

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

*The Newsletter of the Massachusetts Maple Producers Association*

## Promoting Sugarhouse Visits in 2012

**M**MMPA will again coordinate a 'passport' program during the 2012 sugaring season, to generate more business for local sugarmakers and promote education about our industry

We will be directing people to the listings of sugarhouses on the Mass Maple website, and encouraging them to visit local sugarhouses to learn about the syrup making process and to purchase local syrup. As an incentive, MMPA will offer prizes to people who visit more than four sugarhouses during the course of the sugaring season.

We will print official 'passports' for people to use when visiting sugarhouses. Sugarmakers are asked to sign these passports with the name of your sugarhouse and the date of the visit. Anyone who visits four or more sugarhouses by April 15 can send their passport to MMPA to be entered in a drawing for prizes.

If your sugarhouse is not currently listed on the MMPA website's directory, please contact [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org) to be added. Passports will be available online and at the annual meeting for members to take and distribute to customers.



## MMPA Annual Meeting January 21 • 9:00 - 3:00

**T**he 2011 Annual Meeting, trade show and workshop will be held on Saturday, January 21, from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. at Mohawk High School in Buckland.

Our guest will be Rick LeBlanc from the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR). Rick will present "Marketing Maple in Massachusetts and Beyond: What's the Best Use of Your Time and Resources?" offering

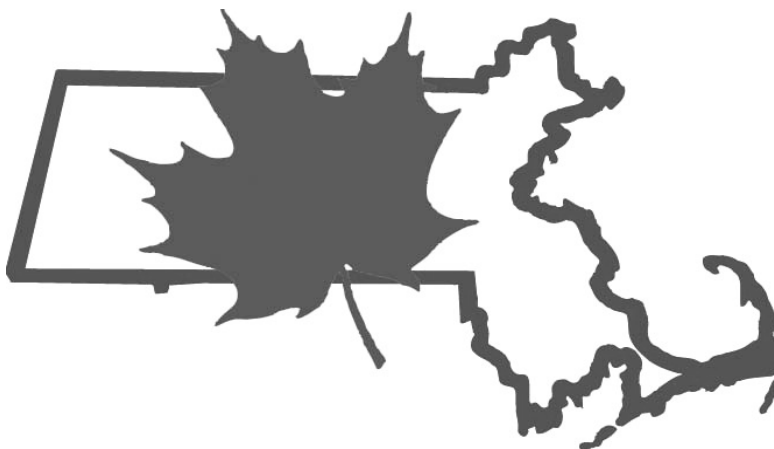
ideas and resources for sugarmakers around using the Internet to promote your business, advertising, working with the press, exploring new markets, and more. See more details on the enclosed sheet.

We'll also put into practice some of what we learned from last year's annual meeting about grading and detecting off-flavors, in the form

of a syrup tasting. Anyone who is interested in receiving feedback on their syrup, please bring a quart of Medium Amber in an unmarked container (so comments can be anonymous) to the meeting. Over the course of the day these will be available for anyone to sample and write (anonymous) comments about, with the comment sheets to be returned to the producer at the end of the afternoon.

The business meeting in the morning will include a recap of the year's events and an opportunity for members to elect a new board member.

A trade show, free hydrometer testing, and a great lunch will also be part of the day's events. Register today!



# From the President

We got an early taste of winter this year! With the October snow, those of us below 1000 ft. elevation now know firsthand how the ice storm affected others a few years ago. Fortunately we have more time to clean up and get our lines repaired. Mass Maple has been busy as well.

The summer picnic was well attended and all were fed very well. Thanks again to the Hubbards and the Sunderland Fire Fighters Association for all of their help. Quite a few members brought syrup for tasting. The wide range of comments made suggests a need for a more formal session on syrup judging.

The Big E was a success this year, despite the usual challenge of not having enough volunteers on some days. We replaced the steam kettle with an electric hot plate, which worked well. We are working with MDAR to propose changes to the booth intended to boost sales and educational opportunities. We are looking to hire a new manager for the booth next year, as Lisa Brackney has said that 2011 will be her last year of service.

Andy Schmidt, Winton Pitcoff and I attended the North American Maple Syrup Council/International Maple Syrup

Institute meetings in Frankenmuth, MI in October. Winton is our delegate and I am the alternate for the meetings. We attended workshops and industry meetings, made good connections with our counterparts in other states, and got updates on the latest industry news, especially the new grading system slated for implementation in 2013. There will be a report at the annual meeting in January.

As is the case with all organizations these days, Mass Maple is working to do more with less. We want to provide more services and opportunities for our members, and are struggling with increased costs for everything we do. After much discussion by the board of directors, we have decided to keep the dues increase to just \$5 this year, to help cover the cost of an increase in our annual dues to NAMSC, higher postage and printing costs, a hike in the cost of the bus we provide for transportation to Verona, increases in expenses for the annual meeting and picnic, and the rising costs of other expenses.

I look forward to seeing many of you on January 21 at our annual meeting, and don't forget to mark your calendar for the January 7 trip to Verona. And join us in Williamsburg at Paul Zononi's sugarhouse for the March is Maple Month kickoff event on March 2.

-- Ed Parker, President

## Massachusetts Maple Producers Association Board of Directors

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

Name	Term Expires	E-mail Address	Town
Paul Zononi	2014	pzononi@massmaple.org	Haydenville
Cynthia Cranston	2013	ccranston@massmaple.org	Ashfield
Keith Bardwell - Secretary	2012	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	aschmidt@massmaple.org	Windsor
Pat Delaney	2013	pdelaney@massmaple.org	Belchertown
Jeanne Boyden	2012*	jboyden@massmaple.org	Conway

*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
Red Bucket Sugar Shack	Kinne Brook Rd., Worthington, MA 01098	413-238-7710
Bascom Maple Farms	56 Sugarhouse Road, Alstead, NH 03602	603-835-6361

### Main Office

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

# Classified Ads

**Wanted:** Sap to buy. Delivered to Windsor. Call Andy or Trish 413-684-1410.

**For Sale:**

- 30 barrel (@1000 gallon) Grimm round bottom galvanized sap tank. Size about 5x10x 3.5 deep. \$300.
- 500 gallon Cherry-Burrell stainless steel dairy bulk tank. Fully covered w/2 SS doors on top. \$600
- 300 gallon galvanized stock tank, w/cover, 1.5" bottom drain. Approx. 10x3x2 ft. \$125.
- 5 barrel (150 gal) Grimm flat bottom rectangular sap tank. Approx. 4x3x2, with 1" bottom drain. \$100.
- 425 gal pickup truck style plastic tank w/2" drain. \$250.
- Small Surge vacuum pump and motor with thermostatic control and moisture trap kill switch. Good for up to 150 taps. \$250.
- Homemade stainless steel mechanical sap releaser to go with above vacuum pump and controls, good for 150 taps. \$300.
- Assorted vacuum pumps, 9 cfm Surge piston pump, no motor; 2 or 3 Surge SP-11 piston pumps, mostly w/no motors; Surge SP-22 piston pump no motor, 2 Sihi 3808 30 cfm liquid ring pumps, no motors.
- 300 gallon galvanized stock tank, one side got slightly smashed due to a snow load roof collapse. Free.
- Kawasaki 3hp sap transfer pump, 11,000 gallons/hour, 2" inlet/outlet presently reduced to 1.5 inch. \$100

Email Tom McCrumm at [tom@southfacefarm.com](mailto:tom@southfacefarm.com)

**For Sale:** 100 gal galvanized sap tank: \$50.00. 50 sap pails with caps and spouts \$7.50 each for all. Two five gallon jugs of syrup: 1 medium, 1 dark. 275 gallon poly tanks. Six burner gas stove. [mapleman5@verizon.net](mailto:mapleman5@verizon.net).

**For Sale:** These 40ml dram, or mignon swingtop bottles from Italy offer perhaps the best value-added in maple. Our family farm has successfully marketed them for many years but has now switched to other stock and we're offering this overstock (@ 45 cents each) at below our pallet price and at least 60% below typical retail. Available in four styles: Square (x1521 bottles); Anelli (x960 bottles); Cleopatra (x1764 bottles); Rubino (x640 bottles). Any quantity available; without swing tops. Swing tops for these bottles are standard size and typically available for 10 cents each. We have available around 2,600 swing tops for sale. Contact us for pricing questions or for a picture. Contact Connor or Brooks, 888-576-2753, [bsgfarm@peoplepc.com](mailto:bsgfarm@peoplepc.com).

**For Sale:** Used wood fired Grimm 4x14ft Evaporator with complete arch. All stainless steel taper with 2 additional lengths of stainless steel stove pipe in excellent condition. 1 set of 4x14 stainless steel pans. New in 2009 4x4 front pan and used 4x10 flue pan in excellent condition with floats and float box. 1 set aluminum hoods. 1 homemade copper preheater. Asking \$5800 or B.O. Leon Ripley, 413-357-8829, [maplecornerfarm@juno.com](mailto:maplecornerfarm@juno.com).

**For Sale:** 100 blue, food-grade, hot-pack approved, 5-gallon maple syrup jugs available. We've been using these jugs for hot packing syrup, but are transitioning to using stainless steel drums. Jugs have been kept indoors, washed, and cleaned after each use. Prices are: \$5.00 each for 100 jugs; \$7.00 each for 50 jugs; \$8.00 each for less than 50 jugs. Email [info@justameretreefarm.com](mailto:info@justameretreefarm.com), or call JP at 413-238-5902.

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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.



## 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'll be using it for news and event notices.

## Mass Maple Working to Open Public Land for Tapping

Massachusetts Maple Producers Association President Ed Parker, Coordinator Winton Pitcoff and member J.P. Welch travelled to Boston in August to meet with Richard Sullivan, Secretary of the Massachusetts Energy and Environmental Affairs agency, and Commissioners from several departments within the agency. The topic of the meeting was increasing access to public lands for sugarmakers to tap.

The Secretary and Commissioners were very receptive to the Association's proposal. We have had discussions with staff at the Department of Fish and Game and the Department of Conservation Resources and 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.

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.

## MMPA is Hiring

The Massachusetts Maple Producers Association is seeking a manager and assistant manager to run the Association's booth at the Big E. Candidates will need to be very organized, able to manage a large number of volunteers, and able to be at the Big E September 14-30. Please contact [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org) or 413-628-3912 for more information.

## MMPA is Seeking Board Members

We will have one vacancy on the Mass Maple board in 2012 and are seeking volunteers to serve. Contact President Ed Parker at [eparker@massmaple.org](mailto:eparker@massmaple.org) or 413-467-7751 for more information or to volunteer.



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# Mark Your Calendar!

## Free Transportation to NY State Maple Conference for MMPA Members

Saturday, January 7, 2012

Verona, NY

For more information on the conference, see <http://maple.dnr.cornell.edu/>. To reserve a spot on the bus, contact [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org); 413-628-3912.

## March is Maple Month Kickoff

Friday, March 2, 2012, 10:00 a.m.

Paul's Sugarhouse

28 Goshen Rd. (Route 9), Williamsburg

## Mass Maple Association Summer Picnic

Sunday July 29, 2012

Location: TBA. If you are interested in hosting, please contact [winton@massmaple.org](mailto:winton@massmaple.org); 413-628-3912.

## 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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## Come to Verona!

MMPA is once again sponsoring a bus to provide free transportation for any member who wishes to attend the New York State Maple Conference in Verona, NY, on Saturday, January 7. 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. MMPA will register everyone going on the bus as a group, so don't register directly with the folks in NY.

## 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.

## Asian Longhorned Beetle Update

The quarantine zone related to the Asian Longhorned Beetle infestation in the Worcester area was expanded to 110 square miles in October, and now encompasses the entire town of Shrewsbury. More than 30,000 trees have been removed, and approximately 6,000 replacement trees planted.

Preventative treatment of trees with Imidacloprid continues, with more than 200,000 trees treated to date. Treated trees are being tagged with a small metal tag that includes the words 'DO NOT TAP.' Under no circumstances should treated trees be tapped for sugaring.



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## Making a Maple Vacuum System More Efficient

By Tim Wilmot

There are never too many useful tips for a maple producer who wants to make his or her operation more efficient and trouble-free. This past September I learned some new ones at a vacuum workshop held by the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association in Shaftsbury, Vt. The instructors were Nick Atherton, service manager at CDL in St Albans, Vt., and J.R. Sloan of Green Mountain Mainlines in Fairfield, Vt. While these workshops were primarily aimed at sugar makers with systems of less than 1,000 taps, much of the information that was shared could apply to systems of all sizes.

J.R. Sloan installs tubing all over the Northeast and has seen operations of all sizes. He claims that the number one reason for a failed system in any woods is grade - not laying out the system to keep some grade on all the lines. Lack of grade at any point in the line causes sap to pool in a sag, diminishing the vacuum beyond this point. Additionally, because the sap will freeze in these sags on a cold night, ice and slush will come down the lines in the morning and may interfere with the sap extractor ("releas-

er"). A mistake that many producers make is running mainlines from a nice slope into an area with a shallow slope, or even no slope, just to pick up some taps in a flat area. In many woods those taps can be picked up by a separate mainline to avoid flattening out the whole system. In the case of trees that are clearly below any logical path for a mainline, Sloan recommends not using sap ladders; instead he uses the vacuum in the mainline to pull the sap from the trees to the mainline by running individual lateral lines with five taps per line.

Sloan had many other tips relating to tubing. When he estimates materials for a job, he uses the formula 6 feet of mainline and 20 feet of lateral line per tap, which works in most woods. He uses only three sizes of mainline: 1, 1.5 and 2-inch, to avoid having too many kinds of fittings, and he likes 1-inch minimum for better vacuum transfer, especially on flatter slopes. To gauge the slope, use a sight level, which Sloan recommends testing prior to use by sighting along horizontal siding on a building and making sure that the bubble is really on the center line when the instrument is held at level.

*Excerpted from the December issue of Farming Magazine. Read the whole article at <http://www.farmingmagazine.com/article-7574.aspx>*

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# Fake maple syrup sours sweet image

**New York's U.S. senators seek federal felony for passing off the cheap stuff as the real thing**

*By Kyle Glazier, Hearst Washington bureau  
October 21, 2011, Albany Times Union*

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Life won't be sweet for anyone caught selling counterfeit maple syrup if U.S. Sens. Kirsten Gillibrand and Charles Schumer get their way.

The New York Democrats are cosponsoring a bill that would make mislabeling a food product as "maple syrup" a federal offense. The Maple Agriculture Protection and Law Enforcement Act -- the acronym is not accidental -- also has the backing of Vermont's Patrick Leahy and Bernie Sanders, as well as Maine's Susan Collins.

The announcement comes in the wake of a U.S. Food and Drug Administration investigation that revealed a Rhode Island man was packaging and selling a "maple syrup" that contained no maple syrup at all, just much cheaper cane sugar syrup.

This sort of food fraud is currently a misdemeanor, but would be a felony under the MAPLE Act. It would also increase the

maximum sentences prosecutors could seek against syrup counterfeiters: If the bill becomes law, bottling fake syrup could carry a five-year prison sentence.

After Vermont, New York is the second-biggest producer of maple syrup in the nation. The state produced 564,000 gallons of maple syrup, according to latest figures. Producers sell the retail product at \$45 to \$50 a gallon, depending on quality.

"Maple farmers across New York state produce some of the highest-quality syrup in the world," said Schumer. "We need to crack down on individuals trying to pass off fake syrup as the real thing, so that our farmers can compete fair and square. The only thing that should be flowing over mom's pancakes is good, pure, New York maple syrup."

Gillibrand said the bill would protect consumers, who would be less likely to wind up paying a premium price for a cheap substitute. The cane sugar product sold in the Rhode Island scheme contained about 2 percent of maple syrup value.



## **Making the Grade: Why the Cheapest Maple Syrup Tastes Best**

*Excerpt from an article in the November issue of The Atlantic.*

The market for maple syrup offers an odd inversion. The thin, pale fluid labeled Fancy or Grade A Light Amber commands the highest prices. It is the white bread of condiments, an inoffensive accompaniment to more flavorful fare. The robust, thick syrup marked Grade B fairly bursts with maple flavor, but sells at a significant discount. So why does the nominally inferior grade offer decidedly superior flavor? The answer lies in the history of maple syrup, a product that has long served as a symbol of American authenticity. As our sense of American identity has evolved, our syrup labels have not always kept pace.

Early European settlers learned the art of sugaring from the native peoples of North America, who first tapped the maple trees, boiling their sap down to make a sweetener. The sap that runs at the beginning of the season, with the spring thaw, is sweet and clear. Twenty or thirty gallons, boiled down, will yield a gallon of light amber syrup. As the season extends, the sap thins out and grows watery. More of it must be boiled down to yield a syrup of equal sweetness. The last of the sap may yield only a sixtieth of its weight in syrup. Concentrating the sugar also concentrates all the other substances in the sap, making late-season syrup also darker, thicker, and more flavorful.

The colonists, though, were less interested in liquid syrup than in granular sugar. The pure, white, crystallized product of sugar cane was still an expensive luxury, imported from plantations in the West Indies. Maple sugar offered an accessible and affordable substitute. These colonists, out on the imperial periphery, wanted to demonstrate that their fledgling society was just as sophisticated and elegant as that of the metropole. They took the concentrated maple sap and poured it into conical molds, refining it into white sugar-loaves like those produced in Britain from cane syrup. Maple sugar, a distinctively American product, was touted as the equal of the sugar served in the most elegant Old World salons. The clearest syrups and whitest sugars, which betrayed the least hint of their rustic origins, commanded premium prices.

After the Revolution, Americans looked at the maple tree in a new light. To the eminent Philadelphia patriot and physician Benjamin Rush, maple sugar seemed perfectly tailored to the new republic. Here was a commodity that could compete in a global market, bolstering the independence of yeoman farmers, and

demonstrating the superiority of free labor. It tapped an abundant resource, required only a small amount of labor, and used supplies most farmers already owned. Best of all, it would destroy the market for Caribbean sugar cane, produced by slaves laboring in horrifying conditions. Rush set down his reflections in the form of a letter to his friend Thomas Jefferson, which he presented publicly in 1791.

*Read the rest of this great article about maple history and the new grading standards at <http://bit.ly/vJBB86>*



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