

# M A S S A C H U S E T T S SUGAR BUSH NEWS

*The Newsletter of the Massachusetts Maple Producers Association*

## **Remembering the season we'd all like to forget**

**M**assachusetts sugarmakers watched the weather carefully all winter, and came to a wide range of conclusions. Some decided that the warm weather and lack of snow was a sign of an early season, others were sure that a big freeze was still coming and that tapping should wait, and still others were convinced there would be no season at all.

In the end, nobody could have predicted what happened. Sap running in late January? Eighty degrees in March, followed by snow the next week? And what happened to mud season?

Those in lower elevations did better than those in the hills, perhaps because those producers are used to earlier start dates and so were ready with their equipment and labor. Earlier thaws in the Valley contributed to this variation as well, no doubt. But when the season was over, it was over for everyone, as the bizarre heat wave turned everyone's sap cloudy at once, and then stopped it altogether.

The final reports from sugarmakers around the state was universally: "Not as good as 2011, but better than 2010." Only one sugarmaker who filed a report with MMPA reported producing 100% of what they consider a 'normal' crop. Most said that their crops ranged from 50% to 75% of normal. Sugar content was average to a bit below average. Taste reports were excellent overall. Most reported color that stayed constant through the season – many made light syrup right up until the end, and a few who started with dark reported that that's all they produced.

Production was down in nearly all states for the season, with only Maine reporting just as much production as last year. Quebec reported only a slight decrease in production from 2011 and reports that they have ample product in their strategic reserves to help keep prices stable.

See page 10 for more details and data on the season.

## **MMPA Summer Picnic July 29, New Salem**

**T**he 2012 Mass Maple picnic will be held on Sunday, July 29, at Hamilton Orchards in New Salem, MA. Socializing and syrup tasting will begin at 1:00, and a smoked pork meal will begin at 2:00. This year's picnic is sponsored by Devon Lane Farm Supply, and they will have a display of items for sale at the picnic.

Please see the enclosed flier for details and send in your form and payment today. We can only accept reservations for meals until July 23.



## **The Big E is coming!**

We are seeking bulk syrup to sell at the Mass Maple booth at the Big E, and are looking for volunteers to help staff the booth September 14-30. Please see the enclosed flier and return it to us promptly, or email booth manager Andy Schmidt at [windsorhill5@yahoo.com](mailto:windsorhill5@yahoo.com).

We are always looking for photographs to include in the slideshow on display at the Big E. Send pictures to [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org). And if you have any educational display items – antique sugaring tools, tree identification materials, etc – that you would be willing to lend MMPA for the Big E, please let us know.

## **Jug price increase**

Due to increasing costs of raw materials, the price of MMPA jugs has increased as of June 1. Please see the enclosed blue price sheet for current prices for jugs and all other MMPA materials.

## Notes on Mass Maple Jugs

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

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

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

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

## VT Maplerama

The Rutland County Maple Producers will host Maplerama 2012, July 26-28, at the Vermont State Fairgrounds. For more information call 802-325-3478 or see <http://maplerama2012.blogspot.com/>.

## Cornell Maple Webinars

This year's series of Maple Webinars offered by Cornell will focus on marketing maple syrup and value added products. The sessions are held on the first Thursday of every month from 7-8 p.m. and are free. See <http://maple.dnr.cornell.edu/webinar.html> for details

### Massachusetts Maple Producers Association Board of Directors

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

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

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

#### Containers

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

#### Main Office

Winton Pitcoff - Coordinator/Treasurer	winton@massmaple.org	Plainfield
Mass Maple Association office	PO Box 6, Plainfield, MA 01070	413-628-3912
E-mail: <a href="mailto:info@massmaple.org">info@massmaple.org</a>	Mass Maple Website: <a href="http://www.massmaple.org">www.massmaple.org</a>	

## Online Sugarhouse Directory

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

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## Do We Have Your Email Address?

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

## MMPA on Facebook

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

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## Mark Your Calendar!

### Mass Maple Association Summer Picnic

Sunday July 29, 2012

Location: Hamilton Orchards, New Salem. For details see enclosed flier and registration form,

### The Big E

September 14-30, 2012

It's never too early to set aside time to volunteer at the MMPA booth at the Big E!

### Annual Meeting of the North American Maple Syrup Council & the International Maple Syrup Institute

October 22-25, 2012

Mystic, Connecticut

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## Tubing seminar and open house

Devon Lane Farm Supply

357 Daniel Shays Hwy., Belchertown, MA

Saturday, August 11, 9am - 4pm (registration @ 8:30)

Open House and a tubing seminar with experts from Leader Evaporator featuring mainline and lateral line installation demonstrations and instruction.

## Register now for Cornell Maple Camp August 1 to 4, 2012 at Cornell's Arnot Teaching and Research Forest

The Cornell Maple Program is excited to announce a unique opportunity for maple producers to acquire hands-on experience to increase their production, profitability and efficiency. Peter Smallidge, Cornell Maple Program Director, reports that "this workshop is a unique experience and an unparalleled venue for focused and hands-on learning in a research and production setting. Participants will learn all aspects of production, processing and marketing." In the sugarbush, participants will learn how to measure and select trees, how to evaluate, plan and install a tubing system, and how to evaluate vacuum and bucket systems for efficiency. In the sugar house participants will learn about sap storage, reverse osmosis, evaporator operations, and syrup filtering, storage and grading. Further, participants learn to understand the principles of marketing syrup and value added products, making value-added products, and evaluating and managing their business enterprise. Steve Childs, NY Maple Specialist, says "this training will position maple producers, especially intermediate and beginners, to learn the details that would otherwise require years." The Cornell Maple Camp will begin late afternoon on Wednesday August 1 and conclude at noon on Saturday August 4. Cornell Maple Camp will occur at the Cornell University Arnot Forest near Ithaca, NY. The Cornell Maple Camp is open to all maple producers and those wishing to become maple producers. The Cornell Maple Camp is designed for anyone who wants to become a producer or who has a few years of experiences, but is seeking to expand production, products, markets or profitability. Registration information is available by going to [www.CornellMaple.info](http://www.CornellMaple.info) and selecting Cornell Maple Camp. Registration including all meals (Wednesday supper through Saturday lunch) and handouts is \$225 per person. Cabins at the Arnot Forest will be available for rent at \$25 per person per night (Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday) or information on local hotels or camp sites can be provided. This training is sponsored by the Cornell Maple Program.



## Classified Ad

For Sale 3'3"x 10' arch with raised flue pan, two finish pans, and pre heater. \$4,000. Ed.Parker, 310 Amherst St., Granby, MA, 413 467 7751, 413 427 2475 cell.

## Mass Maple Working to Open Public Land for Tapping

Discussions about tapping on public land with the MA Department of Fish and Game and the MA Department of Conservation Resources are ongoing. We are working to establish a process by which sugarmakers can bid to tap trees on state-owned land. Tapping protocols will be established, and usage rules will be set on a site-by-site basis.

Both agencies have indicated that the first contact needs to come from the sugarmakers. Those interested in tapping on state-owned land should be prepared to submit a written request, indicating where you would like to tap, how many taps (approximately) you would like to set, where and how you would access the parcel, and any other pertinent details.

Sugarmakers who have public land nearby that they are interested in tapping should contact MMPA coordinator Winton Pitcoff at 413-628-3912 or [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org) for information on how to pursue these opportunities.

## 2012 New York State Maple Tour

The 2012 New York State Maple Tour is scheduled for July 22-24. The tour will be hosted by the Central New York Maple Producers Association and centered at the Holiday Inn in Auburn NY. The tour opens with a reception, registration and tradeshow on Sunday afternoon on July 22nd. On Monday and Tuesday, the 23rd and 24th of July, the tour will feature visits to a variety of maple operations both larger and smaller. This tour features the scenic Eastern Finger Lakes area and will include a scenic cruise on Skaneateles Lake and tour of an historic water powered flour mill. Sites include niche marketing, energy saving technologies, organic production, and will include sugarbush sites. The eastern Finger Lakes includes a number of area attractions including: wine tours and tastings, boat cruises, Merry-Go-Round Playhouse, Cayuga Museum & Case Research Lab, Emerson Park, Harriet Tubman Home - Underground Railroad Heritage Trail, William H Seward House - Seward's Folly, Secretary of State to President Lincoln and much more. Cost is set a \$170 per person to include the tour, meals and the annual banquet. Registration and tour stop information will be available soon at [www.cornellmaple.com](http://www.cornellmaple.com) and [www.nysmaple.com](http://www.nysmaple.com). The tour host site is the Auburn Holiday Inn. Phone (315) 253-4531 Mention New York Maple Producers or, block code MAP for the special room rate of \$89.95 Indoor pool open until 10:30 PM Real nice!



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# Working with the media

Talking to reporters has become a fact of life for most sugarmakers. Our industry plays an important and somewhat iconic role in Massachusetts, and just about every newspaper, radio station, tv station and blogger wants to have some sort of story about sugaring each year.

While your first reaction might be to think of this as a hassle and a distraction from your work, it is also an opportunity for you to promote your business and the industry as a whole. For those of us who sugar, it's easy to forget that most of the general public still has no idea where maple syrup comes from, how it is made, or why it is important to buy from a local source. Talking to the press is a great way to educate people.

Most newspapers in Massachusetts are small enough that it is easy to develop a relationship with a reporter who covers your town. Once you and the reporter know each other, they'll call you first when they have questions and when you want to promote your business they'll respond to your calls promptly.

Reporters are always looking for something different or

new, so think about ideas that will make them interested in writing about your business. New equipment (particularly things designed to be energy-efficient), new marketing strategies (new jug designs, for example, or value-added products), and anniversaries (100th year of sugaring for your family) are all good angles to promote.

Reporters' favorite question seems to be "how do you think the season will be?" They'll ask this any time of year, no matter how far off the season is. While we all like to respond by saying "Ask me in May," that doesn't come across well. Be patient and explain that sugaring, like any other farming, is dependent upon so many variables, particularly the weather, and we can't predict how the season will be.

At the end of the season, when reporters ask "how was the season?" it's best to lead with something positive. Tell them that you made excellent tasting syrup and have lots of bottles of all grades on hand ready to sell. Let them know that the new energy-saving equipment that you installed saved you lots of money and made production much more efficient. Don't hide the truth from them – do let them know how your production levels were in comparison with recent years – but remember that if the public reads that it was a lousy season they may well decide not to bother seeking out your products, thinking you won't have any to sell.

And remember that your season may not be a reflection of how everyone in the industry is doing. If you're done boiling for the year, say so, but don't just say "the season's over," because some producers in other parts of the state may still be boiling. If the reporter is doing a general piece about the sugaring season, encourage them to talk to other sugarmakers as well.

In general, keep answers brief and specific, and try to avoid using jargon or technical language – the article is meant for the general public, not other sugarmakers. And humor often doesn't come across well in print, so hold off on the jokes.

If reporters ask questions about the industry as a whole, or ask anything you don't have an answer for, refer them to the Mass Maple website or phone number for answers.

For more ideas, "Working with the Media: Public Relations & Publicity," is an excellent publication from CISA, is available online at [http://buylocalfood.org/upload/resource/Working\\_With\\_The\\_Media%284-3%29.pdf](http://buylocalfood.org/upload/resource/Working_With_The_Media%284-3%29.pdf)

## Mass Maple Warehouse

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

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

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

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



## **Rhode Island man gets sticky sentence for phony syrup**

*June 13, 2012*

Maple syrup is a messy business, especially when what you're selling isn't really maple syrup.

A Rhode Island man was sentenced Tuesday in Vermont to two years probation for misleading his customers about what kind of syrup he was actually selling.

Bernard Coleman pleaded guilty Tuesday to substituting cane sugar in a product he labeled as "maple syrup."

In addition to probation, Coleman was ordered to pay a \$340 fine.

Last October, Vermont Senator Patrick Leahy introduced the MAPLE Act, legislation that would make the fraudulent sale of maple syrup a felony offense.

"We need to make sure that those who intentionally deceive consumers get a trip to jail, not a slap on the wrist," Leahy said in a statement.

The bill is currently under review in the Judiciary Committee.

*Source: <http://eatocracy.cnn.com/2012/06/13/rhode-island-man-gets-sticky-sentence-for-phony-syrup/>*

## **DO YOUR GIFT SHOPPING WITH MASS MAPLE**

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## New Smartphone App to Boost Invasive Species Data Collection Across Massachusetts: Could Help Safeguard State's Natural Resources and Rural Economy

AMHERST, Mass. - Everybody likes maple syrup. But invasive insects like the Asian longhorned beetle can quickly kill thriving maple forests, with potentially devastating results for the maple syrup industry. And invasive plants like bittersweet and goutweed can choke out native plants and disrupt local natural habitats. Whether flora or fauna, invasive species are very real threats to our state's rural-based economy and natural landscapes.

Thanks to a new collaboration between the University of Massachusetts' Center for Public Policy and Administration (CPPA) and the state Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), efforts to combat these potentially devastating species are gaining momentum. That's because now anyone with a smartphone or a digital camera can help scientists col-

lect valuable data about invasive species throughout Massachusetts.

Charles Schweik, associate professor of public policy and environmental conservation at UMass Amherst, and Jennifer Fish, director of DCR's Service Forestry program in Amherst, have received a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to enlist the help of "citizen scientists" to map invasive species using smartphone technology.

The new Outsmart Invasive Species Project lets people learn about, identify and report invasive species in their own time, using the Outsmart Invasive Species iPhone or Android applications, which are available for free through iTunes and Google Play. But a smartphone isn't necessary to help collect and report valuable data. Participants who have digital cameras and access to the Internet can submit data by registering through the free Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System at [www.eddmaps.org/outsmart/join.cfm](http://www.eddmaps.org/outsmart/join.cfm). All Massachusetts data submitted through this website, as well as that collected by smartphone users, will be sent to the Outsmart project team and reviewed by biologists.

Fish stressed the importance of having lots of people from across the state help collect this kind of data. "Invasive species can hurt the environment, businesses and communities," she said, pointing out that the 2008 outbreak of the Asian longhorned beetle in Worcester led to the loss of 30,000 trees. Luckily for the state's agricultural and tourism economies, so far the infestation has been contained. Nonetheless, the 2008 outbreak devastated Worcester's urban canopy and the tree-removal efforts proved a costly blow to the city. "With more people equipped with the tools to identify and report invasive species in their hands while out in the field, we hope to prevent destructive outbreaks like these in the future," Fish said.

Photos, descriptions and geographic locations submitted by smartphone and digital camera users are initially reviewed by the Outsmart team. Some species will be visually verified and transferred to an on-line database, which the above groups will use for management and planning. Data on species of higher concern, such as the Asian longhorned beetle and the emerald ash borer, are sent directly to the government agencies leading those eradication efforts.

To learn more about how you or your organization can get involved - even if you don't have a smartphone - visit the project website at [www.masswoods.net/outsmart](http://www.masswoods.net/outsmart). You can also check out the Outsmart Invasive Species Project on Facebook, contact the project team by e-mail at [outsmart@eco.umass.edu](mailto:outsmart@eco.umass.edu), subscribe to the Twitter feed @outsmartapp or watch the Outsmart YouTube video.

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# Tapping Into Connecticut

## NAMSC/IMSI 2012 Annual Meeting

October 22nd – 25th  
Mystic, Connecticut  
Hosted by the Maple Syrup Producers  
Association of Connecticut

Connecticut maple producers invite everyone to the 53rd annual meeting of the North American Maple Syrup Council (NAMSC) and 38th annual meeting of the International Maple Syrup Institute (IMSI) to be held at the Mystic Marriott Hotel & Spa in historic Mystic, Connecticut. The convention formally begins on Monday, October 22nd and concludes with the annual awards banquet on Thursday, October 25th.

This New England shoreline town is rich in historical fame including the home of the first nuclear submarine The Nautilus located at the Submarine Force Library & Museum; the R.M.S Titanic exhibit at Mystic Aquarium & Institute for Exploration; B. F. Clyde's Cider Mill which is the oldest steam powered cider mill in the country; and, the Charles W. Morgan which is the last surviving wood constructed whaling ship harbored at Mystic Seaport Village. We will visit these and others as part of our Connecticut tour on Thursday. We will also have companion tours planned during the convention as well as companion activities at the Hotel.

All NAMSC & IMSI meetings, workshops and technical sessions will be at the Mystic Marriott Hotel & Spa, 625 North Road (RT117), Groton, CT 06340 (exit 88 off I-95). For those of you flying in, the T.F. Green Airport (PVD) in Providence, RI is a 35 minute drive and Bradley International Airport (BDL) in Hartford/Springfield is about a 60 minute drive to the hotel.

Registration Packets for conference attendees will be sent out to regular attendees soon but if you want to be sure you receive a mailing, please email Ron Wenzel at [info@ctmaple.org](mailto:info@ctmaple.org) with your name, address, phone and email address or, if you prefer you can write to Ron Wenzel, 522 East Street, Hebron, CT 06248. Trade show exhibitors or those placing advertising in our NAMSC/IMSI Program Book should email Ron at [info@ctmaple.org](mailto:info@ctmaple.org) for more information.

We look forward to you joining us in Connecticut in October and are confident you will enjoy your visit to the Constitution State!

**Mass Maple is considering chartering a bus to bring members to workshops, tours and the banquet at this event. Please contact Winton at [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org) or 413-628-3912 if you're interested.**

## Tools and Equipment for folks who work in the woods



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## Maple Syrup Taps, Yield, and Production – States and United States: 2010-2012

State	Number of taps			Yield per tap			Production		
	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012	2010	2011	2012
	(1,000 taps)	(1,000 taps)	(1,000 taps)	(gallons)	(gallons)	(gallons)	(1,000 gallons)	(1,000 gallons)	(1,000 gallons)
Connecticut .....	75	71	70	0.120	0.239	0.157	9	17	11
Maine .....	1,470	1,470	1,500	0.214	0.245	0.240	315	360	360
Massachusetts .....	250	245	250	0.116	0.253	0.160	29	62	40
Michigan .....	490	495	430	0.167	0.248	0.151	82	123	65
New Hampshire .....	420	420	440	0.207	0.286	0.173	87	120	76
New York .....	1,903	2,011	2,070	0.164	0.280	0.174	312	564	360
Ohio .....	385	405	410	0.169	0.309	0.244	65	125	100
Pennsylvania .....	465	503	501	0.116	0.254	0.192	54	128	96
Vermont .....	3,150	3,300	3,500	0.283	0.345	0.214	890	1,140	750
Wisconsin .....	650	660	600	0.180	0.235	0.083	117	155	50
United States .....	9,258	9,580	9,771	0.212	0.292	0.195	1,960	2,794	1,908

The 2012 United States maple syrup production totaled 1.9 million gallons, down 32 percent from the 2011 total. The number of taps is estimated at 9.77 million, 3 percent more than the 2011 total of 9.58 million. Yield per tap is estimated to be 0.195 gallons, down 33 percent from the previous season's yield.

On average, the season lasted 24 days compared with 32 days last year. The 2011 average price per gallon in Massachusetts was \$57.00, up \$.50 from 2010.

See <http://www.usda.gov/nass/PUBS/TODAYRPT/crop0612.pdf> for more data on the 2012 U.S. maple season.

The Canadian province of Quebec has reported production of approximately 8.73 million gallons of syrup for 2012, a slight decline from 2011. More details are available at <http://www.newswire.ca/en/story/991403/final-results-average-maple-syrup-harvest-for-the-2012-season>



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