NATIONAL MAPLE SYRUP DIGEST

Vol. 11, No. 2

July, 1972

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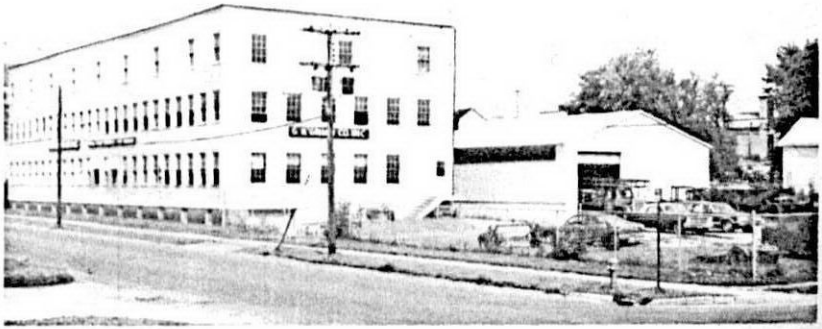

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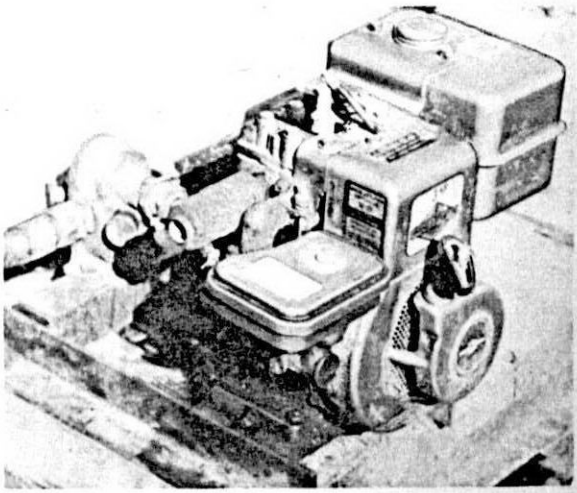

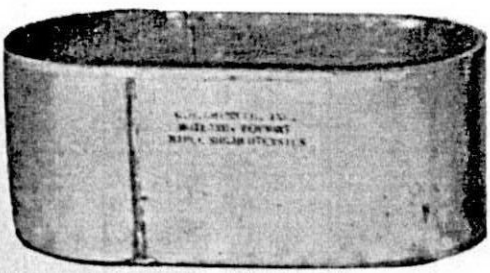

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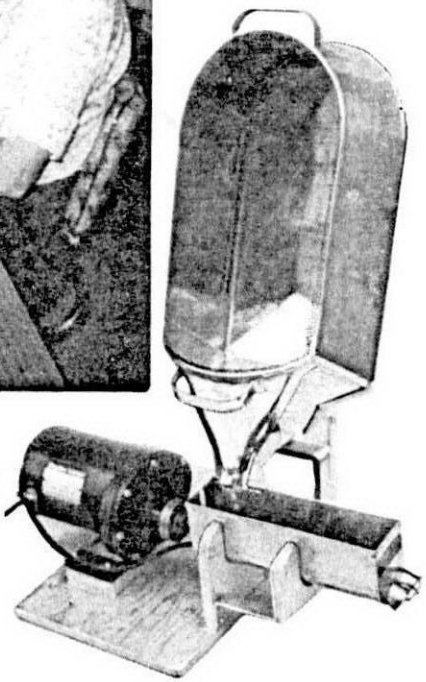

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COVER PICTURE

First series evaporator?
Could be. This picture has been in our files for several years without identification. Any information on who took it or where it was taken will be appreciated.

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Editorial

After spending 28 years in the maple business, which is a short time compared to many producers who have been at it all their lives, a question was put to me several times this season that I hadn't been confronted with before. It was another odd-ball which reminded me of many other incidents which have probably been faced by other producers at one time or another, and merely brings out the fact that the general public has been grossly uneducated, misinformed, or just merely the victim of malicious rumors.

The question, which was asked several times by individual customers or retailers during the first two weeks of March, was either "You'll be tapping pretty soon, won't you" or "How is your tapping coming?" to which I truthfully replied, "We're about through" or "We're all through" depending on the date of the question since we finished tapping about March 7th and were sitting around waiting for mother nature to cooperate with appropriate weather conditions.

Then they hit me with a curve: "Oh, you're all through? What kind of a season did you have?" I guess they thought "tapping" was the process of gathering the sap and making syrup. After the seventh or eighth time it happened, I was about ready to apply for a reservation at the funny farm but reconsidered when I remembered a few other episodes that occurred prior to this. I decided to put them all together in an article that might have some human interest but be of no other value whatsoever.

A few years ago, at the New York State Fair, a woman approached Leon Whight, who is a director and Past President of the N.Y. State Maple Producers Association, and wanted to buy some maple syrup. During the discussion that ensued about how syrup was made, Leon made the remark that the sap had to be boiled to a certain density, whereupon the woman replied that she would buy her syrup elsewhere. She didn't want boiled syrup, she only bought syrup that was evaporated!

This business of "first run" maple syrup has bugged me for years, and I've decided that most folks who use that term when asking for syrup haven't the faintest idea of what they're talking about.

Back when sap was boiled in kettles or big, flat pans, I assume the farmers were anxious to get the syrup when they started boiling, so they syruped off the first night and maybe the second and third. But after a few days the novelty had worn off, so to make it easier they still syruped-off daily, but only on Thursdays. Of course, after a week of boiling, the resulting product was a black, sticky mess that faintly resembled maple syrup. With this procedure, the first "run" was probably the best; maybe the first two or three were all the same and were still called "first run" syrup. As equipment and methods improved over the years, producers have learned how to maintain "first run" quality almost the entire season and all this syrup is classed as "first run" by the producer. However, I think most consumers think "first run" means "the" first run of the season.

Now how can very many people buy "the" first run syrup when the first run doesn't usually amount to

much? Anyway, to prove they don't know what they're talking about, I've had many ask for first run dark amber maple syrup. When one customer asked for first run syrup, I asked if he wanted Light Amber Grade and he said no, he wanted dark syrup. He didn't want syrup made late in the season after it had lost all its flavor. My wife had a customer this year who asked if we still had any first run syrup left. She said "Sure, which grade would you like, light amber or medium amber?" Without hesitation he replied, "I'll take the medium amber." I've also had customers who admitted they didn't know what "first run" meant. The only reason they asked for it was because someone told them to.

If I had my way, the term "first run" should be stricken from the English language and the next one who used it should be hung up by his toes --that is, if you could get his feet out of his mouth.

Then there was the time a customer wanted dark amber syrup instead of light amber. Said she wanted some we hadn't put so much water in.

I've also been accused of putting glass in it. One customer said he found a large chunk of glass in a quart can. I tried to explain that the syrup was a little too thick and it was a large sugar crystal that grew in the syrup. He was positive it was glass, so I asked him if he had tasted it to see if it was sweet. He said, "How could I taste it? I couldn't even get it out of the can." So I asked him, "Then how do you think I got it in the can?"

The names applied to some maple products have always been a bit confusing, but not nearly as much as some consumers would like to make them. Maple Cream, a term we're accustomed to in New York, is called Maple Butter in much of the country and, as far as I know, is the same product. Many customers have come to our place and wanted to buy this product by asking for "Soft Sugar" which, I believe is a sloppy mixture of dark syrup and grainy maple sugar. Some ask for "Honey Butter" and one I remember asked me if we had any "Chocolate Flavored Honey Butter."

I could go on and on, but if you're not asleep by now you soon will be, so I'll cut out. But before next spring, I'm going to take out my Maple Syrup Manual and bone up on some of the terms used and misused in this crazy business. Then, come sap time, I'll don my straight jacket, insert my ear plugs and be ready for the onslaught.

WOMEN'S LIB

by Linda Clark, Delhi, N.Y. 13753

Women's Lib has come to the Delaware - Schoharie Maple School. At the end of January 1972 Maple School in Delhi, New York (Delaware County), thirteen women found an unused corner of the large Grange Hall and talked about their 'end' of the maple business.

One big topic was promotion, according to Linda Clark, Extension Home Economist. The ladies realize that at times there is no syrup available to sell, much less promote. But - the other end of the story might be that with promotion, and scarcity, the maple business may look bright enough for some new producers or suppliers to join in. And, we do want to promote syrup as a wholesome, delicious food.

Some ideas shared:

. Collect folklore of maple and make it available for each producer to use during tours and in written promotional materials.

. Produce a newsletter that would handle problems, share "household type" hints and help producers communicate with each other.

. Compile a directory of maple producers in the Delaware-Schoharie area.

. Produce an idea book with recipes and hints for using syrup for the public.

The women in attendance at this meeting on January 5 plan to meet each year during the afternoon of the maple school day to share ideas and plan promotion of maple. Four ladies will be working to guide the group and will meet with Mrs. Linda Clark, Extension Agent, prior to the 1973 Maple School. These four are: Mrs. Richard Finch, Mrs. Dorothy Clark, Mrs. Walter Hoyt, and Mrs. August Andersen.

1972 MAPLE SYRUP REPORT

State	Syrup Made		
	1970	1971	1972
	1,000 gallons		
New York	332	305	340
Maine	10	8	8
New Hampshire	51	38	50
Vermont	305	240	340
Massachusetts	32	25	28
Pennsylvania	94	94	96
Ohio	92	110	95
Michigan	94	86	83
Wisconsin	100	56	60

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RECEIVES AWARD

Maxson Neal, president of the New York State Maple Producers Assoc. is shown above, left, presenting a plaque on behalf of the association to Neal Handy, Lewis County Extension Service Agent, at the maple school held in Lowville last winter. The plaque is inscribed: "To Cornelius F. Handy, in appreciation of many years of sincere devotion and service to the maple industry, from the New York State Maple Producers Association."

—Photo from Alex Dickson

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3rd stop - Sugar Bush at Kemptville College of Agricultural Technology.

4th stop - Kemptville College Residence. Accommodation $3.50 per person (limited to first 150). Banquet $3.00 per person. Evening program.

Saturday, July 22, 1972

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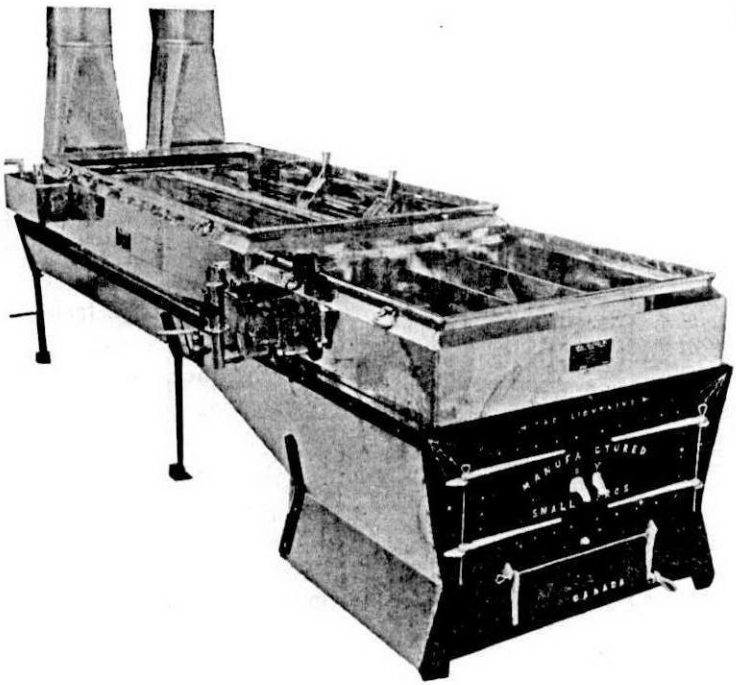

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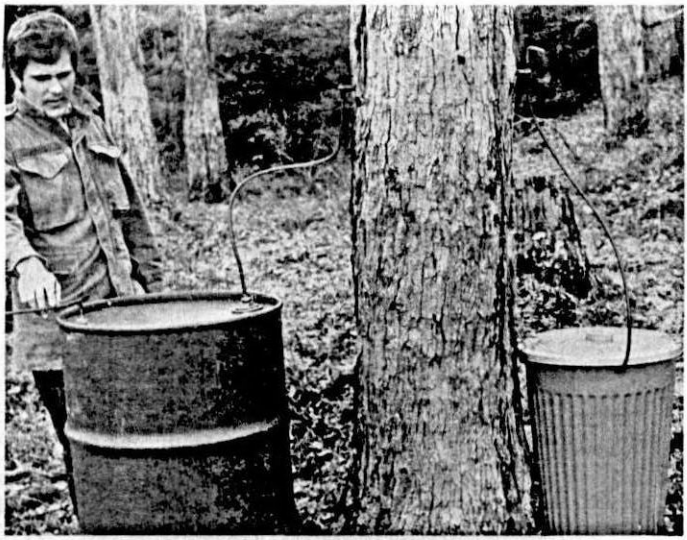


Figure 1. – Sap volume yields for each vacuum taphole were collected in a sealed 55-gallon drum. A 20-gallon plastic container was used for collecting sap from the gravity tapholes.

by
H. Clay Smith and Albert G. Snow, Jr.
Northeastern Forest Experiment Station
Forest Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture
Burlington, Vermont

In recent years, vacuum pumping has been very successful for collecting sugar maple sap in the spring. The question arises: Would it be practical to use vacuum pumping to collect sap in the fall?

Collecting sap from sugar maple trees is normally limited to late winter and early spring–February to April. Sugaring during the fall is not usually recommended, because sap is only about 2/3 as sweet then as it is during the spring season. Sap volumes during the fall season are low, usually less than 1/3 of the expected spring volumes.

THE STUDY

Sap was collected during the fall season in both 1968 and 1969. The test trees were tapped by November 1 in both years. Two tapholes were drilled in each tree, to a wood depth of 3 inches. A 250-milligram paraformaldehyde pellet was placed in each taphole.

On each tree, one taphole–selected at random–was rigged for vacuum pumping, the other for gravity flow. A recirculating jet-type vacuum pump was used for the vacuum pumping, and a vacuum of 12 to 14 inches of mercury was maintained consistently at the tapholes.

Sap from each taphole was collected in separate containers (fig. 1). We also measured sap sweetness, using a sugar refractometer. Sugar readings were recorded four times each season.

RESULTS

Using a vacuum pump to collect sap during the fall season in north central

Vermont was not promising. We were able to collect less than 1 gallon of sap per taphole in the 1968 season, and none at all in the 1969 season. Weather conditions were the main reason for these poor results. Only once during the 1968 fall season were conditions ideal for a sap flow.

Average sap-sugar readings for the fall season were low, as expected. Sap from both gravity and vacuum tapholes averaged about 2.2 percent sugar. Vacuum pumping did not influence the sap-sugar concentration.

CONCLUSIONS

Caution is advised for the sugarmaker who is interested in fall sugaring operations. We suggest a trial installation on a small-scale basis. This will allow the sugar producer to determine if the average fall weather conditions in his locality are suitable for fall pumping.

The sugarmaker should also realize that fall tapping is more of a marginal operation than spring tapping. Sap sweetness is lower in the fall, total sap volume is less, and fall tapping may reduce the potential spring sap yields. Also, drilling tapholes in both fall and spring may lead to taphole-spacing problems.

Although we urge caution in tapping during the fall season, some producers in the southern portion of the maple region may find favorable conditions for sugaring in November, December, or January. However, most producers in the northern portion of the sugar maple region cannot depend on consistent sap flows during the fall season.

For additional information, see "Sap yields from fall and spring tapping of sugar maple", by Melvin R. Koelling (USDA Forest Service Research Paper NE–115, 1968); and "Maple sugaring with vacuum pumping during the fall season." by H. Clay Smith and Albert G. Snow, Jr. (USDA Forest Service Research Note NE–134, 1971). Both were published by the Northeastern Forest Experiment Station, 6816 Market Street, Upper Darby, Pa.

FALL TAPPING

by

Russell S. Walters and H. Clay Smith
Northeastern Forect Experiment Station
Forest Service, U. S. Department of Agric.
Burlington, Vermont

Occasionally sugarmakers ask questions about tapping sugar maple trees during the fall season--in November and December. Is it profitable? Is it practical? We have done some research on fall tapping; and in general we do not recommend it.

Koelling reported in 1968 that the sap volume yields from fall-tapped trees were about one-third of the yields when the trees were tapped in the spring. His data showed that the sap-sugar concentration readings were about two-thirds as sweet in the fall as in the spring.

Koelling used the same trees for both fall and spring tapping. Tapholes were reamed in February. Another phase of Koelling's work also involved drilling tapholes in the fall and redrilling new tapholes in the same trees for the spring tapping season. Conclusions from both types of tapholes were similar.

Since this earlier research, we have conducted another study in which trees were tapped in the fall and spring seasons. New tapholes were drilled for each season. Results of this second study strongly support Koelling's conclusions about sap-sugar. However, because of weather conditions, the sap volume yields did not follow the exact same trend as reported by Koelling, although in both instances the sap volumes were low.

THE RESEARCH

Sixteen trees were tapped for this study. Each tree had two tapholes, drilled to a wood depth of 3 inches, using a gasoline-powered tapper. A paraformaldehyde pellet was inserted into each taphole.

The tapping for the fall season was done on November 1, and sap was collected from November 1 to December 31. In mid-February these fall tapholes were plugged, and two new tapholes were drilled in the same trees. Spring sap volumes were measured from February 15 to April 15. Sap volumes were collected from each taphole in individual containers (fig. 1).

RESULTS

The sugar-content readings for the sap measured during the fall tapping season were approximately two-thirds of sugar-content readings taken in the spring. This result strongly supports Koelling's earlier finding.

However,for the fall season, we col-

lected only about 15 percent as much sap volume as compared to the amount of sap collected in the spring. For the fall, Koelling reported collecting about 33 percent of the total sap volume that was collected in the spring.

This volume difference was probably due to weather condtitions. These conditions influenced the amount of sap that we collected because the fall sap season was very short. Once the fall cold weather arrived, the temperature seldom rose above freezing for any length of time until the spring.

Sap volumes for each tree were determined by adding the yields from both tapholes. The average per-tree volume collected in the fall was 3.76 gallons, whereas the spring average was 24.84 gallons per tree. The sap-sugar readings for each taphole on the same tree were also totaled, and one seasonal average value was determined for each tree. These were 2.2 percent for the fall and 3.6 for the spring.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The sap volume yields measured during fall tapping in north-central Vermont were strongly influenced by weather conditions. Sap volume yields were limited because of long periods of freezing temperatures. Therefore collecting enough sap during the fall season to make the sugaring practical and profitable is risky and uncertain.

Further, drilling new tapholes in trees during both the spring and fall seasons can lead to taphole-spacing problems. Thus tapping trees in the fall must be profitalbe, or the producer will sacrifice good spring sap-producing wood.

Using our present information, we do not recommend the fall season as a practical or dependable time of the year to collect sap.

However, in certain localities, weather patterns may be ideal for fall tapping, particularly those areas with a mild fall climate. In questionable locales, we suggest testing sap-sugar and volume yields on a small-scale basis before installing a full-scale sugaring operation. Observing fall weather patterns would also be helpful in deciding whether or not fall sugaring could be successful in your local area.

From the resluts of this study and Koelling's information, we suggest that fall sap-sugar concentrations can be used as an indicator of sap sweetness during the spring season. Fall sap-sugars will be approximately two-thirds as sweet as from the same tree in the spring. Also, fall sap-sugar measurements will indicate a tree's sweetness relative to its neighbors. This can be used as an aid in tree selection for sugarbush thinning.

If fall tapping is done, we recommend at least three sap-sugar readings per taphole or tree to provide a good average sap-sugar reading. These readings should be made by using a refractometer on separate days during the sap-flow period.

REFERENCE

Koelling, Melvin R.
1968. Sap yeilds from fall and spring tapping of sugar maple. USDA Forest Serv. Res. Paper NE-115. 8 p. NE. Forest Exp. Sta., Upper Darby, Pa.

FIGURE LEGEND

Figure 1. – An experiment in fall tapping. The same trees produced an average of 3.8 gallons in the fall versus 24.8 gallons in the spring.

TAPPING A RESOURCE

Plastic bags are now used to collect the maple sap, otherwise the art of tapping sugar maples remains the same.

Central Minnesota's invigorating climate is ideal for making maple sap flow. Twelve years ago, Roman Klisch knew this but knew little else about maple syrup production. Today, Klisch is recognized as one of the best maple syrup producers in Minnesota.

Klisch has seeded down his 180-acre farm on the banks of Two Rivers Creek in Morrison County and concentrates his time and effort on a south 40 that has a beautiful stand of sugar maple.

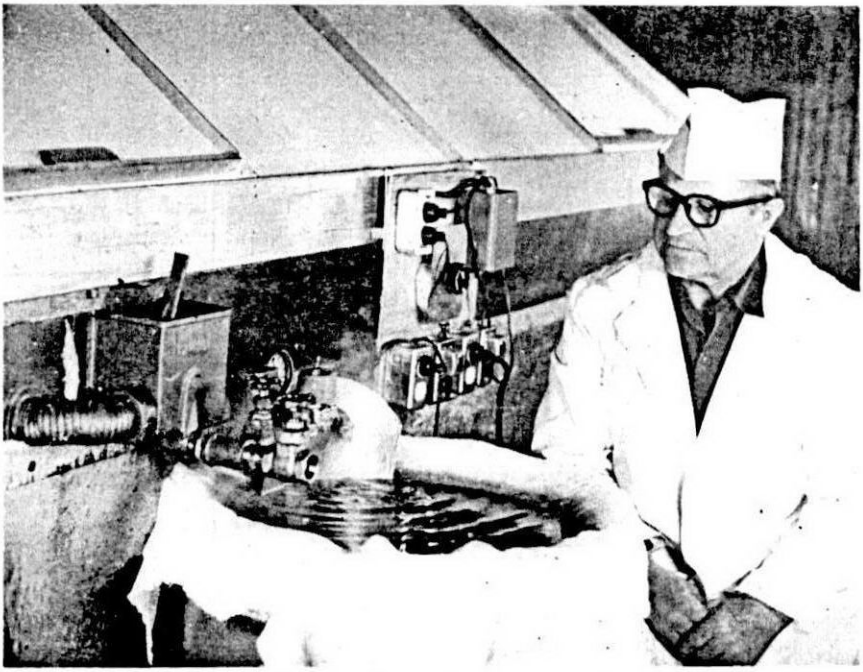
"I logged the first 20 acres of this sugar bush in 1930 and the other 20 acres in 1935, selecting several thousand board feet of basswood, oak, and elm and leaving the sugar maple," said Klisch. "It wasn't until 12 years ago that I started thinking about tapping the maples."

Klisch and two of his sons first cleared brush, cut down snags and cull trees, and opened up a few trails. "Next," said Klisch, "we had to get an evaporator and learn how to cook sap."

From 1963 to 1966, Klisch spent many hours learning about maple syrup production. He drove many miles to attend meetings and to visit producers in Minnesota and Wisconsin. "I learned a lot, but I still have plenty to learn," confesses Klisch. The Soil Conservation Service and Marv Smith and Bill

WITH A SWEET RETURN

by Russell V. Jongewaard
District conservationist, SCS
Little Falls, Minnesota



From tree to evaporator, Roman Klisch filters the maple sap seven times. Here he awaits a run of maple syrup from his evaporator.

Miles, Extension Service foresters at the University of Minnesota, gave encouragement.

In 1966, Klisch purchased an evaporator from a defunct operation on the North Shore of Lake Superior. The 6- by 18-foot copper evaporator was modified and converted from wood burning to oil burning and installed in a new 30- by 40-foot building. The evaporator, fired by three oil burners that use 24 gallons of fuel per hour, is automatically controlled and when going full blast cooks 400 to 600 gallons of sap per hour.

Freshly collected sap is stored in two 6,000-gallon glass-lined storage tanks inside the sugar house; from there it is pumped automatically to an overhead tank that feeds by gravity directly into the evaporator. From tree to evaporator, the sap is filtered seven times. The glass-lined storage tanks are equipped with ultra-violet lights to keep down the bacteria count.

"The first sap started boiling through the evaporator on April 6, 1967. We cooked down 40 gallons of sap for 1 gallon of syrup," Klisch said. "My son Joe was foreman of the woods crew. He had about 10 of his high-school buddies in the

woods every day collecting sap from 3,000 taps. All of our sap is collected in specially made heavy-duty plastic bags and hauled in a mobile tank to a central collection tank. From there the crystal clear raw sap is pumped into a 1,500-gallon stainless steel tank on a truck and hauled a mile to the evaporator," Klisch stated.

Mrs. Klisch and Mary, one of the 12 Klisch children, operate the finishing pan in the sugar house. This final process gives the syrup a perfect density of 66.5. The maple syrup is collected and stored in 5-gallon cans until it is bottled and sold. Some finds its way to local residents, and the remainder is sold in bulk to wholesalers.

The 40 acres of sugar maple was divided into 62 plots in 1966. Each plot is now numbered so trees can be located for an accurate study of production. Each tree is also pinpointed on a map and its diameter recorded for a detailed inventory. The map will also be used to design a central collecting system, using plastic tubing.

Roman Klisch is a cooperator with the Morrison County Soil and Water Conservation District. He is an ardent conservationist and influential booster of district programs. He states that the secret to the success of his sugar bush is the natural forest floor in his woods that has never been grazed or abused. ♦

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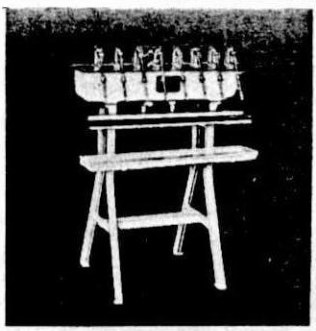

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WHY THE TARIFF FAILED

by Paul E. Sendak, Research Forester
Northeastern Forest Experiment Sta.
Forest Service, U.S. Department of Agr.
Burlington, Vermont

The U. S. tariff on imported maple syrup was ended on January 1. How will this affect the U.S. maple syrup industry? Not much.

Tariffs are imposed on imports to protect home industry from foreign competition. The U.S. maple syrup tariff, first levied in 1909 on imports of Canadian maple products, was designed to remove the difference in cost of maple syrup production between the two countries.

A Tariff protects the home industry by causing the imported goods to have a higher price in the market. The tariff will normally have three other important effects:

- The higher price for the product can cause a decrease in product consumption in the home market.
- This increase in price of goods goes to the home industry as increased profit.
- The government receives increased revenues from the tax on imports.

The many side-effects of the tariff have caused the Government to abandon it in favor of more direct and fair alternatives. As a result of the Kennedy Rounds of tariff negotiations, the U.S. maple tariff was removed in 1972. By taking the lead in tariff reduction, the United States has encouraged worldwide tariff reduction.

The tariff on maple syrup was a specific tariff; that is, a fixed amount was levied per pound of sugar or syrup. From 1925 to 1971, sugar and syrup imports were taxed as follows:

Maple Syrup	Tariff (Cents/pound)
1925 - 1943	4.0
1944 - 1947	2.0
1948 - 1967	1.5
1968	1.2
1969	.9
1970	.6
1971	.3
Maple Sugar	
1925 - 1930	4.0
1931 - 1935	6.0
1936 - 1944	4.0
1945 - 1947	3.0
1948 - 1967	2.0
1968	1.6
1969	1.2
1970	.8
1971	.4

CANADIAN IMPORTS 56 PERCENT of U. S. CONSUMPTION

Maple syrup production in the United States has declined steadily since peak production of 6.6 million gallons in 1860. Production has averaged almost 2 million gallons per year since 1925. Production for the past decade

has averaged 1.3 million gallons annualy.

Maple syrup imports from Canada have been recorded since 1916. Imports have been a significant part of the total U.S. supply of maple products since 1925, when Canadian imports into the Untied States were 13 percent of the total U. S. supply. Today, Canadian maple syrup imports account for over 56 percent of the total U.S. supply (fig. 1).

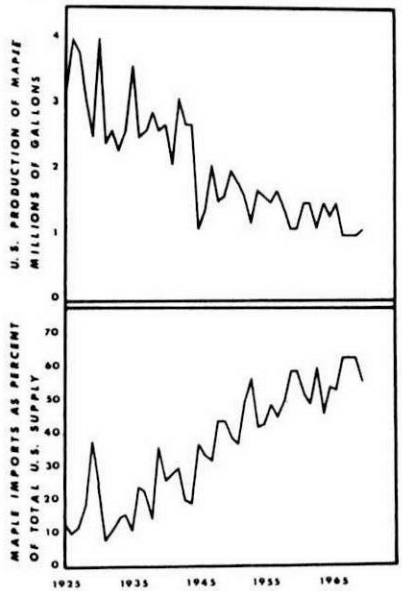

Figure 1. – Trends in maple production and imports in the U.S. from 1925 to 1970.

IMPORTS COMPETE in the BULK MARKET

Pure maple syrup is marketed in three ways: retail in consumer packages, wholesale in consumer packages, and wholesale in bulk to manufacturers. Most of the commercial-grade syrup and any surplus high-grade syrup is sold in the bulk syrup market, while most of the table-grade syrup is sold in smaller packages to consumers.

VERMONT MAPLERAMA – 1972
August 4th - 5th – Bennington, Vt.

Vermont's Maplerama will have a new face this year. Rather than jumping from sugar house to sugar house, we plan to concentrate on the results of Maple Research which has been done over the years at the University of Vermont and the Forest Service Maple Research Lab in Burlington. We'll have the research men out to tell us and show us what they have been working on. We will divide into groups and cover pipelines, washing pipelines, use of pills in tapholes, pumps and insects. We will also take a trip through the State Fish Hatchery. The second day will be on maple marketing, with help from the people at UVM and the maple laboratory. There will be some traveling to observe marketing.

For a program and details on meals and housing, write to John Page, County Agent, Box 559 - Bennington, Vermont 05201.

Noon meals will be box lunches, breakfast on your own. Banquet in the evening. Lodging in motels or campgrounds and reservations will be required. You can request info on lodging and make your own reservations and I'd recommend you do so prior to coming.

It is believed that imported maple syrup competes mainly in the drum and bulk syrup market, for most of this syrup is used to make cane-and-maple blended table syrups. Canadian table-grade syrup is also packaged in consumer containers for competition with domestic syrup in the consumer container market. However, what hap-

pens to imported maple syrup is unknown because information about grade and distribution of Canadian syrup in the Untied States has never been compiled.

DID THE TARIFF WORK?

Maple syrup supply is tied to sap production. Sap production is roughly fixed each year by the number of trees tapped and by the weather. Good weather sets supply at a high level: bad weather sets supply at a low level.

Once the short sugaring season is over, the maple syrup supply is fixed for the year. The quantity of maple available cannot be increased no matter what the market price may be. Should the domestic crop be extremely poor and the market price begins to rise, Canadian sellers might be encouraged to sell more in the U.S. market, thus causing a slight increase in supply.

It was stated earlier that the protection offered by a tariff comes in the form of a higher price for the product. But the quantity of maple offered on the market in any one year is influenced very little by the price. Any increase in price, including that increase caused by a tariff, will have little effect on home production. Therefore the potential protective effect of the maple tariff was small.

A tariff works like an increased cost to foreign producers. Thus the actual burden of the maple tariff can be expressed as a percentage of the total value of the product (fig. 2). From 1925 to 1945 the tariff averaged 33 percent of the value of maple syrup. From 1946 to 1970 the tariff averaged less than 5½ percent of the value of syrup and less than 5 percent of the value of sugar.

There is no doubt that the tariff

VERMONT MAPLERAMA – 1972

To be held in Bennington, Vermont – August 4th and 5th Starts at noon, August 4th, at Mount Anthony Union High School, Bennington, Vt.

PROGRAM – AUGUST 4TH

Field Demonstrations of Pipelines, pumping, washing pipelines, the pill, maple insects, and a trip through a fish hatchery. These sessions will be put on by the maple research people at the University of Vermont and the U. S. Forest Service Maple Research Station.

Banquet and entertainment and demonstrations in the evening at Mount Anthony Country Club.

– AUGUST 5TH

Trip to Wilmington and Jacksonville, Vt. by car where we will concentrate on maple marketing.

Write to John C. Page, County Agent, Box 559, Bennington, Vt. for program, details on meal and lodging reservations, campgrounds and other info. Telephone 802-447-7582 between 8 am - 4:30 pm Monday – Friday.

had a protective effect when it reached levels of 40 to 70 percent of the value of the product. However, since World War II, the tariff has been at such a low level that it has had no significant effect on imports.

Just how the maple tariff alone has affected imports is difficult to measure. The factors that determine the amount of maple syrup imports are much like the legs of a centipede. If enough legs get going in the same direction, the insect will move. The tariff is like one leg. Other important factors are changes in the supply of and demand for maple syrup, in maple syrup prices, and in all other prices in the United States and Canada. If enough of these "legs" are moving in the same direction, the

amount of maple syrup imports will change.

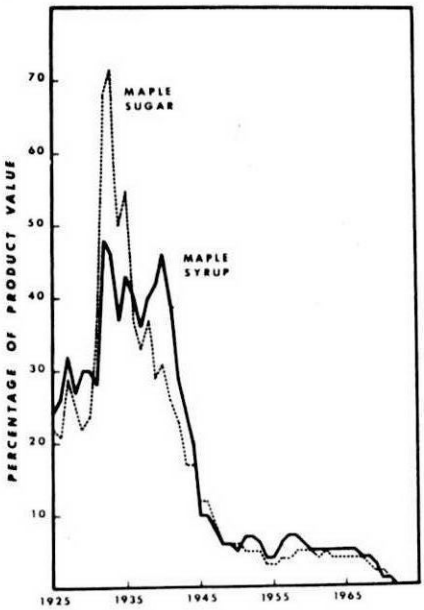

Figure 2. – Maple Syrup and Sugar Tariff expressed as a percentage of the value of the product.

THE MAPLE INDUSTRY WITHOUT TARIFFS

But what of the U.S. maple industry now that the tariff has been ended? The economist Adam Smith wrote in the 18th century, "Every such regulation (of such foreign trade) introduces some degree of real disorder into the constitution of the state, which it will be difficult afterwards to cure without occasioning another disorder."

Usually a protected industry will be injured when the tariff is removed, because of the protective effect of the tariff.

From a study of the tariff, I have concluded that the protective effect of the maple tariff was insignificant, and ending the tariff will do little, if any, harm to the U.S. maple syrup industry.

THE VANISHING AMERICAN 1972 STYLE

by Gordon Brookman

I well remember the first movie I saw in my life. It was "The Vanishing American" portraying the American Indian and his plight. I was only a small boy, so it must have been 50 years ago.

This spring I tried to do a good job making syrup from my syrup bush. Weather was cold, labor was available on cold days, but when the sap ran and you really needed them, they had to go somewhere and we were left short-handed. What has become of the rugged individuals who used to brag about how much work they could do in all kinds of weather? If they told you they would help you, they would come hell or high water. Now they only want to work when they can't find anything else to do.

When I was buying syrup for the Farm Bureau Marketing Association, I met a real American. He was over 70 years old. He and his wife had always run a farm and, with a little day help, had made and marketed over 300 gallons of syrup and hoped to make more next year. I asked him what he thought of retiring and social security and he said, "Only the Lord will retire me, and who needs Social Security if he is able to work?"

These are the kind of people who made America great and helped give us all the luxuries we have today. Are they the Vanishing Americans?

1972 proved to be the most challenging year of maple marketing in my experience. We came out with what producers had always asked for: a guaranteed minimum price before season which was at least equal to last year's price. We hoped to encourage production by getting new producers or re-activating some who had stopped. We got hardly no response, but I'm sure it helped the industry. Prices went up from 5 to 10 cents a pound and there was good demand. Syrup moved in every direction, but there still wasn't enough to supply all the markets.

Well, I told you so. In one of the first articles I wrote I said if we didn't

COMING EVENTS

Ontario Maple Tour
July 21 – 22
Delta, Ontario

Vermont Maplerama
August 4 – 5
Bennington, Vt.

New York Maple Tour
August 14 – 15
Allegany County

Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association
October 13 – 14

Pennsylvania Maple Tour
October 13 – 14

National Maple Syrup Council
October 16 – 17
Mt. Snow, Vt.

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Berkshire Pioneer Maple Producers Coop. Russell Davenport, Shelburne Falls, Mass. 01370	(413) 625-2866
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Ken Proctor 51 South Main St., Rutland, Vt. 05701	(802) 773-7843
Vermont Sugar House Exit No. 3, I. 81, South Royalton, Vt. 05068	(802) 763-8809
Stuart Newton R.D. No. 2, St. Albans, Vt. 05478	(802) 524-5620
Justus "Dutch" Asthalter Neversink, N.Y., P.O. Parksville, N.Y. 12768	(914) 292-8569
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Reynold's Sugar Bush Inc., Aniwa, Wisconsin 54408	(715) 449-2057

advance the prices along with inflation we wouldn't have any syrup to market and it's true. We have to continue to raise prices as long as our legislators continue to raise the minimum wage and taxes. Weather, man's ingenuity, costs and supply and demand all affect the price of maple syrup.

We've got to work together to see that the maple producer doesn't become a vanishing American. If we do all we can to promote, produce and market a quantity sufficient to supply our customers, they will pay us a fair price for it if we ask it and work together to get it.

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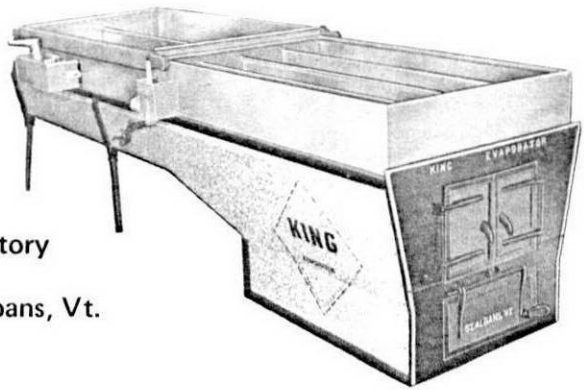

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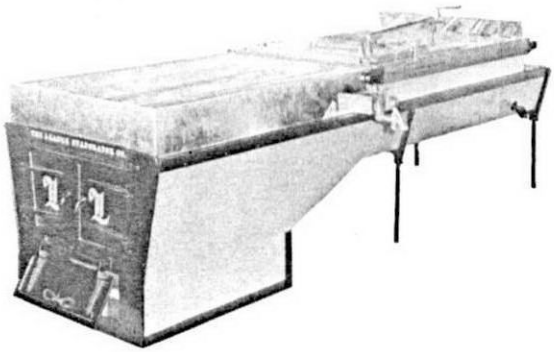

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