

# DROP IN THE BUCKET



Vol. 36, No. 1

Newsletter of The Maple Syrup Producers Association of Connecticut, Inc.

October 2018

Member: North American Maple Syrup Council & International Maple Syrup Institute

## New Connecticut Cottage Food Law

In May, 2018 the Connecticut Legislature prescribed a regulatory framework, referred to as the Connecticut Cottage Food Law, for those people who wish to make certain types of low-risk foods in their home kitchen. Among the more significant limitations are that the food production must not involve commercial equipment, sales must be made directly to consumers, annual sales must not exceed \$25,000, and the home kitchen must meet certain sanitation requirements and pass inspection in order to become licensed by the Department of Consumer Protection.

**Join us...**  
**...for the MSPAC**  
**2018 Annual Meeting**  
**November 10, 2018**

**...and for the MSPAC**  
**2019 Pre-Season Meeting**  
**January 19, 2019**

For agendas and more details, please turn to page 14.

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Sugar-makers boiling sap in their home kitchen should know that they do not need to become licensed as a cottage food producer with the Department of Consumer Protection. Under Sec. 21a-24b of the Connecticut General Statutes, the production of maple syrup in a home kitchen on a residential farm and the sale of that maple syrup on that farm is exempted from inspection by state and local government. Please see the specific language of Sec. 21a-24b included below. Also, please note that there are standards and requirements that sugar-makers must still follow. Please review the Uniform Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (Sec. 21a-91 to 21a-120) on the state website, [www.cga.ct.gov](http://www.cga.ct.gov).

We believe only the smallest producers boil sap and make maple syrup in their on-farm home kitchen and sell it direct to consumers. But no doubt there are Connecticut sugar makers who make maple cream or candy in their home kitchen and they will be affected by the new cottage food law. For all those who do use their home kitchen for maple products to be sold direct to consumers (no wholesale products allowed), the new regulation spells out the requirements to become certified and licensed by the Department of Consumer Protection. While we believe the law/regulation was well intentioned for most foods, we do not believe all aspects of it are necessary for maple products and we will address that next. But our first priority at this time is to address the Connecticut requirement that maple sugar houses must be inspected and licensed as Food Manufacturing Establishments.

Directly from the Connecticut General Statutes

- Sec. 21a-24b. Sale of maple syrup.
  - (a) As used in this section, “residential farm” means property (1) being utilized as a farm, as defined in subsection (q) of section 1-1, and (2) serving as the primary residence of the owner of such property.
  - (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 21a-91 to 21a-120, inclusive, and any regulations adopted thereunder, the preparation and sale of maple syrup on a residential farm shall be allowed in a room used as living quarters and shall be exempt from inspection by any state or local agency. Each container of maple syrup offered for sale on such farm shall have on its label, in ten-point type: “Not prepared in a government-inspected kitchen.”

**Write to Your  
Connecticut  
Legislator NOW**

**Turn to page 3 for details.**

## A Message from the President

It's Labor Day as I write this letter. To many folks it's the end of summer, the beginning of fall and the start of serious preparations for the 2019 sugaring season. But before looking ahead, let's quickly look back at the 2018 season. Overall, it yielded an "average crop," based on the feedback I received. But results varied widely across the state, even be-



tween neighboring zip codes. Some had a great year while others had a subpar year. There was general agreement, however, that the 2018 season was much better than the 2017 season. Common to most in 2018 were low sap sugar content, high niter percentage, an unusual move from dark to lighter syrup as the season progressed and an early, almost abrupt, end to the season despite a forecast

of favorable temperatures. Well, that's all in the history book now; so let's look forward to the 2019 season and hope it is a record breaking one for every producer in the state.

On the less than positive side, we have learned some dispiriting news from the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection, which is covered elsewhere in the newsletter. In their apparent quest for 100% perfect food safety for all locally produced foods, including maple products, they have gone well beyond the new FDA requirements spelled out in the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). Basically, they are **requiring that every maple producer who sells to the public either undergo an inspection to become a Food Manufacturing Establishment**, which can be very costly, or officially certify/attest on FDA form 3942a to the Department of Consumer Protection that they do not meet the requirement to be inspected as one. That amounts to 100% compliance. In contrast, the FDA does not require sugar makers to register as a Food Manufacturing Establishment if they sell only direct to consumers. If they sell direct to customers plus less than 51% to wholesale accounts they still don't have to either certify on form 3942a or be inspected as a Food Manufacturing Establishment. Only if more than 51% of their sales are to wholesale customers do they have to register.

The MSPAC leadership team considers the Connecticut law and Department of Consumer Protection declaration in a May 5, 2018 letter to be bureaucratic over-reach at its worst and we are asking you, the membership, to launch a campaign with our State Legislators to enact a law to bring Connecticut into compliance with the FDA regulation and, as far as we can determine, to be compatible with what all other maple states are requiring. Incidentally, FDA Form 3942a does not yet exist in final form, as I found it on the FDA web site marked "Draft, Do Not Submit."

Behind this issue is the Connecticut Cottage Food law, which also requires registration and inspection for maple and honey producers. As I write this, we have not seen the particulars of that new law. We will deal with that next, but first we must take a stand on the Food Manufacturing Establishment requirement. We have no other choice. Otherwise, maple syrup production in Connecticut will be stifled and even shut down for all but the largest producers. Indeed, it has implications for all small family farms in Connecticut and runs counter to the State's efforts to increase agriculture.

Simultaneously, we will continue to reach out to the Department of Consumer Protection to both work with and educate them about what goes into making pure maple products and keep them up-to-date about what we constantly do to educate our members on how to maintain the highest quality standards. In so doing, we will help the Department of Consumer Protection shape future regulations that will support the growth and continued supply of Connecticut locally produced natural, sweet and nutritious maple syrup, candy, cream and sugar for future generations. Bottom line, we appreciate and respect the Department of Consumer Protection's role in ensuring the safety of our food supply, but we believe in this instance they have gone too far.

Regarding the safety of maple products, **I cannot find any historical record of a maple product ever causing an illness**, say nothing of something more serious. It's a boiled product that in most cases is taken up to above 200 degrees three or four times before it is sold to the consumer. It stands to reason that when we follow best practices and maintain the highest quality standards we are on the right side of the angels when it comes to food safety. We are making a pure, healthy, natural product.

Pam Green, Chairperson of the Vermont Sugar Maker's Association, recently captured the essence of what we are when she wrote the following.

"What makes this industry so great are the people, the sugar makers themselves. Their stories, woven over generations, create a patchwork of experiences that embodies family, community, a way of life, a sense of commitment to green, local and stewardship of the land. It is important for the whole picture to include a vision of an industry that works with nature, and thereby, increases the health of forests. Unlike so many other industries, we do not destroy anything or make changes to the environment in order to make this pure natural product. Even though we have woven a lot of new technology into sugaring over the last 50 years, we are still economically and environmentally sound and friendly. I doubt many other industries that have embraced advances in technology have managed to stay as rooted to the principles of their heritage and as committed to the purity and quality of their product."

Looking forward, the detailed agendas for the upcoming Membership and Pre-season Meetings are spelled out separately in this newsletter. In brief, the 2018 membership meeting will be held Saturday, November 10, 2018 from 9 am till 3 pm at the Mansfield Middle School, 205 Spring Hill Road, Storrs, CT. It will feature three speakers: Kathy Hopkins (University of Maine) addressing quality issues, Tim Wilmot (UVM and D&G Evaporator) addressing 3/16 tubing and Bruce Gillian (Leader Evaporator) addressing equipment options to consider as maple producers scale up their operation. A business meeting will follow the speakers. It will include the election of officers and directors, the treasurer's report, the membership report and reports from key committee heads.

The Pre-season Meeting will be held on January 19, 2019 from 8 am till 3 pm at Lyman Memorial High School, Lebanon, CT. We are pleased to have Dr. Joseph Orifice from the Yale University to explain Yale's forestry program and Ray

Bonenberg, current president of IMSI and past president of the Ontario Maple Syrup Association, to share information about what the Ontario association and IMSI are doing to promote maple products consumption in ways that may be transferable to Connecticut and MSPAC members. There will be ample time to pick-up your last minute supplies from numerous vendors and catch up on what is happening in the industry. This year we will also have some great workshops to help you make value added products and improve your maple operation, including one on how to make maple cream.

So that's it for now. I wish you a happy fall and look forward to seeing you all at our membership meeting on November 10th.

—Mark Harran, President, MSPAC

## Write to Your Connecticut Legislator Now

MSPAC members must become politically active to turn back Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection regulations that will burden the industry while offering no benefit to public safety. Immediately, maple producers must work with their legislative representatives in the General Assembly to bring Connecticut's maple production regulations back into line with the FDA's scientifically-based food safety program (FSMA).

As it stands now, the DCP's regulations and pronouncements require that 1) all maple syrup producers in Connecticut, of any size, register with the DCP, and 2) producers that sell more than 50% of their maple syrup to stores or other wholesale buyers meet the requirements of and become licensed with the DCP as a Class 1 Food Manufacturing Establishment (FME).

If not reversed, these regulations will have a chilling effect on maple production in Connecticut and devastating consequences for our small family farms. Moreover, why would next-generation maple producers follow in our footsteps?

## DCP Should Use an Evidence-Based, Scientific Approach to Food Safety

Sugar-makers should demand that the Connecticut legislature require the DCP to bring its regulation of maple syrup in line with Federal (FDA) regulations. The Food Safety Modernization Act of 2011 (FSMA), as implemented by the FDA in recent years, was developed based on decades of accumulated scientific evidence concerning food safety. The rollout of FSMA has changed the food safety rules/programs for most food produc-

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### Maple Syrup Producers Association of Connecticut, Inc.

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The editor welcomes letters, news items and photographs about sugaring for fun or profit in Connecticut. We also accept advertisements from equipment dealers and maple syrup producers. Rates will be furnished upon request to the editor.

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## Write to Your Connecticut Legislator Now

*continued from previous page*

ers. Sugar-makers that are subject to these rules and rollout-timeframes should have already implemented them.

But specific legal definitions now within the Connecticut General Statutes that require sugar-makers to conform to a one-size-fits-all food policy, plus a recent May 5, 2018 pronouncement by the Connecticut DCP that requires all sugar-makers to register with the state, do not appear to be scientifically based and are far more onerous than FDA policies. These DCP policies will hurt our local maple industry with no clear benefit to public safety.

### How Did This Happen?

In March 2018 MSPAC VP Bill Farrell brought to our attention that current Connecticut law/definition/policies regarding maple syrup were inconsistent with the FDA regulation. Farrell had become aware of a particular enforcement action by the DCP and separately, became aware of the existing law and DCP's desire to seek out sugar-makers who might be selling any maple syrup wholesale without an FME license.

Although the license fee to become a Food Manufacturing Establishment (FME) is modest (about \$200 annually for license renewal and required water test), the capital equipment necessary to meet FME standards represents a significant expense and comes along with periodic inspections and the like. The FME registration requirement could prevent maple syrup hobbyists from growing into full-fledged businesses and in so doing have a negative impact on many current Connecticut maple producers and result in a drastic reduction in Connecticut maple products ("Connecticut Grown") for sale in Connecticut. Ironically, the void would be filled by other maple producing states and Canadian provinces, none of which, as near as we can determine, have the same onerous requirements as Connecticut.

The Connecticut law now in place (Sec 21a-151) is far more encompassing than the FDA regulation and treats maple syrup as a high-risk food product which is a direct contradiction to how the FDA defines it. The latitude the FDA allows is that a maple producer selling only direct to consumers need not register and the maple producer may sell 50% or less through wholesale channels before needing to register. In contrast, Connecticut statute (Sec 21a-151) requires licensing as an Food Manufacturing Establishment (FME) if a producer sells as little one ounce of maple syrup wholesale.

During its development of regulations for implementing FSMA, the FDA specifically excluded the production of maple syrup from its more rigorous provisions. The FDA considers maple syrup production a low-risk activity that exempts the producer from all requirements for hazard analysis and risk-based preventive controls, 21CFR117.5 (3) (xix). In the FDA's draft guidance for industry "Qualified Facility Attestation Using Form FDA 3942a (for Human Food) or Form FDA 3942b (for Animal Food)" the FDA states for maple that "this type of very small farm mixed-type facility may decide to not submit Form FDA 3942a even though it meets the definition of a qualified

facility and instead take advantage of the exemption from all requirements for hazard analysis and risk-based preventive controls based on only conducting low-risk activity/food combinations." In other words, all but the largest on-farm sugar-houses are excluded from the most rigorous provisions of FSMA.

### May 5, 2018 Pronouncement Moves DCP Even Further Away From FDA

When MSPAC learned in March that DCP might be taking steps to seek out sugar-makers that sell maple syrup wholesale without an FME license, members of MSPAC initiated actions to make Connecticut law/regulations consistent with the FDA regulation. This took the form of asking the CT DCP to address the inconsistency and asking several legislators to address it through a change in Connecticut law.

In response, CT DCP, presumably in reaction to MSPAC's request and to head off new legislation, advised to one CT senator that DCP was changing its regulations to be consistent with the FDA, but it added a burdensome requirement. In a letter dated May 5, 2018, the DCP wrote that the only way Connecticut maple producers that sell maple syrup wholesale can avoid becoming licensed as an FME is that ALL sugar-makers must certify or attest to the CT DCP, using FDA Form 3942a, that they sell less than 51% of their maple syrup to wholesale customers and meet the FDA's definition of a qualified facility. With this pronouncement that all maple syrup producers in the State must register, DCP has moved well beyond the new FDA Federal food safety regulations (FSMA) for pure maple products (syrup, cream, sugar, and candy).

Filling out the FDA form 3942a, even if a producer is exempt from becoming an FME, will open up the facility for inspection by the CT DCP and is contrary to the guidance by the FDA for exempt facilities. Moreover, the CT DCP has not, as far as we know at this time, identified how the FME inspection process would take place or what the standards are for maple syrup or honey processing facility, nor have they developed, published and put out for public comment an inspection checklist. Additionally, it may be contrary to the new cottage food laws effective October 1, 2018, that say you can process these foods in your home but again calls for a home inspection which is also not clarified. Moreover, the May 5, 2018 letter by the DCP may be a violation of the states transparency regulations as none of this has been posted on their website or conveyed to the affected parties.

### PLEASE TAKE ACTION NOW!

Bottom line, this requirement is wrong! Please meet with or write your local CT state representatives for their support in modifying the current CT DCP regulation.

We need the law to allow Connecticut sugar-makers to sell their maple products locally without needing to register and/or become licensed as an FME. The requirements for becoming an FME are the same food processing requirements that apply to multi-billion dollar food manufacturers selling to millions of consumers.

You can contact your local legislator drawing from this article or from a recent letter to a CT legislator that is included in this newsletter issue. One-size-fits-all food regulations will hurt the Connecticut maple syrup industry and hold Connecticut back from taking its place in the local food renaissance now

underway around the country.

Here is a recent letter to a CT legislator, which defines the problem and recommends action.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

It is with shock and dismay that I read the 5 May 2018 letter sent you by the Department of Consumer Protection (DCP) regarding new regulations for the Connecticut maple syrup industry. First, under the Connecticut General Statutes (CGS 21a-115) I don't believe that the DCP can unilaterally issue new regulations without a public hearing. And I can tell you right now that if the DCP eventually implements these regulations, the cost of adhering to them will wipe out most commercial producers of maple syrup in our State. It comes as a shock that the DCP would take such draconian steps without any scientific basis indicating that such action will improve public health and safety.

Moreover, the May 5, 2018 regulation change moves Connecticut further away from Federal food safety regulations and defies the spirit of Connecticut being among the first U.S. states to adopt the FDA's model food code almost 20 years ago. In its letter, the DCP states that it is now requiring that maple syrup and honey producers, in order to avoid inspection, attest "to DCP that they meet the qualified exemption." Attestation is something the FDA does not require of maple syrup producers.

For the sake of our local maple industry, I hope that the DCP will treat all pure maple products production (maple syrup, cream, candy and sugar) similarly to how the FDA is regulating the industry under FSMA. During its development of regulations for implementing the Food Safety and Modernization Act, the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) specifically excluded the production of maple syrup from its more onerous provisions. The FDA considers maple syrup production a low-risk activity that exempts the producer from all requirements for hazard analysis and risk-based preventive controls, 21CFR117.5 (3) (xix). In the FDA's draft guidance for industry "Qualified Facility Attestation Using Form FDA 3942a (for Human Food) or Form FDA 3942b (for Animal Food)" the FDA states that "this type of very small farm mixed-type facility may decide to not submit Form FDA 3942a even though it meets the definition of a qualified facility and instead take advantage of the exemption from all requirements for hazard analysis and risk-based preventive controls based on only conducting low-risk activity/food combinations."

If the Department of Consumer Protection has chosen to be more restrictive than the FDA on the production of maple syrup I would appreciate understanding its rationale. In the meantime, I urge you to enact legislation that will bring Connecticut into compliance with FDA regulation for maple syrup.

Sincerely,

Please contact Bill Farrell, Mat Wilkinson or Mark Harran if you desire further help or have questions. Thanks in advance for taking action on this critical issue. 💧

## Hugh R. Brown, 1928-2017



*Hugh Brown at the organizational meeting of the MSPAC at the Grange Hall in West Simsbury, Ct. in November 1977.*

*Hugh was one of the five founders of the Maple Syrup Producers Association of Connecticut. He was involved in the formation of our association in 1977 and for years to follow he contributed his talent and resources to the MSPAC. Hugh was instrumental in the creation of our association logo, naming the "Drop in the Bucket" newsletter, designing our grading poster and much more. He was a great guy who welcomed all who stopped by his sugarhouse in North Canton.*

Hugh "Hughie" Robinson Brown died the evening of September 26, 2017.

He was a tried and true New Englander. Hugh's favorite time of year was late autumn when he would go out with his beloved dogs to hunt for woodcock and ruffed grouse. He was never without a dog by his side. Born September 7, 1928 to Hugh and Phyllis Brown. He grew up with his two brothers, Alfred and Robert, in Unionville, Connecticut. After graduation from High School, he enlisted in the US Army, serving a portion of the time in the "god awful" Aleutian Islands. Upon discharge, Hugh began his career in the family business, The Mono Typesetting Company, working alongside his father, brother Bob, and son Putt. Hugh was married to the beautiful Cherrilla Putnam for 44 years until her passing in 1998. They raised three children to

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## Equipment For Sale

Evaporator - 2' x 6' oil fired D&G, 4 years old, stainless tig welded pans, full hood w/ stainless pre-heater, stainless stacks and caps \$6000	Stainless milk tank 375 gallons \$300
Stainless welded finish pan 16" x 16", 10 gallons, w/valve and thermometer \$200	Truck tanks poly w/valves - 325 gallon \$250 or 210 gallon \$150
One cone filter tank, w/valve, stainless welded \$250	Square poly tank in steel cage 200 gallon \$70
Blue plastic 5 gallon containers with caps - \$5/ea	Horizontal poly tanks - 125 gallon \$150 or 50 gallon \$75
Tubing tool - two handed for 5/16" tubing \$100	Snow shoes - two pairs, med and large \$100/pr
Sap sucker electric \$600	Syrup Refractometer \$60
Sap transfer pump 5 hp w/ different length 1" hoses with quick connectors \$200	Reduction valve for washing tubing \$100
	Misc tubing and main line wire
	Contact Jack Trumbull 860-379-7312 New Hartford



# North American Maple Syrup Council, Inc. September 2018 Report

NAMSC Summary Report by Michael Girard, Executive Director

## Report On Maple Producer Educational Efforts

The North American Maple Syrup Council's Education Committee continues to support projects that will provide the development and distribution of several forms of media with the focus on educating the maple syrup producer. The NAMSC has been working with Mark Isselhardt, University of Vermont, and Extension on a few educational projects listed below.

## Off-Flavor Kits

In participation with UVM the Council sponsored and distributed 400 off-flavor syrup test kits to member associations for their use and hopefully demonstration to their membership. The kits were samples of three natural off-flavors: metabolism, sour sap, and buddy syrup.

This program is continuing into 2019 and will provide another round of off-flavor samples including sample kits on "Chemical off-flavors" such as defoamers, cleaning agents, etc.

## Maple Syrup Digest Supplements

In 2017 the Council began distributing educational supplements through the Maple Syrup Digest. The June '17 Issue was on instruments in syrup production and how to use them properly, and October '17 was on Gravity Filtering. The June '18 issue was on Quality Control in the Sugarhouse and October '18 will be on Tapping. The Council plans on providing supplements on more topics for 2019.

## NAMSC Curated Research Portal

The Council will participate in Educational efforts supported by the ACER Grant which is being funded this year. The NAMSC will be working with Proctor Maple Research Center in developing a curated internet portal of resources for the maple industry collecting technical, practical, and research resources. This will be previewed at the NAMSC Annual meeting in Concord, NH.

The Council will also be working with the Iowa State University Extension in developing further practical skill guides to be published and distributed in the Maple Digest.

## Maple Instructional Videos

The NAMSC is sponsoring maple production videos being created by the University of Vermont.

New videos are in progress or being planned on a variety of sugaring topics.

## Maple Manual Update

The North American Maple Syrup Producers Manual is under review and the NAMSC is considering its options to update the necessary sections of the 2006 version of the Maple Producers



Art Roy, Barkhamsted, receives his NAMSC pin for being the alternate delegate from MSPAC in Levis Quebec 2017. He didn't know he was going to receive anything but an "attaboy."

Manual which was printed by Ohio State University. One option is to re-write the entire Manual and another option is developing supplements to update the sections that need updating. There are 13 sections in the Manual and 4 Appendixes and of that, the sections that especially need updating are: Sap Production, Syrup Production, Syrup Filtration, Maple Economics, Food Safety, and Production Facilities. There is substantial amount of work involved with either option plus expense to write, edit and print the new or updated manual. The 2006 version of the Maple Producers Manual is no longer available for purchase.

## OTHER NAMSC UPDATES:

### The NAMSC Research Fund

Last year The Research Fund awarded grants totaling \$48,120. Requests for 2018 proposals were sent out to researchers and research institutions in March with a September deadline for receipt of proposals. Research Funding is made possible through contributions made to the penny per container program—either by individual contributors or through our Research Alliance Partners. The MSPAC is one of the 15 participating Alliance Partners.

Proposals have been solicited and received by the committee for 2019 and will be considered for funding at the Annual meeting in Concord-based on established criteria of the NAMSC Research Fund Committee.

The Maple Syrup Digest Editor, Winton Pitcoff, is always looking for photos, articles, advertising, classifieds and other printable information for the Maple Digest.

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# MSPAC Annual Meeting November 4, 2017

This year's meeting was held at Sessions Woods State Park in Burlington, Connecticut. Peter Picone, wildlife biologist and curator of Sessions Woods, addressed the attendees. He indicated that their focus is on conservation education. The area was originally owned by the Sessions family, who founded Sessions Clock Company in Forestville, Connecticut, established in 1903. The Sessions family sold the land to the Methodist Church. In the 1980s the land was acquired by the State of Connecticut with the help of Sportsmen-generated Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration (Pittman-Robertson) Funds. The DEP established it as a state park in 1992. The facilities include an education center with an exhibit area and a large meeting room, as well as trails and habitat management demonstration sites.

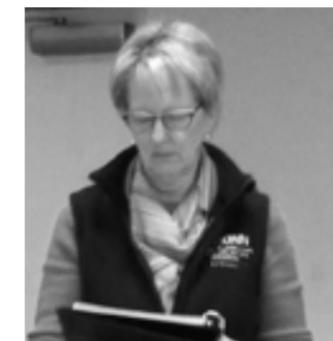
Business meeting started at 9:00. Mark Harran, association. The first presentation was by Dr. Abby van den Berg from the University of Vermont. Dr. Abby's topics were tapping, tubing, vacuum and sanitation. She explained the benefits of vacuum and tubing management, and shared the facts about a study of cost analysis of tubing sanitizing vs. replacement. Dr. Abby also mentioned climate change and a study done on 1/4" vs. 5/16" tap holes.

The second speaker was Diane Hirsch from the UConn College of Agriculture. Diane focused on what maple processors need to know about the Food and Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). She talked about the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection (DCP), which has jurisdiction over food processing, including maple products, as well as current good food practices, labeling requirements, food facility registration, and compliance dates.



Above: Attendees at the annual meeting.

Right, clockwise from top left: Dr. Abby van den Berg, University of Vermont; Rich Norman giving the IMSI report; Peter Picone, Sessions Woods Curator; Diane Hirsch, UConn College of Agriculture; Ray Kasulaitis; Ron Wenzel, past president; Mike Girard giving the NAMSC report.





## The International Maple Syrup Institute Report

### Summer 2018:

The quarterly Board of Directors Meeting of the International Maple Syrup Institute (IMSI) was held in Saratoga Springs, New York on Wednesday, July 18th. Representation at the meeting was from maple producer associations, maple packers/processors, maple equipment manufacturers/vendors, small maple enterprises, maple researchers, maple marketing specialists and others. New IMSI Board representatives, Philippe Breton of Lapierre Equipment and Martin Desilets of Dominion and Grimm, were in attendance at the meeting. The IMSI also convened meetings of the social media initiative and successional planning task teams in advance of their Board meeting.

### IMSI Executive Director Announces His Departure, Effective January 1st, 2019:

The IMSI Executive Committee has been active in assessing the IMSI's successional planning needs going forward. At the meeting in Saratoga Springs, NY, Dave Chapeskie, who has served as the IMSI's Executive Director for over 10 years, announced his decision to leave the position after December 31st, 2018. Dave announced his intentions so that the IMSI Executive and Board would have some time to plan for transition to a new Executive Director incumbent. A job ad for a new IMSI Executive Director will be posted in the next edition of Maple News and in other communications in both the United States and Canada. Dave advised the IMSI Board that he would announce plans for the next phase of his career at the IMSI Annual meeting in New Hampshire in October. Dave will continue as the IMSI Executive Director and it will be business as usual until December 31st, 2018.

### Maple Syrup Supply and Demand:

Growth in maple syrup production capacity in the U.S. is estimated at one million taps. A planned expansion of five million taps is underway in Quebec over a two year period. Production capacity in Ontario and New Brunswick is growing by up to 5 to

7% each year.

Going into the 2018 production season, supply was very good in most areas with about 80 million pounds of maple syrup in the Federation's strategic reserve. Some packers/processors have also held inventory surplus over the past two years. This may lead to some re-balancing of supply and demand in 2019. It is expected that there will be a sufficient supply of maple syrup to meet overall demand in 2019.

Bulk syrup rates in Quebec are currently being negotiated between the Federation and the Maple Industry Council. Some level of decrease in the Federation's syrup inventory is anticipated in 2019 due to stable and in some areas increasing demand and a reduction in the 2018 crop compared to 2017 of about 30 million pounds. The strategic reserve is meant to deal with annual crop fluctuations such as this and all indications are that the industry will be able to meet North American and World demand in the upcoming sales year. Generally, packers are holding good inventories.

Sales of real maple products continue to be strong, with global demand gradually increasing. An interesting fact is that organic maple syrup is now about 30 million pounds of the intake into the strategic reserve, but demand for organic syrup has leveled off. It is not known what that may mean in the sales season ahead. It is possible that some producers may drop their certification because of the current demand situation.

### Canadian Government Imposes Tariff on Maple Syrup:

In late May, the Canadian government announced proposed tariffs on a variety of products entering Canada from the United States, including maple syrup. This was in direct response to U.S. tariffs on Canadian aluminum and steel products entering the United States which had been announced earlier. Following this announcement, the Canadian Maple Advisory Committee, with representation from Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, sent a letter, with rationale, recommending that maple syrup be removed from the proposed list of products to which the new Canadian tariff would apply. Subsequently, the Canadian government chose not to remove maple syrup from the listing and so a new tariff of 10% on maple syrup entering Canada took

effect on July 1st. We understand that there is an exemption to recoup the expenses associated with the tariff on any of the syrup imported into Canada which subsequently re-enters the United States. Now that the decision has been made by the Canadian government to impose the new tariff, the Canadian Maple Advisory Committee will be again expressing their opposition to the new tariff and reiterating its potential negative impacts.

### FDA Added Sugar Issue:

We are making very good progress towards addressing this issue but it is not over yet, despite some media coverage suggesting otherwise. The Washington, DC based lobbyist retained by the IMSI is helping us stickhandle this with wording to advance through the U.S. House and Senate. The IMSI position remains unchanged in that we are requesting an exemption for single ingredient maple products. We need to keep our fingers crossed at this point. FDA appears to be cooperating with favorable language in the proposed Bill at this time.

There was a meeting scheduled in DC with CSPI (Center for Science in the Public Interest) officials on July 31st. Representatives of the maple industry, along with those from the honey industry, will pitch to CSPI the rationale and merits of our IMSI position in requesting an exemption for single ingredient real maple products to the added sugar provision. Emma Marvin, Roger Brown and IMSI Lobbyist Dr. John Goldberg represented the IMSI at this meeting. The position of CSPI has thus far been aligned with that of the FDA on the added sugar provision. Because of their influence with the FDA, it would be very positive if we can help CSPI to see things from our perspective and understand the validity of our position. It may take three to four months or perhaps longer before we have a resolution to the added sugar issue.

### FDA Review and Consultations on the Definition of Healthy Foods, Including Labeling Implications:

The FDA has currently initiated dialogue, including public consultations, on the definition of healthy foods. This includes a

review of what constitutes healthy foods with potentially broader food labeling implications than the nutritional facts panel requirements. The IMSI has retained our DC based lobbyist Dr. John Goldberg to participate in an FDA sponsored public consultation meeting and to report back to the IMSI Executive Director on specific content and possible implications to the maple syrup industry.

### USDA Dietary Guidelines

#### Review:

USDA has initiated a review of their Dietary Guidelines for Food. There has been some initial consultation by FDA to determine the scope of the study. We are hoping to be able to nominate a maple research specialist to participate directly on their advisory committee when the scope of the review has been finalized and the door opens for Advisor Committee Nominations.

### IMSI Issues Identification and Needs Analysis—A Look Ahead:

The IMSI Board of Directors engaged in a brain storming session to identify issues seen as important to the North American Maple Industry going forward. Some of the issues brought forward at the session were:

- Uncertainty regarding the outcome of ongoing trade negotiations and merger of processors/packers.
- Negative impact of tariffs.
- Concern about maintaining the right balance between supply of syrup in the medium and longer-term.
- Margins on bulk syrup sales being lower and future prices unknown.
- Need for an economic analysis of the U.S. Maple Syrup Industry.
- Concern about off-flavored syrup being sold in some sales outlets.
- Need for stepped up awareness and education focused on product quality.
- Potential that some of those involved in expansion of production may not have a long-term commitment to the industry.
- Need to continue to monitor and proactively engage in regulatory initiatives by both Federal Governments – US and Canada.

- Need to stay focused on the intent of taste descriptors in the classification/grading system and product quality assurance.
- Need to fully support the new maple grades and color classification system for maple syrup; there is a very good market for very dark syrup provided that it is of good quality.
- Need to stay vigilant regarding eliminating any potential contaminants in real maple products.
- Need to stay connected and communicate effectively (consensus that we are doing this very well now).
- The maple industry will continue to change and we need to stay nimble.
- Need to respect and understand the special needs of small producers.
- Need to pay attention to RO water discharge issues, especially pH and temperature attributes.
- Need to develop a viable recycling option for sap collection system components (tubing, fittings, etc.).
- Need to review the scope and priorities of the IMSI (including re-active versus pro-active emphasis).

### IMSI Social Media Campaign:

The IMSI Social Media Task Team met in Saratoga Springs, NY in advance of the Board of Directors Meeting. Brad Gillilan, IMSI Director and Project Lead, provided an update on progress achieved since the IMSI's social media Facebook page (English language) was launched in September of 2017. As of the meeting, there were 800 site followers. Unfortunately, the site was hacked earlier this year which caused an unfortunate disruption in the postings for awhile. Aside from this problem, the postings have been refreshed monthly. Lots of content has been put forth, tied mostly to the seasons. IMSI Board consensus is that we have made very good progress in implementing the IMSI's social media campaign. In Saratoga Springs, subject

themes for message posting were identified through to the end of the 2018 / early 2019 calendar year. The themes are summarized below:

July/August 2018 – Add a Little Maple to Your Summer-time (BBQ, cooking with maple)

September/October 2018 – Get Out and Experience Maple (focus on color, fall fairs)

November/December 2018 – Sharing Maple with Family and Friends (gifts, Christmas)

January/February 2019 – Sharing the Story of Making Maple Products (equipment, product quality, classifying syrup)

IMSI members and others are strongly encouraged to re-post the IMSI posts on their Facebook and other social media venues to add to the overall effectiveness and reach of the IMSI Facebook initiative.

They are also encouraged to send in articles and pictures for the different themes on an ongoing basis to Dave Chapeskie, IMSI Executive Director (agrofor@ripnet.com).

### IMSI Maple Awards (2018):

We are seeking nominations from IMSI members for the IMSI Annual Awards for 2018. The IMSI sponsors the Golden Maple Leaf Award, the Lynn Reynolds Memorial Leadership Award and the IMSI President's Award, which was introduced last year. Information regarding the awards can be obtained from Dave. Award nominations should be sent to Dave Chapeskie (agofofor@ripnet.com) by the deadline of August 31st, 2018.

*continued on next page*


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## Ag Day 2018



On March 21, 2018 MSPAC participated in the annual Ag Day program at the Capitol. Many Connecticut senators, representatives and legislative staff visited our booth to talk about the maple industry. Several of them expressed concern about how the Department of Consumer Protection might begin to increase its regulation of Connecticut maple syrup production unnecessarily. Governor Malloy and Commission Reviczky also visited the booth.

*Photo credit: Charles Corey, MSPAC  
Pictured from left to right: Bill Farrell of Fat Stone Farm (background), Governor Malloy, Rich Norman of Norman's Sugar House, and Mat Wilkinson of Wilkinson Farm.*

### The International Maple Syrup Institute Report continued

#### IMSI International Maple Grading School (2018):

Two grading schools were scheduled in 2018, one in West Virginia and one to be held in Keene, NH on October 24th and 25th, 2018. The registration information for the Keene, NH School is posted at <https://extension.umaine.edu/register/product/2018-maple-syrup-grading-school-keene-nh/>.

The school held in West Virginia was the first held in that area of the country and attendance was comprised of 29 maple producers from West Virginia and Virginia. On the post-training evaluation, 79% of the participants responded that their knowledge gain was three steps or more on a seven step scale. When asked what they would do differently as a result of knowledge gained through the school, course participants listed 14 different quality control practices which they would implement. These included paying more attention to color and clarity

of syrup, more confidence about rejecting off-flavours in the final product and raised awareness regarding the importance of classifying and grading syrup.

#### FDA Food Safety Modernization Act and Health Canada Safe Food for Canadians Act:

The IMSI continues to monitor the roll out of the FDA's new Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA). The U.S. State governments are being assigned responsibility for implementation and interpretation of the new FSMA requirements. All maple syrup producers in the U.S. may be ultimately impacted by FSMA. Exporters of maple syrup to the United States will also be affected by the new FSMA requirements.

The Canadian government is also working on a new Safe Food for Canadians Act.

State/Provincial level Associations in both the United States and Canada are encouraged to stay abreast of these regulatory developments and take every opportunity to learn about any new or proposed requirements related to food

safety and help state government officials to interpret and apply the rules in a practical manner which is workable for maple producers.

#### Upcoming IMSI Meetings (2018 and 2019):

IMSI Fall Board of Directors Meeting – Friday, October 26, 2018, Concord, NH.

IMSI Annual Meeting – Saturday, October 27, 2018, Concord, NH.

IMSI Board of Directors Meeting (Montreal, QC) – Late January/early February 2019. Date to be determined.

IMSI Board of Directors Meeting (Burlington, VT) – May 2019. Date to be determined.

It was agreed that the IMSI would conduct a membership survey to help decide on the location of IMSI Board meetings going forward in 2019 and beyond.

*Report Prepared by:  
Dave Chapeskie, Director, International  
Maple Syrup Institute*

# MAPLE SYRUP CONTEST



MAPLE SYRUP PRODUCERS  
ASSOCIATION OF CT

## Contest Rules:

- All entries must be produced in the past year by the person entering the contest and become the property of the Maple Syrup Producers Association of Connecticut.
- Maple syrup entries must be submitted in a pint size sealed plastic or glass syrup container and will be placed by staff in coded glass containers without names for judging, and displayed during the meeting.
- All entries must be identified appropriately with sugarbush name, producer name, address and syrup grade, by means of a sticker, tag or printing direct on the container.
- Only **one entry per person per category** will be accepted.
- Entries must be produced by MSPAC members from trees and cannot be blends.
- No points given for decorative containers, ribbons, etc.
- Judge participants may not participate in the contest.
- *Syrup & Entry/Judging Form must be entered by 9:15 am at the Annual Meeting.*

## Judging Guidelines:

**PURE MAPLE SYRUP** – Enter one sealed plastic or glass pint size (16 oz.) container per grade category.

### How Syrup Will Be Judged:

Entries will be evaluated for proper density, clarity, flavor, and color according to the following standards:

- **Density** – Should be greater than or equal to 66.0 °Bx and less than or equal to 68.9 °Bx and will be determined by judges using a refractometer.
- **Clarity** – Should be clean and clear with no visible impurities (cloudy, sugar sand, etc.).
- **Flavor** – Should be free of off-flavors and representative of grade category entered (e.g., a light syrup should taste appropriately for the light category, not like a medium).
- **Color** – Must conform to color grade as determined by the judges using a spectrophotometer.

Entries may be disqualified at the judges' discretion regarding extreme off flavors, mold, or visual impurities.

## Award Categories:

### Maple Judging Classes

Blue Ribbon – 75–100 ..... Excellent  
Red Ribbon – 65–74 ..... Good  
White Ribbon – Below 65 ..... Fair

# MAPLE SYRUP CONTEST

## ENTRY FORM & JUDGING SCORE SHEET



MAPLE SYRUP PRODUCERS  
ASSOCIATION OF CT

One (1) pint pure maple syrup is required per entry. Must be in a plastic or glass, sealed container

Entry number \_\_\_\_\_

Maple Syrup Grade A (Check one):  Golden w/ Delicate Taste  Amber w/ Rich Taste  Dark w/ Robust Taste

Density – Highest Score: 20 points	Score
66.0 – 66.9 °Brix .....	20
67.0 – 68.9 °Brix .....	10
69.0 + °Brix .....	5
*Below 66.0 °Brix .....	0

\_\_\_\_\_ Density

Clarity – Highest Score: 15 points	Score
Crystal clear and clean .....	15
Slightly cloudy and practically clean .....	5
**Very Cloudy .....	0

\_\_\_\_\_ Clarity

Flavor – Highest Score: 50 points	Score
Good characteristic maple flavor .....	50
Successive shortcomings will take off 5 points per shortcoming – such as caramelization, mold flavor, mustiness, astringency, etc. ....	45
.....	40
.....	35
**Unacceptable strong off-flavors, such as buddiness .....	0

\_\_\_\_\_ Flavor

Color – Highest Score: 15 points	Score
Graded as color designated on grade sticker or lighter .....	15
Not correctly graded as color designated .....	5
***Darker than Grade A Dark with Robust Taste .....	0

\_\_\_\_\_ Color

Total Score \_\_\_\_\_

\*Disqualifies entry as “Maple Syrup”

\*\*Disqualifies entry as Grade A Golden, Amber or Dark

\*\*\*Disqualifies entry as Grade A Golden, Amber or Dark

**Judges’ Comments:** Please list on the back of this sheet any comments that you think may help the producer improve his/her maple syrup.

Entry Number \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Sugar Bush Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

### Maple Judging Classes

Blue Ribbon – 75–100 .....	Excellent
Red Ribbon – 65–74 .....	Good
White Ribbon – Below 65 .....	Fair



The bottle features the popular maple leaf embossed on a stately round flask style bottle.

The Medallion bottle was thoughtfully designed for all

producers with a generous base for stability and popular cap size. This compact bottle is as attractive as it is practical for retail sales.

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## Coming Up

### The MSPAC Fall Membership Meeting November 10, 2018

**Mansfield Middle School**, 205 Spring Hill Road, Storrs  
Come join us for our 2018 annual membership meeting—kick off your 2019 maple season, catch up with old friends, and make some new ones. This year we will have three exciting presentations by industry leaders. They are all geared to help members increase the quality of their syrup and grow their operation. Additionally we will be presenting some exciting news about our new Connecticut “Maple 2020” initiatives. We will also announce the winners of the syrup competition at last year’s meeting. As always there will be coffee, maple donuts and fruit to start the day.

#### Agenda:

- 8–9 am Coffee, check-in, mingle with vendors and other members
- 9–9:30 am Opening Remarks
- 9:30 am–12:30 pm Presentations
- 9:30–10:30 am **Kathy Hopkins, University of Maine:** Quality Maple Products and Food Safety
- 10:30–11:30 am **Tim Wilmont, University of Vermont** (retired) and D&G: 3/16" tubing setup instruction and tips
- 11:30 am–12:30 pm **Bruce Gillian, Leader Evaporator, with Sam Bascom, Bascom Maple, and David Butler, Leader Evaporator:** How to grow from a small backyard operation to a commercial operation
- 12:30–1:30 pm Lunch break (cold cut platters and salad)
- 1:30–1:40 pm Connecticut Maple update (showing of video)
- 1:40–1:45 pm Manual Update
- 1:45–3 pm Business Meeting
- 3 pm Adjourn

### MSPAC January Pre-season Meeting

January 19, 2019

**Lyman Memorial High School**, Lebanon

Kick off the 2019 maple season with us as we hold our annual pre-season meeting on January 19 in Lebanon. We are pleased to have Dr. Joseph Orifice from the Yale University to explain Yale’s forestry program and Ray Bonenberg, current president of IMSI and past president of the Ontario Maple Syrup Association, to share information about what the Ontario association and IMSI are doing to promote maple products consumption that may be transferable to Connecticut and MSPAC members. There will be ample time to pickup your last minute supplies from numerous vendors and catch up on what is happening in the industry. This year we will also have some great workshops to help you make value-added products and improve your maple operation.

#### Agenda:

- 8–9 am Check-in and Social Hour, mingle with members and vendors
- 9–9:30 am Business meeting
- 9:30–10:30 am Joseph Orifice: Yale Forestry program and its tie to maple.
- [9:30–11:30 am *Maple 101 will run concurrent to morning presentation*]
- 10:30 am–12 pm Ray Bonenberg: Ontario Association’s Growth and Marketing Campaign
- 12–1 pm Lunch / Syrup competition Awards
- 1–3 pm Workshop rotation:
  - How to make maple cream: Rob Lamothe
  - Build your own small RO: Brett Horborski
  - Running an open sugar house event: Ron Wenzel
  - Filtering workshop: Daryl Sheets

## MSPAC 2018 Preseason Meeting

January 20, 2018

The meeting took place at Lyman Memorial High School, Lebanon, Connecticut.

Bob Dubos, maple contest chairman, announced the results of the maple contest. In the rich maple syrup category, Paul Humphrey took first place, and Don Bureau took second place. In the robust maple syrup, Don Bureau took first place, Paul Humphrey second place, and Andy Heath third place.

Guest speaker Brenda Noireux from Manchester, New Hampshire spoke about how to cultivate a web presence. She gave tips on how to manage an affordable website, and how and why to use Facebook as a social media tool. Brenda explained different processes on the use of the internet to increase maple product sales.

Rob Lamothe from Lamothe’s Sugar House in Burlington, Connecticut demonstrated maple candy making. The method he showed used a pre-made fondant to mix with syrup for the candy batter. The filling of the candy molds was done with a funnel tool that was engineered and made by Rob. It was an exciting and productive presentation, with plenty of candies to pass around.

Mike Girard, along with Charity Folk Girard and Wayne Palmer, gave a very informative maple syrup off-flavor workshop. They passed out samples to taste, so participants could identify the bad flavors and learn what caused them. Examples were sour sap, bubbly, scorched, metallic and musty. ☹️



Guest speaker Brenda Noireux speaks about cultivating a web presence.



Vendors.



Rob Lamothe demonstrates maple candy making.



Mike Girard, Charity Folk Girard, and Wayne Palmer gave a maple syrup off-flavor workshop.



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**MSPAC Treasurer's Report**  
as of 9/18/2018

**Income:**

Dues.....	\$5275.00
SHOP ads .....	840.00
CT table .....	369.00
Drop in the Bucket ads .....	615.00
Sugar Hill royalty .....	211.77
Food at meetings.....	614.00

Income total: ..... \$7924.77

**Expenses:**

NAMSC dues .....	760.00
NAMSC research Fund .....	200.00
CT incorp. Fee .....	50.00
Printing (Drop in the Bucket newsletter).....	1473.56
CT sales tax .....	102.00
Meeting exp. (incl. Director's mtg.) .....	1482.25
IMSI dues .....	200.00
Postage, etc. ....	208.54
SHOP brochures .....	1471.88
Ag Day expense.....	575.00
Domain registration.....	0.00
Maple Digest .....	780.00
Liability insurance.....	690.00
CT table .....	600.00

Lunch for meeting ..... 212.39

**Expense total: ..... \$8805.62**

**Balance Oct.1, 2017..... \$3255.50**

**Income:..... + 7924.77**

**Expense:..... -8805.62**

**Balance 9/18/2018..... \$2374.65**

**Hugh Brown**

*continued*

gether in North Canton: Cherrilla, Hugh (Putt) and Peter. He is survived by all three, along with his daughters-in-law, Christine and Erin, five grandchildren, Shannon, Ian, Olivia, Coco and Isabella and four great grandchildren. Hugh was a founding member of the Ratlum Mountain Conservation Association, The North Canton VFD, and an active member of both The Connecticut Christmas Tree Growers Association and the Maple Syrup Producers Association of Connecticut. Although he will never again be found in the fields and woods of Connecticut with his dogs, his memory will remain strong with those who knew and loved him. Donations in memory of Hugh may be made to the Ruffed Grouse Society at [ruffedgrousesociety.org](http://ruffedgrousesociety.org), 451 McCormick Road, Coraopolis, PA 15108. ♻️

**American Maple Museum Displays Girard's Sugarhouse Replica**

At the 2018 annual opening weekend of the American Maple Museum and the Maple Hall of Fame induction ceremonies, Mike Girard set up his exact replica of his family's Girard's Sugarhouse which is located on Number Nine Road in Heath, Massachusetts. It took Mike over 400 hours to construct the model, including countless hours to cut the scaled lumber from 1x6 pine, replicate the evaporator, tanks and the miniature sugaring utensils that are hanging in the sugarhouse.

The original Sugarhouse was built in 1887 and the present woodshed was added in 1995. The 1/12 scale model authentically represents the sugaring operation as it was in the early 1990s with very little compromise in scale, construction and detail. The model sugarhouse will be on display at the American Maple Museum in Croghan, New York.

Michael A. Girard is the Executive Director of the North American Maple Syrup Council (NAMSC) and a 2012 inductee in the Maple Hall of Fame. ♻️



the new moniker better conveys the Museum's mission. ♻️

**Museum Announces Name Change**

American Maple Museum President Don Moser, announced during the International Maple Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony on Saturday, May 12, that the Museum will now be known as the International Maple Museum Centre. This name change is an effort to be more inclusive to Canadians. Although the American Maple Museum has always promoted and educated about the maple industry in both the United States and Canada,

*From the American Maple Museum newsletter, June 2018.*

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## FDA Considering Revised Approach to Declaration of Added Sugars on Pure Maple Syrup and Pure Honey Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition Constituent Update

June 19, 2018

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is reviewing comments on its draft guidance to inform its approach to the declaration of added sugars on pure maple syrup and pure honey.

FDA recognizes the complexity of this issue and is grateful for the feedback it has received, including more than 3,000 comments received during the comment period on the draft guidance that closed on June 15. The agency plans to take these comments into consideration to swiftly formulate a revised approach that makes key information available to consumers in a workable way.

When the FDA issued its final rule to update the Nutrition Facts label, it included added sugars as one of the required nutrients to declare on the Nutrition Facts label and provided a definition of added sugars based on the 2015–2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans. FDA's definition of added sugars includes sugars that are either added during the processing of foods or are packaged as such (e.g., a jar of honey, container of maple syrup, or a bag of table sugar). This definition forms the basis of the Dietary Guidelines recommendation that Americans eat no more than 10% of their daily calories from added sugars in order to reduce their risk of chronic disease like heart disease.

In February 2018, FDA issued a draft guidance for industry that would help industry provide information about the

added sugars declaration on the label of products like maple syrup and honey.

This draft guidance was the agency's preliminary attempt to address concerns that declaring added sugars on the Nutrition Facts label of single ingredient products like pure maple syrup and pure honey may lead consumers to think that a "pure" product is economically adulterated with corn syrup or other added sweeteners. The guidance advised food manufacturers about FDA's intent to exercise enforcement discretion to allow the use of an obelisk symbol, "†," on the Nutrition Facts label immediately after the added sugars percent Daily Value information on containers of pure maple syrup or pure honey to direct consumers to language outside the Nutrition Facts label that provides truthful and non-misleading contextual information about the meaning of "added sugars" for these specific products.

The feedback that FDA has received is that the approach laid out in the draft guidance does not provide the clarity that the FDA intended. It is important to FDA that consumers are able to effectively use the new Nutrition Facts label to make informed, healthy dietary choices. The agency looks forward to working with stakeholders to devise a sensible solution.

The draft guidance also considered labeling of added sugars for certain cranberry products. The agency looks forward to reviewing the comments received on these products as well. ☞

## New York Today: A Maple Syrup Boom

*This article appeared recently in the New York Times and may serve as inspiration for Connecticut maple producers to grow our maple production across the State.*

New York State is in the midst of a maple syrup boom.

The past five years have seen a nearly 50 percent increase in maple syrup production in New York State.

We've produced more than 800,000 gallons of maple syrup this year, making New York the second largest maple syrup-producing state in the country (behind Vermont).

There are two reasons for this, according to Helen Thomas, executive director of the New York State Maple Producers Association.

"One is that more landowners have joined the ranks of making maple syrup," she said, with an estimated 2,000 producers across the state. "But the bigger reason is that techniques for producing syrup have gotten better, so that all of us who make syrup now make more syrup per tree than we did 10 or 15 years ago. We've also added taps."

Maple season is in the early spring — "that's when the tree is taking the 'food' stored in its roots as starch and converting it into sugars," Ms. Thomas explained — but this week included the inaugural Maple Day at the New York State Fair. Visitors in Syracuse watched cooking demonstrations and

sampled syrup-soaked pancakes, maple sausage, maple milk, maple doughnuts and maple cotton candy.

Maple Day was certainly a cause for celebration, but the activity continues year-round.

Producers like Ms. Thomas — whose farm near Buffalo, Maxon Estate Farms, has been in the family for 200 years — spend the fall in the woods preparing equipment. In the late winter and early spring, they are drilling holes into trees, inserting tap spiles and monitoring sap flow. Ideal weather for getting the job done is 40 degrees by day and 25 by night, Ms. Thomas said, so when the time is right, farmers must collect the sap quickly, several times a day, and then boil and process it immediately to prevent it from spoiling.

At the rate they're going, Ms. Thomas said, New York's maple producers hope to catch up with Vermont. (Behind us: Maine.)

"Our industry is still very different from the Vermont's and the Maine's because we're still very much small family farms doing it," she told us.

Maybe best to compare us to the craft breweries; Vermont and Maine are more of a commercial product. New York adds the ingredient of family love to their maple syrup." ☞

CTVNews.ca Staff

Published Monday, August 20, 2018 10:04PM EDT

## Maple syrup fills our pantries. The leaf dons the Canadian flag and clothing. And soon it could be part of our... skin-care regime?

U.S. researchers are calling it a "plant-based Botox": compounds found in maple leaves that might be a key ingredient in the next trendy anti-wrinkle cream.

"We believe it could have cosmetic applications," said University of Rhode Island researcher Navindra Seeram, who is studying the compounds called glucitol-core-containing galotannins. GCGs appear to be able to interfere with elastase, the enzyme that breaks down the protein that gives skin its youthful elasticity.

Researchers in the U.S. are studying compounds found in maple leaves that appear to have anti-wrinkle properties, though it has not been tested on humans yet.

"It was absolutely amazing," said Hang Ma, a research associate with the University of Rhode Island. "We see it from plant extract and into different bio-acids, and finally see (that) it has (an) effect on the skin cells. So that's very exciting."

The research has so far only been completed in labs and not on actual human skin, but the results are intriguing enough that they have caught the attention of the maple syrup industry.

Researchers say they have developed a proprietary patent-pending formulation containing GCGs from summer and fall maple leaves and maple sap, which has been licensed to an Indiana-based botanical extracts supplier.

Nathalie Langlois, from the Federation of Maple Syrup Producers of Quebec, called the research "very promising."

"If the maple leaf extract can indeed reduce wrinkles in humans then this could represent the potential development of value added products from the maple industry," she said.

Dave Chapeskie from the International Maple Syrup Institute agreed that the research, while preliminary, could be good news for the industry, which is concentrated in Quebec, Ontario and the northeast of the United States.

"Many aging baby boomers are looking for natural products to maintain a youthful and healthy appearance," he said. "Maple leaves, just like the maple forests from which maple syrup is derived, are both natural and sustainable," he added.

Seeram, who presented his findings Monday at the national meeting of the American Chemical Society, says he was inspired to study the makeup of maple leaves after learning that Indigenous healers have used them in medicine for centuries.

"We always hear there are exotic plants in the Amazon, (the) Mediterranean or India," he said. "Well, I have news for you. There is an exotic plants in North America, and it's the maple." ☞

With a report from CTV's medical affairs specialist Avis Favaro and producer Elizabeth St. Philip

## Vermont's maple syrup business is booming, thanks to technology and changing tastes

Washington Post

In Vermont, the nation's leading maple-producing state, production has tripled in the past decade, from an average of 600,000 gallons per year in the late 2000s to about 1.8 million per year now. Since 2013, Vermont producers have installed 1.2 million new taps. "Maple is pretty big business in Vermont," said Amanda Voyer, communications director of the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association, one of the oldest agricultural associations in the nation, founded in 1893. "It used to be more of a cottage industry, a side business. Now people are using it as a real income generator."

Traditionally, maple was a part of a dairy farmer's annual work cycle, a source of supplemental income in the early spring. But by the 1970s and 1980s, Vermonters were making less than 300,000 gallons per year. In fact, all the current maple growth is only restoring things to former prominence. In the 1860s, when maple sugar was cheaper than cane sugar, production was much larger than it is today. In the early 20th century, Vermont produced more than 9 million gallons of maple syrup a year.

"The imagery of maple hasn't really moved out of the 1860s, but the technology has," said Mark Isselhardt, a maple specialist at the University of Vermont's Proctor Maple Research Center. Until recently, maple production was limited by how much human labor could be put to work in the snowy woods. But technology is rapidly changing that. "We know you can get more sap out of a tree than is currently typical," Isselhardt said.

Alongside growing demand and advanced maple technology has been relatively stable prices. That's mainly thanks to producers in Quebec, who own 70 percent of the international maple market and whose trade federation tightly controls supply and pricing. Those factors have made Vermont's maple forests attractive to big-money investment from outside corporations. ☞

**To place advertising in the next issue of Drop in the Bucket, call the editor, Rick Goulet, at 860-379-0793 (daytime) or 860-307-6793.**

## Is It Time to Embrace The Red Maple?

by Jennie Blohm

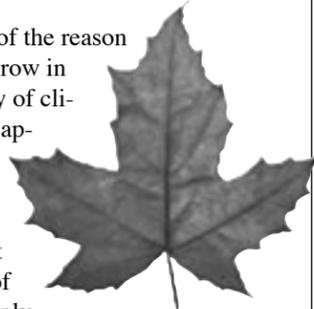
As sap collectors and syrup producers, the time has come to plan for and embrace the red maple tree in our endeavors. The species is becoming more and more prolific in our forests and this trend has been noticed over the last 100 years. How do we adjust?

The red maple is also known as the swamp, water, or soft maple. The US Forest Service lists it as the most abundant native tree in Eastern North America. It can be found from Minnesota to Maine and then south to Florida and west to Texas. The red maple is so adaptable that it flourishes in both country and city, in swamps and mountains.

It is this flexibility that is part of the reason for its popularity. Since it seems to grow in any soil, in any light, and in a variety of climates, the tree is a favorite of landscapers. The rapid growth and desirable shape with the deep scarlet color in Autumn makes it a favorite for our yards and city streets. It does not hurt that the tree is so very tolerant of pollution and road salt, either! The only event that a red maple cannot endure is fire. Since we have become very good at fire suppression, this natural “cleaner” has not kept the red maple population in check.

This popularity has led to a situation where the red maple could almost be considered invasive as it gains influence. The red maple is one of the first trees to flower in the spring and the first to drop seeds every year. These seeds also sprout within a few weeks in just about any environmental condition. A sapling will also easily sprout from a stump. The rapid growth brings shade where other hardwood saplings need sun. And the growth happens easily in disturbed land—cleared areas or abandoned fields—and through environmental changes.

How do we identify these trees? It can be a challenge because of the great number of maple species and associated hybrids. Reliable identifiers are leaf shape and bark. The red maple



leaf is usually 2"–4" long with 3–5 lobes that have rough, saw-like edges. The trunk of a red maple tree is typically free from branches. When the tree is young, the bark is smooth and pale gray. As the tree ages, the bark will show straight cracks and turn dark brown.

Since we can now identify the red maple, a plan can be put in place to best manage those trees. Management can be done by fostering diversity and keeping your red maple numbers in check. Identification can also aid a syrup producer in knowing when to pull those taps or set up a separate collection line for the sap from the red maple.

The sugaring season for a red maple may be shorter but the syrup is just as sweet and the sap is just as plentiful. Some maple producers may claim that the sugar content in red maple sap is lower than that of the sugar maple but records show that sugar density seems to vary from tree to tree.

What do you think about the changing makeup of our forests? Will you reduce your red maple population or will you embrace them? Join the conversation at [SmokyLakeMaple.com](http://SmokyLakeMaple.com) or [Facebook.com/smokylakemaple](https://www.facebook.com/smokylakemaple).

*“Eastern Forests Change Color As Red Maples Proliferate.” New York Times. Retrieved 30 March, 2015.*

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*Abrams, M.D. (1998). “The Red Maple Paradox: what explains the widespread expansion of red maple in eastern forests?” BioScience. 48 (5): 355–364. doi:10.2307/1313374.*

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[https://garden.lovetoknow.com/wiki/Maple\\_Tree\\_Identification](https://garden.lovetoknow.com/wiki/Maple_Tree_Identification)

## Six Maple Syrup Benefits You May Not Have Known

From an article by Sushmita Sengupta which appeared in *NDTVFood*

In the world of nutrition, maple syrup is hailed as one of the best alternatives to refined and fattening sugar. But there is much more to this syrup that makes it a must-have in your kitchen.

Here are six maple syrup benefits you may not have known:

### 1. Maple Syrup is Good For Men’s Health

Maple syrup is loaded with zinc. According to the book *Healing Foods* by DK Publishing, zinc plays a significant role in supporting men’s reproductive health and protects against prostate enlargement. “Its abundant manganese levels also help in production of sex hormones in both men and women.”

### 2. Maple Syrup Helps Boost Energy

The manganese content in maple syrup helps boost energy production and synthesis of fatty acids and cholesterol. It is said that just 1/4 cup of maple syrup could fulfill 90–100 percent of your daily requirement of manganese.

### 3. It Compliments Heart Health

The natural sweetener does not pose a severe threat to your heart either, as opposed to the refined and processed varieties available in market. Maple syrup has decent quantum of zinc. This mineral helps protect artery walls from free radical damage, and prevents arteries from hardening. The manganese content in maple syrup also helps boost good cholesterol levels in the blood.

### 4. Maple Syrup Helps Regulate Blood Sugar Levels

Maple syrup may help ensure better blood sugar control. Now that does not mean you finish off the jar in two days! But it may prove to be a healthier switch. According to *Healing Foods*, “its antioxidant polyphenols, combined with its plant hormone, abscisic acid, have been shown to improve the body’s sensitivity to the blood-sugar-regulating hormone insulin.”

### 5. Loaded with Antioxidants

Turns out that maple syrup is not just another sugar alternative but a very healthy food, too, “It has around 56 vital antioxidants,” says Bangalore-based nutritionist Dr. Anju Sood. Several studies have also claimed that maple syrup has good amounts of antioxidant polyphenols which have strong anticancer properties.

### 6. Ideal for Summers

Maple syrup could help replenish your body with vital nutrients and antioxidants this summer. According to Dr. Sood, “One of the biggest challenges in summers is of dehydration. Many people don’t understand what dehydration really is. Dehydration is not just the loss of fluid, but a state when you are depleted of

## U.S. Food Laws can be Confusing

Clarification of authority—Congress specifies which agency is to implement a program, but one statute may impose the responsibility on one agency and the next statute with a related program may impose that responsibility on another agency. This can sometimes lead to confusion and complexity for agencies responsible for implementing the programs and for businesses that need to comply with several programs. For example:

- FDA regulates macaroni and noodle products (21 CFR Part 139) while USDA regulates spaghetti products that contain meatballs and sauce (9 CFR 319.306);
- FDA regulates Grade A (fluid) milk (21 CFR 131); USDA regulates dairy products such as butter and cheese (7 CFR Part 58); but state governments also are often involved (e.g., ND Dept of Ag, Dairy Division);
- An open-face sandwich with meat or poultry is regulated by USDA; a closed sandwich with meat or poultry is regulated by FDA;
- Soup with more than 2% meat is regulated by USDA; other soup is regulated by FDA;
- Pizza with cheese is regulated by FDA; pizza with meat and cheese is regulated by USDA; but USDA regulates cheese (see previous point), so why would FDA regulate cheese pizza? Explanation—cheese is only an ingredient in cheese pizza; cheese is not the ultimate product in this case (it is pizza); thus FDA regulates pizza where cheese is an ingredient;
- Canned beans with more than 2% meat/pork is regulated by USDA; other beans are regulated by FDA;
- Beef broth is regulated by USDA; dehydrated beef broth is regulated by FDA; dehydrated chicken broth is regulated by USDA; chicken broth is regulated by FDA.

Source: North Dakota State University

many other vital nutrients too. Maple syrup, in my view, could help you hydrate very well. Swap refined sugar with maple syrup, add it to your glass of nimbu paani, and hydrate and revitalise your system. Sugar tends to dehydrate you of all essential nutrients, which is why maple syrup is such an ideal bet. Make sure the maple syrup you use is pure. Its extensive range of antioxidants would help replenish your body with several lost nutrients and minerals.”

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I highly recommend [The Murphy Compensation Cup]. A definite 'must have' for all producers, big or small.

★★★★★ Gary W., Springboro, PA

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**See page 3 to learn  
about the new  
Connecticut Cottage  
Food Law and its impact  
on your sugarhouse.**

## FIRST CLASS MAIL

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### **2019 Sugar Houses Open to the Public (SHOP)**

The renewal notice for those who had an ad last year will be mailed out the first of October.

For those of you who would like to submit an ad for the first time, I need the following information:

- **Name of sugarhouse**
- **The sugar maker's name**
- **The address of the sugarhouse**
- **Phone number for contact**
- **Email or FaceTime address**
- **The hours you will be open and anything you want to say about your operation.**

Please mail your ad, with a check made out to MSPAC, to Ron Wenzel, 522 East Street, Hebron, Ct. 06248

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