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### Did you know?

“Native Americans processed sugar maple sap long before Europeans arrived in the northeast region of the United States. They made maple candies, maple drinks, and used maple syrup as a cooking ingredient. French explorers and fur trappers who came to North America traded for these maple syrup products, and in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, some thought that maple sugar could become an alternative to cane sugar, including Pres. Jefferson.”

(Excerpt from Harvard Museum of Natural History  
[https://whatsinaname.hmn.harvard.edu/sugar-maple.](https://whatsinaname.hmn.harvard.edu/sugar-maple))

## January Producer Spotlight Ruff Cut Farm



## President's Note

Fellow Maple Producers,

First, I hope that everyone has had a great holiday season and gotten everything that they wanted for gifts. I know that for most sugar makers the dreams of a new steam-a-way, filter press, or a vacuum pump for gifts fill their minds. Remember that they are hard to wrap as gifts and that's why they don't always come true.

The fall was a busy time with record attendance numbers at most fairs, and a strong craft fair season, meaning that producers have been selling a lot of syrup. Consumers have really been supporting the maple industry and looking to know where their food is coming from. Maple producers for years have been doing a great job teaching and explaining how they make syrup and now it is really paying off. This year had an abundance of rain and that has many old timers saying that this year's sugar content should be good, (it won't take much to be better than last year) and we can hope for a healthy crop.

Remember to mark January 12th at 6:30 pm on your calendar for the MMPA annual meeting. Unfortunately, we will be meeting remotely again this year. We are expanding from last year by adding a technical session and going over the economic analysis. This was a decision that was made with the best interests of our members and the association in mind.

We are always looking for members to step up and take an active role in the association. If you have a special skill in something that could possibly be of value to the association, we would love to hear from you. Anything from grant writing and oversight, marketing, or social media, we could use your assistance.

It has been a privilege to lead this organization for the last two years. Representing members that are passionate about their product makes this job easy and the stressful times worth it. Continue striving to be the best at what you do, and what you make, and the customers will follow. Be safe in the woods when getting things ready, drill straight tap holes, strive to keep vacuum levels high, and high production will follow.

Respectfully,  
*Scott Dunn*  
President

## Producer Spotlight ~ Ruff Cut Farm, Jeff and Bobbi Merrill Parsonsfield, Maine, York County

### About our operation

While we have been sugaring for 15 years, and we want to keep our operation at a manageable size. Right now, we have 300 plus taps; 115 taps on our land and the other taps are just down the road from us on our neighbor's land who lets us tap the trees in exchange for syrup. Our evaporator is a 2x4 flat pan with a pre-heater box made by Bill Mason of Porter, Maine.

We grew to this tap count by addiction, I guess, like so many other maple producers. We have a small operation but we're extremely busy due to the size of our evaporator and the number of taps we run. Each year we expand a little more and get a little busier. Sugaring only comes once a year so you must gather all you can in a short period of time and keep boiling!



Jeff and Bobbi Merrill

### Collecting, boiling, and finishing

We collect sap by pickup truck with tanks in the back, or our side-by-side. If the timing is right, we use our Jersey oxen, but those opportunities are usually limited. We have some tubing going into tanks, and about 75 buckets.



From a collection tank on a rock wall behind the sap house, sap flows into the sap house to the pre-heater box which drips into the pan when the sap is almost 219° and we open a valve to allow the syrup to flow through filters into the finisher. We then finish the syrup and filter it into our canner and then jug the syrup. Our fuel source is wood for the evaporator, and propane for the finisher (pictured left).

### Marketing

We participate in Maine Maple Sunday Weekend each year and pretty much sell out. We make around 25 to 40 gallons, depending on how good the year is. Any syrup leftover is usually sold to people who know we make it, so we don't need to do much marketing. We open on the Sunday, only, of the weekend, and offer a breakfast, barn tour, and antique tractors are on display about the farm. Sometimes we have a band playing if the weather is good. Snacks and beverages are offered all day. We also have raffles for syrup and shirts, and of course lots of boiling!

### Lessons learned and future plans

Pay attention when the syrup is getting close to being made! Always check all valves on everything to make sure they are shut or open when needed! Learn to run on not much sleep! Never think about how the sap is flowing – good or bad – just always remember to keep a good fire going and boil, boil, boil!

We don't have any big future plans, maybe add more taps, and just keep our operation small but steady.

### MMPA membership

We are a member of MMPA because we are one of them and want to support the organization and anybody else who would want to join in on the fun!

(Each issue of the Maine Maple Producers monthly newsletter features a maple producer.)

## Economic Impact Analysis Synopsis

In the fall of 2020 MMPA received a Specialty Crop Block Grant. One goal of that grant was to conduct an economic analysis of the Maine maple industry's impact on the Maine economy. A similar project was done in 2014, and due to the huge changes in the industry since that time, we thought that the analysis needed to be updated. This information is important for agencies such as the State Department of Agriculture, Conservation and Forestry (DACF), the USDA, and the UMaine Cooperative Extension to understand the scale and influence of the industry in order to commit resources to supporting it.

MMPA contracted with the University of Maine Margaret Chase Smith Policy Center and School of Economics to conduct this study. This is the same group that conducted the study in 2014, which meant that the data from both studies would be easily comparable due to the same process being used to calculate the numbers. In June and July of this year, you likely received a survey from this group about the scale, sales, and activities offered at your operation. 107 of those surveys were completed and returned. Those survey results were used to create a “profile” of economic activities of producers at different scales and from different geographic locations throughout the state. Those profiles were then compared to the USDA National Ag Statistics Service (NASS) to determine a statewide economic impact of the industry.

**RESULTS:** Between 2018 and 2021, farms managing less than 100 taps grew by 93 percent while those in operation with 10,000 or more taps grew by 7 percent over the same period.

Collectively, the maple syrup farms who responded to the survey expect to grow by 15 percent between 2021 and 2026.

More than one-half of respondents indicated that key factors influencing the “future viability of their operations” includes spring weather conditions (76%), selling directly to consumers (58%) and equipment costs (55%). These factors were the highest selected out of 20 total options. Respondents could select more than one option.

In 2014, the annual direct contribution to the state’s economy was estimated to be \$27.7 million in output, 567 full- and part-time jobs, and \$17.3 million in labor income. In 2021, that contribution was estimated at \$29.8 million in output, 634 full and part-time jobs, and \$16.8 million in labor income. That’s a 7.6% increase in direct economic impact and 11.8% increase in the number of jobs. Direct economic contribution is defined as the output (i.e., revenue), employment and labor income (e.g., wages and salaries, proprietor’s income) that are directly associated with maple production activities.

Maine’s maple industry has also increased in the annual statewide economic contribution including multiplier effects to an estimated \$55.6 million in output, 833 full- and part-time jobs, and \$26.9 million in labor income. The “multiplier effects”, estimated by the Maine IMPLAN model, are the economic activity – that is, output, employment, and labor income – supported by the spending of businesses and workers that are associated with the production of maple syrup and related products, as well as the sales of “tourism-related” retailers (e.g., gas stations and restaurants) associated with visitors to maple farms (e.g., Maine Maple Sunday and Fall in Love with Maple). Reach out to the directors to receive a copy of the full report.

### Reminder: Mentor Program Volunteers Needed

Thank you to the members who have volunteered to be part of the association’s mentor program. In order to have a statewide presence, we still need volunteers in Eastern and Central Maine. Being a volunteer mentor should not be a big investment of your time, it is way to get a new maple producer started on the right path to success. To become a volunteer or for more information, contact Brian Dunham, 207-665-2967 or email [velvethollowsugarworks@outlook.com](mailto:velvethollowsugarworks@outlook.com) .



## EXTENSION PIPELINE

### Extension's Maple Webpage Gets Updated with New Financial Opportunities

Things have been busy at the Extension office. I spent a few days in November visiting sugarhouses. That was a great opportunity for me to get to know some of you, and to better understand your operations, needs and concerns. Please let me know if you'd like to set up a visit or phone call to make an introduction, or if there are any problems, I can research for you. I'm always looking for excuses to get out of the office!

The UMaine Extension Maple Team has also been hard at work [updating our Maple Syrup Production website](#). We have built this out with more resources about

- Backyard Sugaring
- Maple Quality Control
- Maple Business and Financial Opportunities
- Labor and Management
- And info about the Maple Grading School

The [Maple Business Resources section](#) is packed with resources including financial technical support groups who can sit down with you to work on aspects of your business and financial management. There are also lists of various types of low interest loans, cost share programs, grant opportunities, and tax reduction programs specific to the Maple Industry. Take a look and feel free to reach out if you have questions and would like help accessing any of these programs. [Jason.lilley@maine.edu](mailto:Jason.lilley@maine.edu) 207-781-6099.

### Website Update

Many changes have taken place over the last 90 days with the new website. A new modern look is in place with many features that are there for our current member producers as well as new and aspiring producers.

You are now able to purchase MMPA supplies online and have them shipped to your house. We are stocked with grade labels, recipe cards and rack cards. Current rack cards are Maple Sunday, Grades and Nutrition, and Maple syrup facts. We have all four grade labels and four different recipe cards. We do have MMPA member signs, and Maple Sunday host signs but they do not lend themselves to be shipped easily so they will have to be picked up.

A new Helpful Links page is available. This is full of links that will assist producers new and old with getting the information that they need and keeping up with current research projects.

Equipment dealers now have a page to promote their offerings. Based on a price structure they are able to post pictures and descriptions of maple supplies that they carry.

Have an item that you are looking to sell or in need of? We now have an Equipment Swap & Wanted page. Simply submit a description of what you have or need with or without a picture. This is a free resource for maple producers.

If you have an idea that can make the website better or add better depth please reach out to Scott Dunn.



## Updates from NAMSC and IMSI



### North American Maple Syrup Council, Inc.

- No research projects are going to be funded this year due to a shortage of funds. Lack of funds is due in part to two years of no fundraising auctions at the annual convention and some Alliance members that have not paid their dues.
- Annual convention is going to take on a new look. Emphasis will be on workshops, technical sessions and less about the business meeting.
- Host States are Wisconsin 2022, Massachusetts 2023, Maine 2024
- Mission Velocity was hired to conduct a strategic plan. Interviews were held with most delegates and officers. Many recommendations were heard, and a plan is being formulated.
- Winton Pitcoff has been appointed as the Executive Director. [www.northamericanmaple.org/](http://www.northamericanmaple.org/)



### INTERNATIONAL MAPLE SYRUP INSTITUTE

Estimates of a +20% increase in dollar sales and 17% in unit sales over the last 12 months. Sales increases are out pacing corn syrup and other “table” syrups.

- Manufacturers are struggling to keep up with demand for tubing and equipment.
- Work continues on the NASS statistic discrepancies. Information could be off by as much as 64% based on specific counties that were evaluated. [www.internationalmaplesyrupinstitute.com](http://www.internationalmaplesyrupinstitute.com)

## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Jan. 8 [NY Syracuse Winter Maple Classic](#) Syracuse, NY  
A full day of technical sessions from Maple Researchers and Producers throughout the maple producing region. There will also be plenty of time built in for networking and seeing fellow maple producers in-person.
- Jan. 12 **MMPA Annual Meeting and election of officers** \*\*\*Remote meeting via ZOOM\*\*\*  
Starting at 6:30 p.m. David Butler of Leader Evaporator will present Sugarhouse start up, shut down, and end of season cleaning. Jason Lilly of UMaine Ext. will then present the newly released Maine maple economic impacts and marketing reports. Immediately following will be the MMPA annual meeting and election of officers for 2022. A meeting agenda and ZOOM link will be sent out soon.
- Jan. 29 [Backyard Sugaring Workshop Hosted by the Southern Maine Maple Sugarmakers Association and UMaine Cooperative Extension](#) Gorham  
This full day program will cover everything a hobby scale beginner sugarmaker needs to know in the morning. In the afternoon, tour a local sugarbush to discuss setting up tubing systems for more efficient sap collection. Register on-line or by contacting [rebecca.gray@maine.edu](mailto:rebecca.gray@maine.edu) or 207-781-6099
- Jun. 9 – 11 **Maple Mania** Augusta  
This is MMPA’s big gathering filled with a trades show, technical sessions, a syrup contest, banquet, and sugarhouse tours. Save the date.
- Oct. 15 **Chainsaw Safety Workshop**  
The workshop will take place in Central Maine.



**Maine Maple Producers Association**  
**Application for Membership**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Business/Farm Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Owners Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Sugarhouse Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Town: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check items that apply:  Member  Bulk Producer  Equipment Dealer

**MMPA APPLICATION** \_\_\_\_\_ **NEW** or \_\_\_\_\_ **RENEWAL** (*please check*)

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$65.00 BASIC MEMBERSHIP (Licensed Producers)** *You must be a MMPA Member to host Maine Maple Sunday*

Basic listing on website includes: address, phone #, Maine Maple Sunday map, Fall Maple map, Newsletter & Maple Digest (1 MMPA vote)

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$15.00 ENHANCED LISTING (Optional)** Includes Website link, Brief Biography & notes (100 words or less; emailed to [Dunnfamilymaple@gmail.com](mailto:Dunnfamilymaple@gmail.com) Logo + Photo & link to Social Media Accts.)

**Friends of Maine Maple Producers and Business Membership**

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$25.00 Friends of MMPA** Email newsletter, No voting rights, No listing on MMPA website/No use of trademarks of MMPA.

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$75.00 Business Membership (non-producer):** No voting rights, email all MMPA news, and newsletter, Rights to use Maine Maple Sunday trademark for advertising and Marketing.

\_\_\_\_\_ **\$50.00 Business Website Listing (paid on top of Basic or business membership):** Business name, description (100 words or less; emailed to [Dunnfamilymaple@gmail.com](mailto:Dunnfamilymaple@gmail.com) Photo & link to Social Media Accounts).

**Total Due \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail application and check to: Maine Maple Producers Assoc. 419 Chicopee Rd. Buxton, ME 04093**

**SOUTHERN MAINE MAPLE SUGARMAKERS ASSOCIATION:** Southern Maine Maple Sugarmakers Association Contact Richard Morrill through email at [nashvalleyfarm@myfairpoint.net](mailto:nashvalleyfarm@myfairpoint.net) to become a member. You may also visit [www.smmsa.org](http://www.smmsa.org) or mail to SMMSA 79 Nash Rd. Windham, ME 04062

## Maine Maple Sunday Application

Maine Maple Sunday Weekend is open for all MMPA members to participate. Listing on the MMPA website map is optional. Members can log into their accounts and adjust their listing and add photos. **(Prices or discounts are not permitted to be advertised on the MMPA website).** You may also submit your description with your application for it to be added. **(MMPA officers will not be held liable for transcription errors or late submissions)**

Event

details: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Bulk Producer Syrup Sales

The MMPA website will soon have a page to assist our bulk producers selling bulk syrup to other producers. Bulk producers will be able to list contact information as well as how to order bulk syrup. Contact information and ordering information should be submitted to Scott Dunn at [dunnfamilymaple@gmail.com](mailto:dunnfamilymaple@gmail.com) or mailed to

MMPA, C/O Scott Dunn, 419 Chicopee Rd. Buxton, ME 04093

## Equipment Dealers

The MMPA website equipment dealer page has been updated and now offers more for the dealers. Dealers are now able to choose between two options to be listed on the website. Dealers do not need to be MMPA members to be listed on the dealer page.

\$25 for a business card size listing with contact information and one logo

\$100 Approximately a 4-inch by 6-inch space, where you can provide your own artwork with photos, logos, and other information. You can also opt to provide the information that you would like, and our webmaster will incorporate it into the space. Remember, there is only so much space, so photos and logos will be sized accordingly. Please provide some sort of sketch so we can reduce the number of revisions needed as the webmaster works by the hour.

Dealer listing information should be submitted to Scott Dunn at [dunnfamilymaple@gmail.com](mailto:dunnfamilymaple@gmail.com) or mailed to

MMPA, C/O Scott Dunn, 419 Chicopee Rd. Buxton, ME 04093



## Maple Vanilla Spiked Coffee

### Ingredients:

8 ounces brewed coffee

Creamer to taste

1 ounce of bourbon or Crown Royal

1 tsp. vanilla extract

1 Tbl. Maine maple syrup

### Directions:

Combine all ingredients well in a glass and enjoy!

Add ice to serve cold.

## Honey vs. Maple Syrup?

*Which is healthier — honey or maple syrup?*

By Andrew Weil, MD | August 27, 2021

In his article, Dr. Weil, a health, and wellness physician, explored the nutritional composition of honey and maple syrup.

When compared, honey and maple syrup have similar amounts of calories and carbohydrates. Honey does contain antioxidants, such as vitamin C, while maple syrup is a richer source of manganese, zinc, and vitamin B2.

“For me, the tie breaker between these two sweeteners is the type of sugar they contain, particularly the amount of fructose. The body cannot metabolize fructose well; diets high in it derange liver function, promote insulin resistance and obesity, and increase risk of cardiovascular disease. The fructose content of honey is about 40 percent. That of maple syrup averages less than 4 percent.” The article can be found at:

[https://www.drweil.com/diet-nutrition/nutrition/honey-vs-maple-syrup/?fbclid=IwAR1bg08EhXUCYcmjteU5Ccsyno4IWGR4\\_JoSfZQpkNvMoKObURzE21-zpGE](https://www.drweil.com/diet-nutrition/nutrition/honey-vs-maple-syrup/?fbclid=IwAR1bg08EhXUCYcmjteU5Ccsyno4IWGR4_JoSfZQpkNvMoKObURzE21-zpGE)

January 2022 Newsletter

419 Chicopee Rd.  
Buxton, ME 04093  
c/o Scott Dunn

Maine Maple Producers Association

MAINE MAPLE  
PRODUCERS  
ASSOCIATION

