

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

*The Newsletter of the Massachusetts Maple Producers Association*

## **2nd Annual Maple Weekend March 21-22**

Massachusetts Maple Producers Association will coordinate the second annual 'Maple Weekend' on March 21-22, 2015. This weekend of events promotes local, pure Massachusetts maple products.

Sugarmakers are encouraged to participate by opening their sugarhouses to the public during that weekend and offering demonstrations, tastings, tours, meals and other activities to entertain and educate customers. Participating sugarhouses will be featured on the Mass Maple website, and the Association will be purchasing advertising to attract consumers to the website. See the back of the membership renewal form in this mailing for details about how to participate.

Restaurants around the state will be asked to highlight items on their menus featuring Massachusetts maple syrup. Sugarmakers who have contacts at restaurants are asked to contact Coordinator Winton Pitcoff to help solicit participation.

Last year's event was a big success. More than 40 sugarhouses and more than 30 restaurants participated, and there was excellent press coverage. We're hoping for even more this year. This is an exciting opportunity to have a coordinated range of activities designed to raise awareness about our work and encourage consumers to purchase pure maple products direct from their local sugarmakers. Members are strongly encouraged to participate by offering an open house and publicizing the weekend's events to your customers via Facebook and other social media.

Emails over the next few months will offer more details and solicit input, but please fill out the enclosed form and start planning your events today!

## **Maximizing Sap Yield and Preserving our Maple Trees MMPA Annual Meeting**

The 2014 Annual Meeting and trade show will be held on Saturday, January 17, from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. at Mohawk High School in Buckland.

The trade show will feature a range of dealers from the maple industry. As in past years, members can bring hydrometers for free testing. The business meeting in the morning will include a recap of the year's events and an election of a board member and we'll enjoy a great barbeque lunch.



After lunch Tim Wilmot, Extension researcher and educator from the University of Vermont will present a workshop: "Maximizing sap yield and preserving our maple trees."

More details are on the enclosed sheet. Register today when you renew your annual membership!

## **Maple Month Kickoff to be held in Fitchburg**

The MMPA March is Maple Month Kickoff will be held Friday, March 6 at 11 a.m. at Hollis Hills Farm in Fitchburg. Jim and Allison Lattanzi, started the farm in 2009 in Lunenburg. In 2011, they purchased all of the equipment from an existing sugar house and operated there for three years before moving to their new farm in the spring of 2014. The 100 acre operation includes 18 acres of PYO apples and peaches, 25 acres of row crops and 30 acres of pasture land featuring a farm to table breakfast restaurant in an old barn. Hollis Hills Farm boils sap from 2500 taps. For more information visit [www.HollisHillsFarm.com](http://www.HollisHillsFarm.com)

## From the President

**A**s I reflect over the events and opportunities of 2014 I would like to share some of my highlights.

I was very fortunate to enjoy several educational and networking events this year. Not only did I get my maple overload at Verona but was amazed at the New York Maple Tour and Vermont Maplerama. The sugarhouses we visited really highlighted the changes and advances in the maple industry, from the increased efficiencies with vacuum systems and reverse osmosis to the great set-ups in the filtering and bottling of maple syrup. The sugarhouses were meticulous and I was impressed to see the improvements being made in food-safe maple production.

Mike Farrell's talk on 25 ways to make your sugarhouse operation more profitable and enjoyable that was held on Oct 31st at Williams Sugarhouse, and

Dr. Seeram's talk on the nutritional benefits of maple syrup at the University of Rhode Island on Nov 7th reinforced the importance of marketing. They both stressed education to consumers about the nutritional values of maple syrup, how to cook with maple syrup, and how maple syrup can be used as an all-natural sweetener.

Most of all I have taken away the importance of increasing our collaboration and utilizing all the valuable resources we have available to further the maple industry.

I look forward to brainstorming more educational and marketing opportunities for the MMPA to take part in, as well as any other opportunities to help better promote Massachusetts maple syrup.

Have a great Holiday Season.

– Melissa Leab

### 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
Keith Bardwell	2015*	kbardwell@massmaple.org	Whately
Cynthia Cranston	2016*	ccranston@verizon.net	Ashfield
Pat Delaney	2016*	pdelaney@massmaple.org	Belchertown
Missy Leab – President	2015	missy@iokavalleyfarm.com	Hancock
Andy Schmidt – Vice President	2016*	windsorhill5@yahoo.com	Windsor
Gary Shaw	2017	shawssugarhouse@comcast.net	Buckland
Chip Williams	2016*	cwilliams@massmaple.org	Deerfield
Stan Zawalick	2017*	szawalick@massmaple.org	Florence
Paul Zononi	2017*	pzononi@massmaple.org	Haydenville

*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	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	413-238-7710

#### Main Office

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

## Welcome New Members

The following people joined MMPA in the last six months. If they're neighbors of yours, stop by and welcome them!

Patrick F. O'Bryan, Deerfield  
Scott Breveleri, Feeding Hills  
Brendan Gerry, Charlemont  
David Wallace, Monson  
Eileen & Bob Silva, Byfield  
James Molitoris, Easthampton  
Penny Marston, Spencer  
Peter Stodden, Washington  
Mike Rhenow, Brockton  
Steve Rogalski, Hadley  
Christine Turnbull, Sharon  
Mark Lattanzi, Montague  
Craig and Hunter Sessions, Shelburne Falls  
Michel Levesque, Lapocatiere, Quebec  
Jason Hoellerich, Cheshire  
Thomas C. Powers, Jr., Williamsburg  
Ashley and Shirley Webb, Greenfield

## Classifieds

D.C. Farms is now offer bulk maple sugar for sale and custom maple sugar processing. Please give us a call for pricing. 413-331-3786.

### DO YOUR GIFT SHOPPING WITH MASS MAPLE

Get all of your gift shopping done AND support MMPA!

Does your favorite sugarmaker have the **The North American Maple Syrup Producers Manual**? We've got it for only \$35!

Then there's our great DVD -- **Making Maple Candy & Cream**. \$30

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

Everything's available online, at:  
<http://www.massmaple.org/buy.php>

## Annual Bus to NYS Maple Conference in Verona

MMPA is once again sponsoring a bus to provide free transportation for any member who wishes to attend the New York State Maple Conference in Verona, NY, on Saturday, January 10. This is always an excellent conference and members who have attended in the past have learned a great deal. See <http://maple.dnr.cornell.edu/> for full details on all of the workshops, covering everything from research to marketing to production to forestry and more.

Contact [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org) or 413-628-3912 to reserve your space on the bus – each member is entitled to up to two free seats. MMPA will register everyone going on the bus as a group for the conference, so don't register directly with the folks in NY.

## Dues and Jug Prices...

...Will NOT be increasing at this time!

### 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.

## Participate in State Food Planning Effort

The Massachusetts Food Policy Council has engaged the Metropolitan Area Planning Council to create a statewide strategic plan for Massachusetts's food system. The goal is to promote a food system that is economically viable, socially inclusive, and ecologically sound.

During the next year, the project team will work with Massachusetts residents and food system experts, including producers, business owners and food system stakeholders, to conduct a comprehensive assessment and vision for the Massachusetts food system. The project will look at all components of the food system as well as overarching areas including employment opportunities, public health, and regional collaboration.

For more details, see <http://www.mapc.org/mafoodplan>. If you are interested in participating in a working group, contact [massfoodplan@mapc.org](mailto:massfoodplan@mapc.org).

## EAB Quarantine Extended

The Emerald Ash Borer quarantine area is now state-wide. The quarantine area previously covered only Berkshire and Essex Counties. The quarantine order means that certain products will be prohibited from moving outside the regulated area, including all hardwood firewood (any piece of wood smaller than 48 inches), all ash nursery stock, and any ash lumber that has not been treated. Proper wood treatments include the removal of the bark plus an additional half an inch of wood, dry kiln sterilization, or fumigation/heat treatments.

Ash trees also remain one of the 13 regulated host trees for the Asian Longhorned Beetle (ALB). The 110 square mile ALB regulated area in Worcester County restricts the movement beyond the regulated boundaries of ash along with any other ALB host tree. The ALB regulated area includes Worcester, Shrewsbury, West Boylston, Boylston, and parts of Holden and Auburn.

Further details are available at <http://goo.gl/Iz6ivJ>

## Our Heriage Is Maple Sugaring...

Call and ask for our maple equipment catalog and current used equipment list. Bulk maple syrup bought and sold. Syrup and equipment may be accepted in trade toward equipment.

*Photo: Ken Bascom with Jack and Jerry collecting sap, 1953.*



**Bascom Maple Farms**  
56 Sugarhouse Road, Alstead, NH  
M-F, 7:30 - 4:30 Saturday, 8 - 12  
Tel/603-835-6361 Fax/603-835-2455  
E-mail: [sales@bascommapple.com](mailto:sales@bascommapple.com)

# Sugaring Tips from Mike Farrell

**M**ike Farrell, Director of the Uihlein Forest, Cornell University's Sugar Maple Research & Extension Field Station in Lake Placid, NY, came and spoke to Mass Maple members on October 31. His talk, "25 Ways to Develop a More Enjoyable, Productive, and Profitable Sugaring Operation," actually offered far more than just 25 tips, and I couldn't write as fast as Mike can talk, so only captured some highlights, reprinted here.

- Everyone needs to be constantly promoting maple syrup as a local, natural healthy sugar. We all want something sweet, and this is the best option.
- Promote the versatility of maple syrup. We can't identify our product solely as a breakfast topping, since the anti-carbohydrate and anti-gluten movements have resulted in a significant decline in the amount of pancakes and waffles being consumed.
- Take advantage of the premiums customers are willing to pay for value-added maple products. A little more work can generate a lot more profit from each gallon of syrup.
- Participate in maple weekend and other collaborative marketing efforts.
- Don't limit your customers based on how much syrup you produce. If you're marketing well and have more customers than you expected, buy syrup in bulk and bottle it.
- Once you've made the investment in all of your equipment, you need to make syrup to make that investment pay off. Always be looking for opportunities for more taps on your own land as well as nearby ones you can lease, and consider buying sap.
- With an eye toward catching every sap run that you can and keeping your tapholes open for as long as possible, tap early, keep your system tight to get the highest vacuum possible, replace your spouts each year and your droplines often.
- Invest in setting up your tapping system well and in maintaining it properly, finding and fixing leaks as soon as they occur, eliminating all sags, and taking full advantage of natural terrain.
- If you have a reverse osmosis machine, tap red maples.
- Learn how to identify old tapholes as they heal over, to avoid drilling into dead wood. To help with this, follow a clear tapping pattern on your trees each season and choose your taphole locations carefully. Mike tells his workers that he expects to see footprints in the snow all around each tree, so he knows that all options for tapping have been considered.
- Invest in high quality tools. The time they will save and the frustration they will help you avoid will be well worth it.
- Make sure that all of your measurement equipment (hydrometers, thermometers, etc.) is properly calibrated.
- Participate in the annual National Agricultural Statistics Survey (NASS). Not participating makes the industry look much smaller than it really is, which ultimately hurts us when regulations are being written and funds are being allocated for grant programs or extension services.

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## New MA Laws Important to Sugarmakers

Small farms in Massachusetts will be able to take advantage of a new tax break beginning in 2015. The legislature passed, and the governor signed, a law giving a 3% tax credit to unincorporated farms and fishing operations for capital purchases, a credit that had previously only been available to incorporated farms. Make sure to ask your accountant for details about this change when you're doing your 2015 taxes.

Also passed this session, a law that allows farmers to use all-terrain vehicles without registration on public roads for up to ½ mile as long as it is being used exclusively for agricultural purposes, or up to ten miles if the owner also has appropriate liability insurance. The owners need to notify local police of these vehicles' use, and must display a safety flag.

# Western MA Fair Winners

Congratulations to the following Massachusetts sugarmakers who took home prizes from the three large fairs in Western MA this season. Don't forget to enter next year!

## Franklin County Fair

### Light Maple Syrup

- 1st: Paul and Serena Zononi, Williamsburg
- 2nd: Boyden Brothers Maple, Conway
- 3rd: Jeffrey Webb, Greenfield

### Dark Maple Syrup

- 1st: Patrick O'Bryan, Deerfield
- 2nd: Paul and Serena Zononi, Williamsburg
- 3rd: Jeffrey Webb, Greenfield

### Maple Sugar

- 1st: Boyden Brothers Maple, Conway
- 2nd: Paul and Serena Zononi, Williamsburg

### Maple Cream

- 1st: Boyden Brothers Maple, Conway
- 2nd: Paul and Serena Zononi, Williamsburg

### Display of Sugar & Syrup

- 1st: Boyden Brothers Maple, Conway
- 2nd: Paul and Serena Zononi, Williamsburg

## Cummington Fair

### Maple Syrup

- 1st: Paul Zononi
- 2nd: Peter Tessier
- 3rd: Peter Lang

### Stirred maple sugar

- 1st: Peter Tessier
- 2nd: Paul Zononi

### Creamed Maple Sugar

- 1st: Susan Snow
- 2nd: Winner: Paul Zononi
- 3rd: Peter Tessier

### Cake Maple Sugar

- 1st: Keith A Dufresne
- 2nd: Peter Tessier
- 3rd: Paul Zononi



Boyden Brothers Maple's blue-ribbon entry in the Display of Sugar & Syrup category at the Franklin County Fair.

## Collection of Maple Products

- 1st: Susan Snow
- 2nd: Paul Zononi
- 3rd: Peter Tessier

## Three County Fair

### Youth Division

### Collection of Maple Products

- 1st: Timothy Meacham

### Dark Maple Syrup

- 1st: Rachel Meacham

### Adult Division

### Collection of Maple Products

- 1st: Paul Zononi
- 2nd: Milton Severance

### Collection of Maple Syrup

- 1st: Paul Zononi
- 2nd: Milton Severance

### Maple Syrup – Light Amber

- 1st: Henry Sarafin
- 1st: Paul Zononi

Maple Syrup – Medium Amber  
1st: Paul Zononi

Maple Syrup – Dark Amber  
1st: Paul Zononi  
2nd: Mark Meacham

Maple Sugar  
1st: Milton Severance  
2nd: Paul Zononi

Maple Cream  
1st: Paul Zononi  
2nd: Milton Severance

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## **Massachusetts Sugarmakers Bring Home International Awards**

**E**ach year, at the North American Maple Syrup Council and International Maple Syrup Institute annual meetings, sugarmakers from all over the U.S. and Canada enter their syrup, candy, cream and photos in an international contest. At this year's meeting, in Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Massachusetts sugarmakers came away with more awards than any other maple producing state or province, and was the only state represented among the winners in all three of the Grade A syrup categories. The winners from Massachusetts were:

- Grade A Light Amber Maple Syrup: Paul's Sugarhouse, Haydenville, 2nd place
- Grade A Medium Amber Maple Syrup: Paul's Sugarhouse, Haydenville, 3rd place
- Grade A Dark Amber Maple Syrup: Paul's Sugarhouse, Haydenville, 3rd place
- Maple Candy: Boyden Brothers Maple, Conway, 2nd place
- Maple Cream: Boyden Brothers Maple, Conway, 2nd place

Mike Girard, from Girard's Sugarhouse in Heath, took first place in the "Sugarbush Scenes" category of the photo contest as well.

Next year's contest will be held during the meetings in Pennsylvania. Be sure to set aside a jug of your best syrup this season to enter, so we can continue to show that Massachusetts producers make the best maple products anywhere.

## **Agricultural Business Planning Courses, Winter 2015**

MDAR offers three courses for participants who are 1) thinking about farming, 2) getting going, with access to land, or 3) already operating an agricultural enterprise undergoing growth or change. Attendance is required at all sessions. Fees are kept low through MDAR financial support, and a partner may attend at no additional cost.

**Exploring The Small Farm Dream:** For those who are thinking about getting into farming or are expanding a hobby to an income-generating scale. This course offers guidance and feedback to help make informed decisions about whether or not to take the plunge, and how to proceed in the first stages. Cost per enterprise: \$100. Amherst on Thursday evenings March 5, 12, 19, 26 and April 2, and Marlborough on Tuesday evenings March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31.

**Planning For Startup:** For those a step beyond Explorer who have a strong sense of what they intend to do and where. This course is a gut check before making significant investments of time and money. It requires completion of Explorer, or equivalent programs and experience. Participants have already made the decision to farm on a revenue-generating scale, and have secured the land and initial finances to do so. Cost per enterprise: \$150. Amherst only. Saturday Mornings: February 21, 28, March 7, 14, 21, 28, April 4.

**Tilling the Soil of Opportunity:** For those already operating a commercial agricultural enterprise and in need of a comprehensive business plan. This in-depth course offers a chance to assess, regroup, plan ahead, finance expansion, or clarify transfer/succession. The course draws on peer experience, Instructor knowledge and guest speakers. Meets USDA/FSA certification for "Borrower Training." Graduates may qualify for individual post-course technical assistance. Cost per enterprise: \$200. Amherst or Marlborough (depending on location of registrants) on Wednesday evenings: January 7, 14, 21, 28, February 4, 11, 18, 25, March 4, 11.

Registration is rolling (no payment until enrollment is complete) - those who have completed an application receive priority on location. Email information and application requests to Rick.Chandler@state.ma.us or call 413-548-1905.

## New Grades, New Poster

The new maple grading system has been adopted by most states and Canadian provinces, and the USDA is in the process of approving them as a standard for the nation. The MPPA board of directors voted last year to encourage Massachusetts sugarmakers to adopt the new system, and help educate the public about it. The warehouse is stocking the new grade labels. We have created and printed a new grading poster (right), which is available to members at the warehouse and will be available at the annual meeting as well. It can also be downloaded, at: <http://www.massmaple.org/gradingposter.jpg>, or one can be mailed to you for \$6 (mail check to MPPA, PO Box 6, Plainfield, MA 01070).

## Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference and Trade Show

The Harvest New England Agricultural Marketing Conference and Trade Show will be held February 25-26 at Sturbridge Host, in Sturbridge, MA. This biennial conference and trade show offers New England growers sessions on new marketing ideas, promotion, business planning, ag-tourism, managing farmers' markets, agriculture commissions, and more. There will be multiple educational and networking opportunities along with a trade show. More information is available at [harvestnewengland.org](http://harvestnewengland.org).



## Devon Lane Farm Supply Inc.

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[nates@devonlane.com](mailto:nates@devonlane.com)  
[www.devonlane.com](http://www.devonlane.com)





## Another Successful Year at the Big E and Franklin County Fair

Mass Maple continued our annual tradition of staffing booths at the Franklin County Fair in Greenfield and the Big E in West Springfield. These are opportunities for us to help spread the word to the public about Massachusetts maple products, and sell products made by our members to raise funds to help keep the Association operating.

Serena and Paul Zononi managed the Franklin County booth, which has been in the Roundhouse building for many years, selling candy and cream cones. Andy Schmidt managed the Big E booth for his third year, with the help of dozens of member volunteers who made and sold more candy and cream than ever before.

These events are great opportunities for members to help promote the Massachusetts maple industry by educating consumers and supporting the Association. Please consider working a shift in 2015. If there are other fairs you think MMPA should have a presence at, let me know at [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org).

## Commonwealth Quality

Commonwealth Quality, a brand designed by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources, serves to identify locally sourced products that are grown, harvested and processed right here in Massachusetts using practices that are safe, sustainable and don't harm the environment. Massachusetts sugarmakers developed a set of guidelines, based upon MMPA's Quality Control Manual and the Handbook of Best Management Practices, to be used for Massachusetts sugarmakers who wish to participate in the Program.

Participation in the program is voluntary and largely self-regulated, with participants self-auditing their operations using a checklist. Participation will allow sugarmakers to display the Commonwealth Quality seal on their products. To date, six sugarmakers have signed up to participate in the program.

Guidelines for participation and more information about the program are available at <http://www.thecqp.com/images/maple/maple.html>, or contact MMPA coordinator Winton Pitcoff at [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org).



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[northhadleysugarshack.com](http://northhadleysugarshack.com)  
181 River Drive  
North Hadley, MA 01035

# Members to Vote on Proposed Changes to Mass Maple Bylaws

The MMPA board of directors spent several meetings over the last year reviewing the organization's bylaws to ensure that they accurately reflect our work and provide an appropriate framework for the Association. They are proposing a few minor but important changes that the membership will be asked to vote on at the annual meeting in January.

The first proposed change is a clarification concerning membership, making it clear that a single membership grants benefits to a single family or sugaring operation.

Also proposed is a change in the dues payment schedule, allowing for a \$5 discount off the \$45 annual dues if paid before the annual meeting, rather than January 1, as the current bylaws state.

Proposed changes to the section governing board operations clarifies the number of board members to be elected at each annual meeting – a number which is no longer constant due to a number of board members who did not complete their terms over the years – and codifying the option to choose board members by acclamation, rather than ballot, if candidates are running for the open seats unopposed.

If adopted, this section would also now grant the board's executive committee the power to make decisions when the board is not in session, subject to full board approval at the next scheduled meeting. This change will allow the board to respond more quickly when situations arise.

Finally, language has been proposed to make it clear that board decisions are made by majority vote.

The section of the bylaws on procedure would be amended to reflect that in the event of a tie at a meeting of the membership the President shall have the right to cast the deciding vote, and that the secretary may designate another individual to notify members and board members of meetings.

Finally, the section on dissolution currently allows for the transfer of any remaining assets of MMPA to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts should no local organization with the same or similar mission as Mass Maple be found. That provision would be stricken, under the proposed changes.

Along with the proposed bylaw changes, the board

of directors also recently clarified a number of issues related to membership and board operations, including:

- Mass Maple will offer free memberships for one year to new members under the age of 18. In subsequent years they will be charged the regular rate.
- The Coordinator and Board President will be MMPA's delegate and alternate to the NAMSC annual meeting each year and the Association will reimburse them for reasonable travel expenses. Should they be unable to attend, the board will choose who will go in their place, first from the board and then from the broader membership. The Association will also pay for basic registration for any additional board member who wishes to attend.
- There are no geographic requirements for MMPA membership, but some benefits are available only to sugarmakers from Massachusetts (directory listing, use of MMPA jugs, opportunity to sell syrup to the Big E, and participation in Commonwealth Quality).
- A membership entitles households to two seats on the bus to Verona. Additional seats may be paid for at the non-member rate, after all members have had an opportunity to sign up.

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## 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.

## Help with Ag Conflicts

Have you ever found yourself in a conflict with local government or a state agency? Or maybe you and neighbors have had some disagreement over your farm stand traffic, your spraying with pesticides or your animals' smells? Or maybe you have an issue with USDA over regulations or a loan payment or an organic certification. The Agricultural Mediation Program at the Massachusetts Office of Public Collaboration's (MOPC) is available to help.

The Ag Mediation Program has two parts. One is funded through a grant from USDA to resolve issues with that agency and the USDA subsidizes the mediation. The other half of the program deals with conflicts that are not related to USDA but are agricultural in nature. The costs for these services vary.

MOPC is also available to help train local Agricultural Commissions in resolving local conflicts. In partnership with the MA Dept. of Agriculture (MDAR) and other agricultural organizations, MOPC provides outreach and mediation services, conflict resolution training and support to Agricultural Commissions to help sustain the community's farm businesses and farmlands. MOPC teaches commissioners how to prevent and manage conflict effectively, and pro-

vides access to professional mediators if they are not able to resolve the conflicts themselves.

The agency is housed at UMass Boston and offers services through several regional mediation centers. For information about services for Ag Commissions or producers, contact Courtney Breese, Program Manager, Massachusetts Office of Public Collaboration (MOPC), UMass Boston, 100 Morrissey Blvd., M-1-627, Boston, MA 02125, 617-287-4046, Courtney.Breese@umb.edu, [www.mopc.umb.edu](http://www.mopc.umb.edu).

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## 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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phone: (413) 238-5514  
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# Climate Change and MA Maple Production

*By Emma Hanson, Matt Hazel, Christa Mayfield, and Nina Rogowsky*

*Agriculture, Food, and Environment Program, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy, Tufts University*

The annual collection of maple sap from maple trees is a longstanding tradition that has been practiced in the Northeast since the days before European settlers arrived. However, with climate in the region shifting, the maple industry is likely to experience some changes. So, what does this mean for Massachusetts maple producers?

The two factors affected by climate change that are most likely to impact maple production are temperature and precipitation. By mid-century, the Northeast can expect an increase in temperatures by 2.5 to 4 °F in winter and 1.5 to 3.5 °F in summer. Precipitation in winter is projected to increase with less falling as snow, and rain likely falling in fewer but more extreme events, possibly leading to greater occurrences of flooding.<sup>1</sup>

Over the next several decades it is predicted that warmer temperatures will have an effect on when

maple sap will be flowing each year. Maple syrup producers in Massachusetts are likely to see sap flow start dates advance days or even weeks earlier, depending on the magnitude of greenhouse gas emissions. There may also be fewer sap flow days per season, on average, as warmer springs hasten bud-break.<sup>2</sup>

According to the Climate Change Tree Atlas produced by the U.S. Forest Service, the distribution of sugar maples will likely remain constant, while the overall numbers could drop by as little as a quarter or as much as half, depending on which climate change model is referenced. Of course, whether or not the remaining maples produce usable amounts of sap depends on having enough warm days and cool nights.

In recent years, a predominant concern among maple producers has been the Asian Longhorned Beetle, which kills sugar maple trees and has no natural predators. While Massachusetts has been making progress towards eradicating this pest, there is also some troubling research indicating that climate change might make that battle more difficult. Research by the U.S. Forest Service found that while

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warmer temperatures did not affect the beetle's life span, it did improve its breeding ability. More eggs were laid in warmer conditions, and a higher percentage of laid eggs hatched.<sup>4</sup>

An interesting, albeit radical, new technique has emerge from the University of Vermont's Proctor Maple Research Center to help producers mitigate climate change's effect on their maple yields. The "plantation" method entails decrowning a maple sapling and tapping by attaching a plastic bag and tube to the exposed cross-section of sapwood. Despite the young tree's relatively low sap production on a per-unit basis, sap production per acre is higher because the producer is able to plant the young trees more densely on open land. The method is resilient to climate change because the smaller trunks freeze and thaw more quickly, making the dependence on warm days and cool nights less of a factor.<sup>4</sup>

Maple producers must be prepared for the changes likely to occur due to climate change in the next century. Resilience is the key word – since there is no way to stop the changes, those with the greatest ability to adapt will be most successful.

<sup>1</sup> Karl, Thomas R., Jerry M. Melillo, and Thomas C. Peterson, (eds.). "Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States." Cambridge University Press, 2009. Web. Nov. 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Skinner, C. B., DeGaetano, A. T., & Chabot, B. F. (2010). "Implications of twenty-first century climate change on Northeastern United States maple syrup production: impacts and adaptations." *Climatic Change*, 100(3-4), 685–702. doi:10.1007/s10584-009-9685-0

<sup>3</sup> Keena, Melody. Moore, Paul. United States. USDA. Forest Service. Effect of Temperature on Larval Development and Survival - Asian Longhorned Beetle - Forest Disturbance Processes - Northern Research Station - USDA Forest Service. Northern Research Station, 2010. Web. 22 Oct. 2014

<sup>4</sup> Brown, Joshua E. "Remaking Maple." University Communications. University of Vermont, 06 Nov. 2013. Web. 21 Nov. 2014.



## Bringing the Trees Indoors

Rob and Missy Leab of Ioka Valley Farm in Hancock have used logs to build this indoor forest to show customers at their sugarhouse restaurant how tubing systems work.

## Do We Have Your Email Address?

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## 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. And please 'share' our posts to help spread the word about Massachusetts maple syrup!

# Massachusetts Farm Energy Program Helps Maple Producers Cut Costs and Increase Efficiency

**D**o you know how much energy it takes to produce a gallon of maple syrup? And how much that energy costs? Assuming that you need to evaporate 40 (or more!) gallons of water per gallon of syrup, you can burn through several gallons of fuel oil for every gallon of syrup you produce! Did you also know that there are ways to cut your energy use – and costs?

The Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) Massachusetts Farm Energy Program, now coordinated by the Center for EcoTechnology (CET), has been helping maple sugaring operations in Massachusetts decrease costs through energy efficiency and renewable energy since 2008. With support from the MDAR and the USDA, energy specialists from CET help agricultural producers learn about efficient technologies and practices and navigate the world of energy audits, grants and financial incentives.

Most recently, CET's Massachusetts Farm Energy Program staff has been working with Ed Caron from Leyden, MA, who contacted us because he was in-

terested in replacing his old evaporator with more energy efficient equipment. We were able to:

- Cover 75% of the cost of an energy audit that calculated the cost and savings associated with a new evaporator, steam enhanced pre-heater, and energy efficient lighting.
- Help Ed apply for an energy grant from the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture for a new evaporator.
- Refer Ed to the NRCS EQIP program for additional assistance.
- Contact Ed's electric utility company to request an electric audit to evaluate and provide funding to install energy efficient lighting.

Ed is now on his way to installing a high efficiency evaporator for the upcoming maple season!

You too can reduce your energy use and costs, and increase your efficiency. Here's how:

- Start with an energy audit to determine the best, most cost-effective measures for you. Funding is available to pay for 75% of the cost of a study!



Gerry Palano from the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources firing the high-efficiency evaporator at Justamere Tree Farm in Worthington.

- Get information about available grants and financial incentives available! The good news is that there is funding available from several sources. Here are a few:

- Utility companies – provide energy audits and rebates for energy efficiency improvements.
  - Massachusetts Department of Agriculture – offers grants of up to \$20,000 for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects.
  - Massachusetts Farm Energy Program – provides up to \$5,000 in incentives for energy efficiency improvements.
  - USDA Natural Resources Conservation Services – sponsors EQIP grants.
  - USDA Rural Energy for America Program (REAP) offers grants and loan guarantees.
- Apply for funding and implement recommended measures, ranging from energy efficient evaporators to renewable energy systems. The following are some examples:
    - A pre-heater for your evaporator can reduce fuel consumption by up to 13%.
    - A steam-enhanced unit can reduce fuel use by up to 40%.
    - A reverse osmosis (RO) system removes the water and concentrates the sap, making it possible to reduce the fuel needed to evaporate the water by 65% or more!

For more information, contact the Massachusetts Farm Energy Program staff TODAY! We'll walk you through the steps to get EXPERT ASSISTANCE and FUNDING too!

Call 413-727-3090; e-mail us at: [info@massfarmenergy.com](mailto:info@massfarmenergy.com); or visit our website: [www.massfarmenergy.com](http://www.massfarmenergy.com), submit a Request Form and WE will contact YOU.

## New Central Mass Grown Buy Local Initiative

Central Mass Grown is now accepting memberships from farms, producers, nurseries, retail establishments, restaurants, organizations, and individuals for our inaugural year Central Mass Grown Farm Product Directory. Membership enrollments received by January 15th will be included in the first print Central Mass Grown Directory. For more information and to enroll as a member, please visit [www.centralmassgrown.org](http://www.centralmassgrown.org), where you will be able to fill in an enrollment form.

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