conservancy who through a collaboration of forest related associations lobby for continued funding of USDA-APHIS for programs targeting non-native forest pests and the eradication of the Asian Longhorned Beetle.

NAMSC – IMSI Conference & Annual Meetings

The NAMSC and IMSI share the same venue each October at their annual conference where they each hold their annual meetings. Here the NAMSC Delegates and Alternate Delegates from the different States and Provinces actively participate in discussion planning and resolution of current maple industry issues. At the meetings NAMSC Delegates and Alternate Delegates receive updates on active maple research, new technology and education. This information is intended to flow back to the membership of their local maple association or co-op through the Delegates.

Promote the Development and Funding of Maple Research

The NAMSC Research Fund is a non-profit, volunteer managed fund established by in 1987 and is a major activity of the Council. The goal of the program to generate seed money for universities and institutions that perform maple research and to open commu-

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nication between the producers and the research community regarding the needs and issues the maple industry. This voluntary contribution program began based on a “penny per syrup container” filled. Producers were encouraged to participate and the fund has expanded over the years to what is now known today as the Maple Research Alliance. It is still based on a “penny per syrup container” but rather than container “filled” it is now container “sold” and designed to increase and maintain consistent funding through an industry-wide network of container manufacturers and distributors, syrup packers, co-ops and maple associations. Participating companies who make the commitment to support and promote the research and educational initiatives of the NAMSC Research Fund are known as Alliance Partners.

What we provide the industry:

Publications

The *Maple Syrup Digest* is a familiar periodical to maple syrup producers throughout the maple belt. It was established in January 1962 and is the official publication of the North American Maple Syrup Council. This quarterly publication provides dependable information including industry reports, research findings, State and Provincial events and information on products and services through its advertisers.

The *North American Maple Syrup Producers Manual* is “everything you need to know from tree to table”. For almost fifty years maple producers have depended on and have been well served by five editions of this publication which guides the industry in forestry, production, technology, maple markets and more. A NAMSC committee works closely with Ohio State University in updating editions by assisting in writing, editing, providing photos and proofing of the manual.

Recognition of Maple Industry Leadership

The Richard G. Haas Distinguished Service Award is presented at the NAMSC annual meeting to a leading maple research organization, research professional or Maple Research Alliance Partner in appreciation for their work and / or contributions to the industry. The NAMSC established this memorial fund in 2011 in the name of Richard G. Haas of Sugarhill Containers in recognition of his support of the goals of the Council, efforts of the Research Fund and overall advancement of the maple syrup industry.

The American Maple Museum Hall of Fame Award is represented through a standing committee of the NAMSC. The award recognizes and honors two individuals at the opening ceremonies in Croghan, New York on the third Saturday each May. This prestigious award is presented in recognition of the recipients’ commitment and contributions to the maple syrup industry and is the highest honor the Maple Industry offers.

Where the NAMSC goes from here:

Planning & Development

NAMSC Strategic Planning Initiatives began in 2000 with the

adoption of a comprehensive Strategic Plan in 2004. The intent was to research and establish a more formal approach to the management of the Council and to better define the future of the organization through planning. The current Strategic Plan which covers five key areas: Communications, Finance, Organizational Structure & Operations, Research Fund Focus & Education. The plan is monitored and updated annually with planning sessions every three or four years. This document has proved to be a valuable tool in the management and growth of the Council. The next planning session will be held in Connecticut in October 2012.

The NAMSC Mission Statement states that “The North American Maple Syrup Council is an international network of maple syrup producer associations, business leaders and affiliated groups brought together to share their common interests, experience and knowledge for the advancement and improvement of the maple syrup industry”.

The future of the NAMSC can be best summarized in its mission statement that “The North American Maple Syrup Council will provide and maintain a forum for its member States and Provinces, associates, affiliates and other members to exchange information; promote research; protect and improve product standards and production methods; and to enhance the marketing and promotion of quality pure maple syrup products. The Council will continue to enhance its position as a leader in education and general resource for the maple industry in the United States and Canada.”

For more information visit our website at:
www.northamericanmaple.org



Maple resources online

Massachusetts Farm Energy: Best Management Practices for Maple Sugaring

<http://www.mass.gov/eea/docs/agr/programs/energy/energy-bmp-maple.pdf>

Maple Nutritional and Health Benefits Information (poster and rack card)

<http://www.internationalmaplesyrupinstitute.com/projects.html>

Connecticut Maple Syrup Producers Manual

http://www.ctmaple.org/uploads/1/1/7/9/11794542/connecticut_maple_syrup_producers_manual_2005.pdf

Cornell Maple Program Publications

<http://maple.dnr.cornell.edu/pubs/index.htm>

Maple Flavor Wheel

http://www4.agr.gc.ca/resources/prod/doc/sci/maple-erable/maple-erable_eng.pdf

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Food Safety Laws and Maple Products— Should Maple Producers be Concerned?

The following article appeared in the newsletter of the Maple Syrup Producers Association of Connecticut and is reprinted here with their permission. Some specific references to CT regulations and agencies have been removed and, where appropriate, Massachusetts-specific information has been added.

As most everyone knows, food safety concerns are increasing in the United States and worldwide. Over the past several years we have had illnesses and deaths caused by a multitude of agricultural products, such as spinach, pistachios, fruit juices, peanuts, eggs, etc. Maple products, as far as we know, have not caused any problems to date and may never become a concern. Certainly our association, since its inception, has stressed the need for high quality standards. Indeed, it's in our charter as the objective of the organization and our Producers Manual, readily available to anyone, is filled with production and quality control guidelines to ensure the production of highest quality maple products. Moreover, we are all stressing quality in our operations for all maple products, but particularly those that are sold directly or through retail outlets to consumers. Like it or not, however, as government at the Federal, State and local levels reacts to the public outcry for more protection from unsafe foods, various laws have been and will be enacted that impact all food products, including maple. Therefore, our association should keep its members informed about the current and forecasted food regulatory environment.

In April of this year, the Connecticut Farm Bureau held a conference that addressed the current and forecasted future food safety regulatory environment through which farmers must pass in order to bring their products to market. It was well attended. Various Connecticut state agencies were represented, including the Departments of Agriculture, Consumer Protection and Revenue Services as well as the UConn Cooperative Extension. Although not specifically addressed, most all of the sessions provided information on regulations that impact maple products in some way. Of particular interest was a presentation by Diane Wright Hirsch, of the UConn Cooperative Extension. She presented an update of the recently passed Food Safety Modernization Act and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and how each will affect farmers. Incidentally, while the Food Safety Modernization Act is the law of the land, GAP is a voluntary program. Generally it applies to unprocessed or minimally processed (cut, bunched) fresh produce, but it is possible that some of your larger customers may want you to have a GAP food safety program. Because maple products were not specifically addressed and yet they come under some of the regulations, after the conference, we asked Diane Hirsch to provide answers to several questions that are important to maple

producers. She agreed and what follows are our questions and Diane's answers.

1. Because maple syrup is a boiled product, is it exempt from most, or at least some, regulations?

The fact that maple syrup is a boiled product is only tangentially related to how it is regulated. There is no specific exemption for retail manufacturers of maple syrup from the US Food and Drug Administration's Good Manufacturing Practices (GMPs), but the FDA does not generally inspect retail manufacturers (although interstate commerce of components such as packaging does give them authority if necessary).

These actions are likely predicated on the belief that maple syrup is at low risk for being the source of organisms that cause foodborne illness because it is boiled.

2. Are there fewer regulations involved if a maple producer sells only maple syrup direct to consumers at their farm? If not, what ones do apply?

Farmers who produce maple syrup on their farm to sell directly to the consumer at a farm stand or farmers' markets are covered under the exemption detailed in #1 above. There are still requirements regarding labeling, however (see #6).

3. What is entailed if a maple producer wholesales maple syrup to a retail outlet for resale?

Farmers who are selling their maple syrup wholesale and/or to a retailer for resale to the consumer must comply with a longer list of regulations. Because they are considered food processors (as are all syrup makers), they must comply with regulations carried out by the FDA. Labeling requirements are provided under #6, below. The FDA requires any processor who is selling product wholesale to complete the Food Facility Registration found at fda.gov (search for "registration of food facilities"). Again, it is also incumbent upon the producer to notify the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) if a food (your syrup) that may cause illness has entered distribution. [Massachusetts producers are also bound by Massachusetts Retail Food Regulations, found at <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/provider/guidance-business/food-safety/retail-food/massachusetts-retail-food-regulations-fact-sheet.html>.]

4. What changes when value-added products, such as maple cream and candy, are offered for sale?

No one producing a maple product is exempt from regulations applied to any food manufacturer. All of these prod-

ucts must be produced in an approved, nonresidential facility, and must comply with the requirements described in #3 above.

5. What are the labeling requirements for maple syrup?

The labeling requirements for all maple products are the same, no matter who you are selling to. Basically, you must include the name and address of the manufacturer or distributor, an accurate statement of quantity, and the common or usual name of the food. You may find Massachusetts labeling requirements at <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/environmental/foodsafety/food-label-brochure.pdf>, and information regarding ingredient, food allergen, and nutrition labeling at www.fda.gov (search for food labeling guide).

In addition, the International Maple Syrup Institute (IMSI) strongly recommends that the label include a production code date. “Trace back” or the ability to trace a food product back to its original source is becoming the standard of operation for food businesses. If a problem occurs, people want to find out when and where that food was produced, so that, if necessary, it can be taken off the store shelf or out of the consumer’s pantry.

Often, a product is identified by a “batch” code. The pro-

cessor can define what a batch is. But keep in mind that the larger the batch, the bigger the potential recall. If a batch is one day’s worth of processing, then if a problem occurs, that day’s production will come under scrutiny and may be recalled. If a batch is defined as a week’s production, then the recall will involve all of the syrup produced in a week. If there is no batch code used, all of the maple syrup from a processor can be the subject of that recall—this year’s, last year’s, anything that is still in commerce.

6. What will the new FDA Food Safety Modernization Act mean to the maple syrup producer?

In January 2011, the President signed into law the US FDA Food Safety Modernization Act, the first far-reaching federal food safety legislation in years. This is likely to affect most food manufacturers, though there are some exemptions for very small processors. There is an interesting provision in the regulation that may prove helpful to maple syrup producers. It states that, “FDA is required to issue regulations specifying what activities constitute on-farm packing or holding of food, and on-farm manufacturing or processing of food. FDA is required to conduct a science-based risk analysis of the types of manufacturing, processing, packing, and holding activities that occur on farms and, based on that risk analysis, exempt (or modify the requirements for) facilities that are small businesses or very small businesses engaged in specific activities

FDA determines to be low risk involving specific foods FDA determines to be low risk.” As yet, the outcome of this risk assessment is not known. We are still waiting for the actual regulations to be published. Otherwise, very small manufacturers may also be exempted as “qualified facilities” which limits some of the requirements based on the size of the operation and the end user (must be consumer or restaurant). All of this is still very much up in the air as the final rules have not been published and no one really knows when this will happen— presently they are overdue by at least six months.

7. Who at the state level does a maple producer contact to learn more about inspections or certification?

To learn more, contact the Massachusetts Food Protection Program (www.mass.gov/dph/fpp) at (617) 983-6700.



New England Agricultural Marketing Conference & Trade Show

February 27 - 28, 2013

Sturbridge Host Hotel, Sturbridge, MA

The Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference & Trade Show is once again coming to Sturbridge, MA in February 2013.

The theme of the 2013 conference is Making “Cents” in Today’s Marketplace. Attendees will find 26 workshops on topics such as marketing, agri-tourism, social media, financing and more. There will be a panel discussion with the agricultural chiefs from each of the New England states. Don’t forget the trade show with a large variety of agricultural vendors and the New England Farmers’ Market Managers Workshop.

Registration is now open. More information is available at <http://www.regonline.com/builder/site/Default.aspx?EventID=1135517>

Harvest New England (HNE) is a cooperative marketing program created by New England’s state departments of agriculture in 1992. It has sponsored this regional conference since 2007. For more information, contact David Webber, David.Webber@state.ma.us, 617-626-1754.



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