

NATIONAL MAPLE SYRUP DIGEST NATIONAL



Vol. 11, No. 4

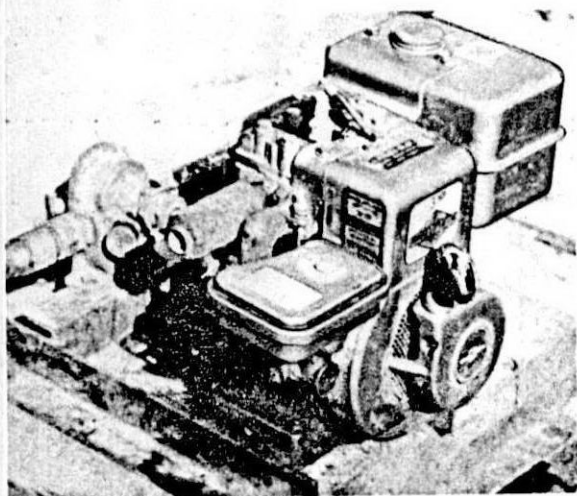
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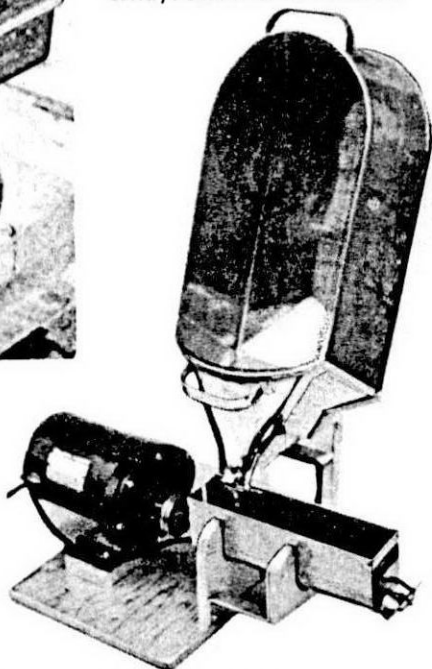
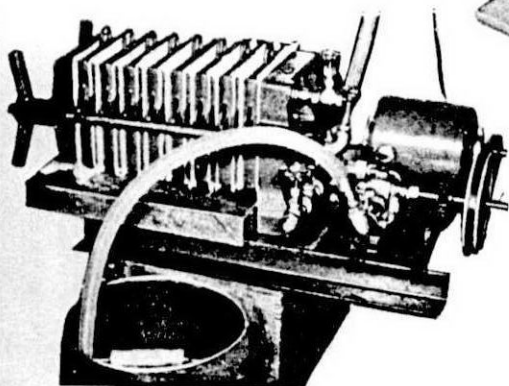
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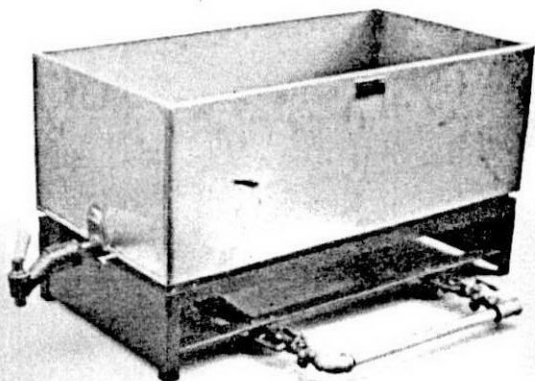


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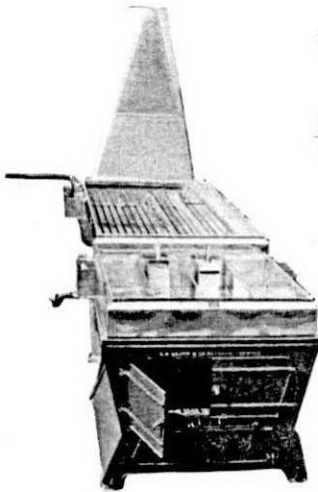
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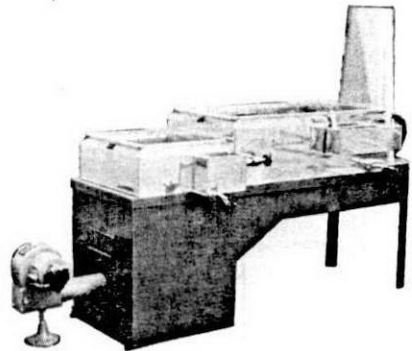


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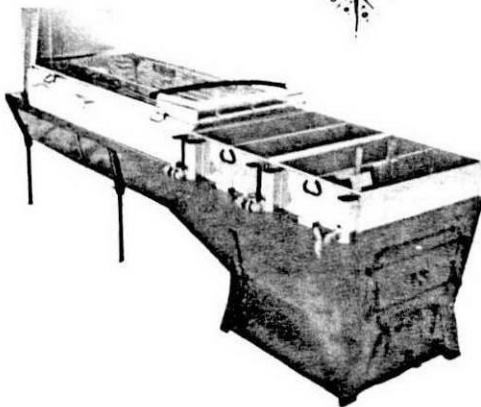
EVAPORATORS



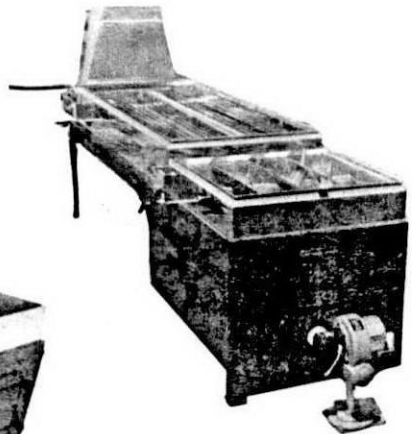
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NATIONAL MAPLE SYRUP DIGEST

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COVER PICTURE

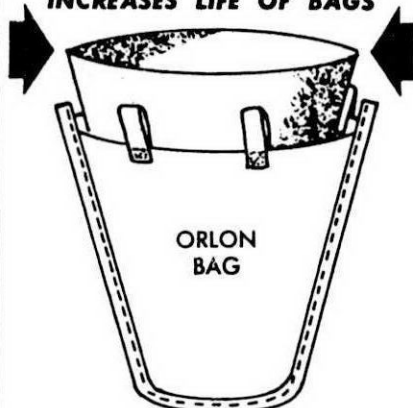
Snowmobiles are used extensively for work as well as play; this picture taken in central New York. For a new twist in the sugar bush, see Lin Lesure's article on page 6 of this issue.

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Editorial

According to the amount of material I've sent to the printer, I don't think there will be much room for an editorial in this issue so I'll cut it short. There are a couple of items I would like to bring to your attention.

A new law, which I believe is part of the Federal pure food laws, has just been approved in New York State and possibly some other states. It goes into effect January 1st, 1973, and requires licensing of all maple syrup producing plants. An article explaining it more fully immediately follows this editorial.

Also, several readers have expressed their interest in a "how to do it" column which we ran a couple of times a year or two ago. They would like it continued, which I would be very happy to do except for one reason. I haven't had any good ideas since then, and no one has sent me any. You really can't expect me to think up all the helpful hints myself, so if you have any bits of homemade equipment or a unique way of doing some of the many chores connected with making or marketing maple products, how about sharing them with your fellow man?

And while you're at it, get your wife involved. I'd be very happy to print a women's page if I had the material to print.

And now, to not waste any more space, I'll wish you all a very Merry Christmas and hope the new year brings everyone a bumper crop.



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IMPORTANT NOTICE TO NEW YORK STATE PRODUCERS

The following is a section taken from an act passed by the New York State Legislature to take effect January 1, 1973.

ARTICLE 20-C

LICENSING OF FOOD PROCESSING ESTABLISHMENTS

Section 251-z-3 Licenses; fees. No person shall maintain or operate a food processing establishment unless licensed by the commissioner. Application for an annual license to operate a food processing plant, upon a form prescribed by the commissioner, shall be made on or before January fifteenth in each year for the license year beginning February fifteenth following. The applicant shall satisfy the commissioner of his character, experience and competency, that his establishment has adequate facilities and equipment for the business to be conducted, and that the establishment is such that the cleanliness of the premises can be maintained and that the product produced therein will not become adulterated. The commissioner, if so satisfied, shall upon payment of the license fee of twenty dollars, issue to the applicant a license to operate the food processing establishment described in the application until the fifteenth day of February next following.

Since the above section includes all "food processing establishments" it

automatically includes all maple syrup producers who make any maple products for sale (producers who make syrup only for their own home use are exempt). All New York State producers should obtain an application form for a Food Processing License by writing to:


N. Y. State Dept. of Agric. & Mkts.
 Division of Food Control
 Bldg. 8, State Campus
 Albany, New York 12226

This must be done in time to file the application with the commissioner by January 15th, 1973. If you desire, you may obtain a complete copy of the act by writing to the same address. Ask for Article 20-C, Licensing of Food Processing Establishments.






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SNOWMOBILES

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PROBLEM



by Lin Lesure
 Ashfield, Mass.

Snowmobiles have been used for recreation in the sugar orchard. They have been used for setting out tubes, for inspection of lines, for setting out buckets and tapping trees, but this year our snowmobiles went all the way and gathered the sap.

Fifty-three inches of snow on the ground made walking about most difficult. 480 taps on quite level land with trees not growing very close together made a real problem. Our answer was to mount 30 Gal. syrup drums on runners and replace end bung with large unloading pipe. A second pipe welded to a fill bucket and we had a gathering tub that could be handled by any medium sized snowmobile.

We were surprised at the low costs of gathering. We were careful not to try to draw full loads up hills, and to work as much as possible in the morning before snow had begun to soften. We took care to have a good arrangement for fast unloading and our costs were somewhat lower than conventional gathering on the highway with standard equipment.





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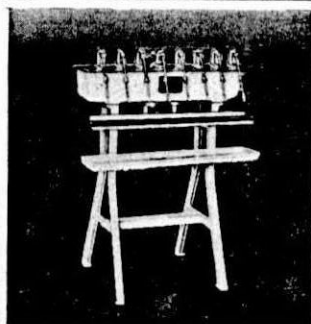
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MAPLE PRODUCTION



1972

The following reports were given by each state's delegate at the thirteenth annual meeting of the National Maple Syrup Council held at Mt. Snow, Vermont, October 16 & 17, 1972.

MAINE — Ted Harding

The 1972 maple season was below average in Maine. The snow was deep at the start of the season and it got deeper all the way through, so that we were still on snow shoes when the trees went buddy. There was one phenomenal day's run for those with a warm exposure; but those with a cold berth

didn't have it and that was pretty much the season.

Many producers from Maine have bought extra supplies of syrup from the Canadians of Dorchester County, Quebec, who go into northern Maine to make syrup. Reports from this area indicate that this year was poor there and that many of the men in that area have stopped making.

Although the tourist traffic to Maine this summer was down about 10%, the demand for syrup remained high, so that everyone had no difficulty in disposing of his product.

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MASSACHUSETTS - Russ Davenport

Massachusetts had either a good or bad season. Many producers in the higher hills had very poor runs of sap because it didn't warm sufficiently. There was never more than a quart or two in the buckets and most of the season this was solid ice. The areas about 1100 feet in elevation did quite well. Some had near normal production. Those in the lower valleys did poorly.

An infestation of trumpeters and leaf cutters showed up but late enough so that little harm was done to the trees.

Progress was made this last year in getting the producer, who was selling for prices too low, to charge more in line with the industry as a whole. The supply of syrup seems to be about equal to the demand locally, but little will be on hand after Christmas.

MICHIGAN — Floyd Moore

Michigan had an average season in the southern part while the northern part had a very poor season. The weather was cold the first part and warm the last part with lots of snow.

The average price for syrup was \$7.50 to \$8.50 in the south and \$9.50 to \$10.50 in the north. Most of the producers using tubing are using vacuum pumps on their tubing. There should be more bulk syrup produced in Michigan.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Ken Bascom

Season—better than that of '71 but not good. Some of us made about one quart syrup per tap (good for us). Early tapping started without much snow but heavy snows in February hindered. Retail \$9.50 - \$12.00 gal. can.

LAMB'S CORNER

Dear Friends,

About fifteen years ago we rounded up a few bits of polyethylene tubing so one man could tap a few trees with it. The following year quite a few people used a lot of the same stuff. The next year, against our better judgment, we spent a lot of money on molds to make spiles and tees so you could use vinyl tubing. Then we found we were in the tubing business so deep we couldn't get out. We kept going, improving a little here, a little there, until now our system can be used on level land or steep hills, sealed for natural or artificial vacuum or fully vented, any way that works the best for you. All of them will produce more sap for less labor. But if you are getting all the sap you can boil, and can hire help for a dollar an hour, maybe you shouldn't buy our tubing.

Shortly after our tubing venture, along came the tap hole pellet. We set about the task of obtaining the best pellet that could be made - one that would last long enough to insure a full length season. But here again, if you don't care if you get a pretty short crop some years, maybe you shouldn't use our pellets.

The electronic, automatic draw-off is a great labor saver in the sugar house, but if you have plenty of cheap help, don't waste your money - they're expensive.

Now the Electro-man, that little gadget that warns you if one of your pans is getting too low, is a horse of a different color. It doesn't save you any labor, just evaporator pans. And, after all, someone has to keep the evaporator companies in business, don't they?

Sincerely yours,



Bob Lamb

More interest shown in small evaporators. Many in the "back to the land" movement want to tap a few trees to make syrup on a small scale but there doesn't seem to be enough used small rigs to accommodate. New ones are expensive in proportion to their limited capacity for production. To assist 4-H and others in setting up the job on a small scale and at low cost, the New Hampshire Extension Service has published a leaflet that describes how to set a small pan on a homemade arch and the procedure to follow in tapping trees, collecting sap, and boiling down syrup. A garbage can (new!) is used for sap storage, a washtub for an evaporator, etc. This leaflet, entitled, "Backyard Syrup Making from Maple Trees" is authored by Roger Sloan, N. H. Extension Forester and Joseph Szymujko, Sullivan County Extension Forester and may be obtained by writing to Cooperative Extension Service, U.N.H., Durham, N.H. 03824.

Another subject of interest to some of us New Hampshire producers is the use of vacuum pumps on tubing lines. There seems to be no rule of thumb, no scale to use, as a basis for choosing a pump. For example: if I install 2,000 taps on a 10% slope, what capacity pump will I need to create 25 inches

of vacuum at the upper ends of my lines? The research people when asked tell me that this will vary with the slope, the spacing between trees, the length of conduit, etc., but fail to tell me whether a pump that displaces 10 cu. ft. of air per min. will probably do the job or whether I'd best look for one displacing 25 cu. ft./min. I would welcome a Digest article on this subject.

It appears that a general upward trend in syrup production is the prospect for New Hampshire, at least in the immediate future. New sugar houses are being built and others are tapping more trees than formerly. It would appear that money invested in maple at this time will return a margin of profit.

NEW YORK — Gordon Brookman

Production was better than the past three years but still below average. New York State Maple Producers Association worked with other states to keep pure maple products off price freeze for first sales by producers but failed on second sales by processors. Helped local festivals such as Franklinville, Schoharie and Lewis County; helped with N.Y. Maple Tour and operated booths at Erie County and State Fairs where sales continued to improve over past years. Farm Bureau Maple Marketing Assoc. handled more bulk syrup than ever and worked as a clearing house for producers and buyers. Demand excellent; supply of drum syrup exhausted. Average price: retail \$9.00 per gal.; bulk 45c to 60c per pound depending on grade.

OHIO — Ture Johnson

Ohio had a normal to above normal season in maple this past year, with an excellent quality. The darker grades of syrup are really scarce. Very little syrup

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is available in our area at the present time.

Even with the price of syrup in bulk as high as it was in our area we had a good many producers that did not open their bushes this year, but we still get our normal yield annually. At the present time, farming is in deep competition with industry and the crafts and many of our so called farmers are working away from the farm as a living from this source is much easier than farming.

Our annual maple institute meeting was held in January 1972 and our attendance was down from previous years. Of course, this is easily explained. The producers, not being at home on the farm, are prohibited from attending meetings during the day. However, as long as we have in the vicinity of 200 people in attendance, we have a good representative group of the industry.

Equipment dealers reportedly did a good business this year which indicates more interest in new producers and expansion by others.

Ohio witnessed its first outbreak of Gypsy Moth this year.

The Log Cabin in Burton was open every Sunday this past summer and sales were very good. We are just beginning to realize that there are a lot of people touring our area and if they see the door open, they want to stop and find out what the building is all about.

As you might remember, last year I reported on our price of syrup, which was low in comparison to many of you. This year we tacked on a dollar increase per gallon and had no repercussions. This year our syrup sold for \$8.50 per gallon.

PENNSYLVANIA — Ed Curtis

Production was up in Pennsylvania

this year with more producers operating than usual. Federal food inspectors began checking on sugar houses. Back yard hobby producers present a challenge.

Pennsylvania has been an open market for bulk syrup for years with no orderly marketing . . . This year the Maple Producers Association helped market bulk syrup at an increase in

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price to producers of 10 to 15 cents per pound. This helped gain membership in the association. They also helped at festivals, fairs, and the Pennsylvania Maple Tour. Officers of the Maple Associations should take their jobs more seriously and work harder for the general good of the industry. Average price, retail, per gallon was \$8.00 to \$10.00, bulk syrup 45 to 65 cents per pound.

VERMONT – Bob Coombs

We here in the Green Mountains seem to have had a very respectable crop. It started late and finished late as has the whole spring and summer season. Many of our sugarmakers boiled through the first week in May, which is quite unusual.

The syrup has brought very good prices and sales have been exceptional even with the high prices. Syrup throughout Vermont is selling for \$10.00 to \$12.95 for the table grades and the bulk prices are 45 to 60 cents per pound with a very little selling for more than the 60 cent price.

The outlook for next year is very good and the equipment business has been excellent which usually indicates a very high interest in sugaring.

WISCONSIN – Adin Reynolds

Wisconsin had more snow than usual and produced about half a crop of syrup. This makes six consecutive years of below normal production. Markets are firm and demand is much greater than the supply. A sharp decline in maple producers is also lowering production.

Average retail price of syrup was \$9.50 per gallon. Bulk prices were 45 to 60 cents per pound depending on grade.



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.....

A TRIBUTE TO H. V. "BILL" SHUTE

● V.M.S.M.A. pays tribute to Bill, who is chief of Division of Markets, Vermont Dept. of Agriculture. Bill is retiring as of the end of November. He has done an outstanding job in the field of maple quality improvement. Bill also retires from the Vermont Farm Show, another one of his success projects. Best wishes and thanks for a job well done, Bill.

.....

● County maple schools coming up! Better be there this year. It can mean a lot of dollars and Sense to you.

.....

● Vermont Farm Show — Jan. 23, 24 & 25, 1973. Under new management of Keith Hooker. Don't miss this top Vermont Agricultural show of the year.

.....

● Time for 1973 membership sign up. Remember, your association brings you the DIGEST free of charge.

.....

● Don't forget - we have syrup cans, 1/2 gal. cartons, tapes, labels, posters, brochures, graders, etc. For any of these contact Mrs. Carolyn Perley, R.D.1, Richford, Vermont 05674

.....

● Anyone need syrup drums? Some of you could have used some last spring. Better own your own; sell your syrup where you get paid for it. Your Association can get you 30 gal. Epoxy lined drums for \$10.00 or less. We sold two carloads (700) last spring. Just tell us how many you want.

.....

● ATTENTION all Vermont Maple Producers. Please fill out your syrup can survey and return it as soon as you receive it. It's important to know what you prefer.

VERMONT MAPLE SUGAR MAKERS ASSOC., INC.

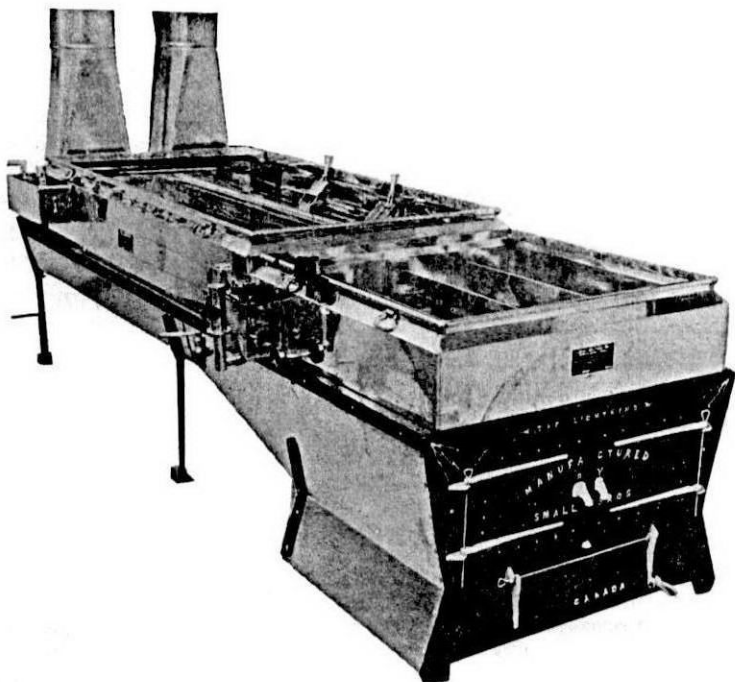
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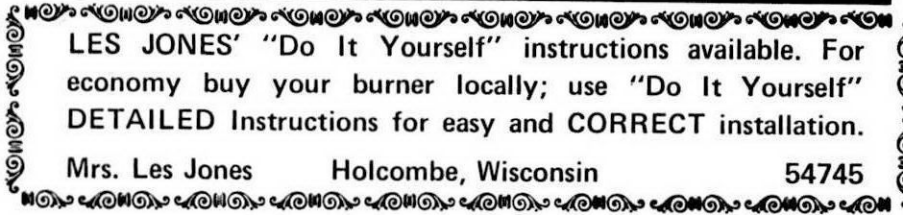


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NEW YORK MAPLE TOUR

The waterlogged Allegany County area, for the 1972 New York State Maple Tour on August 14 and 15, had approximately 200 people from New York State and surrounding states as well as Canada.

Sugar bush management was the theme of the tour this year and the first afternoon was spent on premises owned by Merritt Vossler and sons of Wellsville. With the good help of state forester Dave Zlomek and forest owner Merritt Vossler, discussion first centered in a woodlot where systematic poisoning with sodium arsenite had taken place. Some of the pros and cons of chemical thinning as backfiring some of this on twinned maples and very definite effect on black cherry, was offset by having some standing drywood for helping to run the steam boiler. Across the road on this high elevation woodlot is another area that had been thinned by a saw and axe some years before but which still showed some of the needs for continued thinning for best sugar bush management.

Sidelights to the maple business was also shown on top of the 2548-foot high Alma Hill with a discussion of the oil and gas business of New York State and the general push for more gas wells. A discussion by geologist Arthur VanTyne and Mr. Vossler cen-

tered around the local drilling business, the method of sand fracturing now being utilized to increase oil well output and the demonstration of one of the older leases in operation by Richard Vossler captured the fancy of syrup producers.

A stop at the home of Merritt Vossler gave this tour a look at his evaporator heated by steam, his sugar bush planted in years following 1958 and the remarkable growth of these trees, excessive livability, along with a view of his maple kitchen and sales room shows the thought and management that goes into this well rounded business.

The evening program held at the Whitesville Central School started off with a chicken barbecue prepared by the Whitesville Firemen and was followed by flood facts and a little history of Allegany County by Agricultural Agent Charles Hebblethwaite. A discussion on maple marketing by the Producers Association president, Max Neil and remarks by Lloyd Sipple of Maple Digest rounded out the program with remarks by Prof. Fred Winch from Cornell.

The second day of touring took us on to four farms. The first was a real early morning stop at Carrol Burdicks of Andover. Carrol is a collector and restorer of antique farm equipment and automobiles. The old single cylin-

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der engine running the ancient Westinghouse thresher and many other things in operation brought a strong touch of nostalgia. Actually Carrol Burdicks' sugar business ties to his sale of maple equipment and his own syrup business based around well-managed woodlots has almost 100% tubing situation and dandy evaporators.

The second morning stop was at Allan Stout's at Hallsport. He runs a tidy maple business. There tourers were able to see his sugar house, his kitchen and sales room built into the corner of their dwelling and to hear discussions on getting started in the maple business and, as a highlight, a discussion on maple cream machines by the inventor of the first maple cream machine, Harold Stout, Allan's father. Harold told us he had never got a patent on the machine because it resembled someone's patent on a bread mixer so we were able to see 2 or 3 predecessors of what most people call a modern maple cream machine. Following a snack break, we moved on to the woodlot of Lawrence Walters of Whitesville. Mr. Walter's grove of hardwoods (from which he makes maple syrup and systematically harvests some sawlogs) led to almost a whole college course in the art of woodlot management.

Lester Harris of Whitesville, a little way down the road from Lawrence Walters, was the scene of a heavily thinned sugar bush that has been systematically cared for under the guidance of state foresters and it was also the site of one of the super sweet trees that topped the list of those trees honored by USDA forester Bill Gabriel. The tree is not large, it doesn't look different and in spite of severe pruning for graft that might be used to speed up reproduction of the tree, it still stays

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sweet but it has one grave problem - the grafts from this tree will not take at their nursery.

Visitors found the tour was not a high pressure sales program - it was a comparatively easy-flowing, educational type of program, primarily intended to mark both the oldster as well as the youngsters that attended, into doing a better job with the interesting business of maple production.



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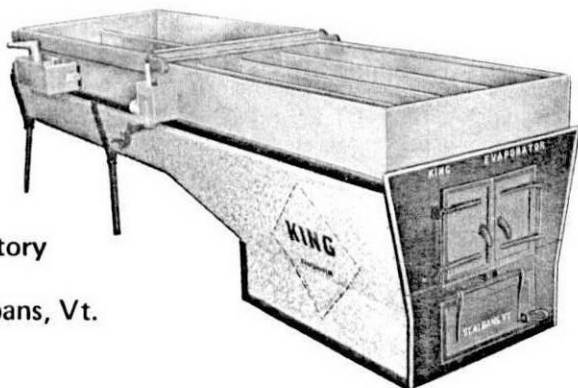


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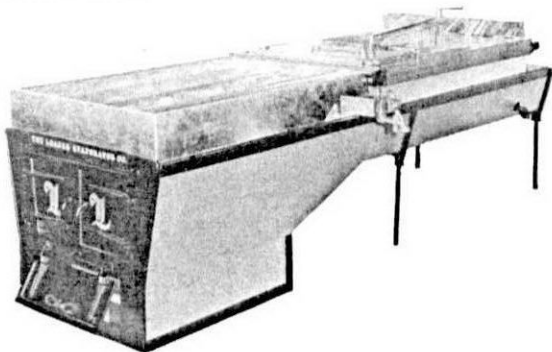
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