

# MAPLE SYRUP DIGEST



Vol. 21, No. 3

October 1981

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# KRESS



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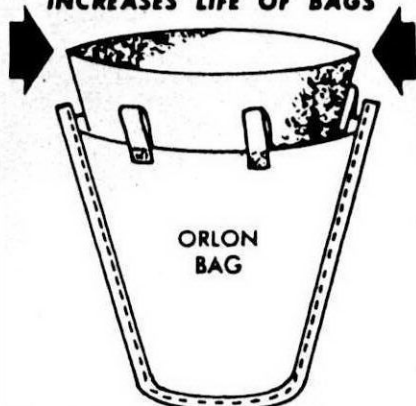
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# SUGAR SAND

by  
Lloyd Sipple

Sugar sand, lime, nitre or whatever you want to call it is actually calcium malate. It's the stuff that coats the bottom of your evaporator and syrup pans, plugs up valves, automatic draw-offs, syrup pipes and makes a real nuisance of itself. But sometimes it comes in real handy to help filtering syrup.

Let's start at the beginning. I'm going to use the term "sugar sand" because that's what I'm used to calling it. I've never done any actual research on it but after working with it for 40 years things eventually begin to add up. A friend of mine once said, "If you walk around a barnyard long enough, you're bound to step into something sooner or later." I just thought I'd pass along a few observations I've made over the years and maybe someone can make use of

them.

About 15 years ago Dr. Willits told me about a research project that was supposed to answer a lot of questions about sugar sand. I don't know where it took place but about 50 producers with different locations, soils, elevations, etc. were supposed to take unfiltered samples of syrup on a given day about 4 times a season for 3 years. When it was finished they had about 800 different samples of sugar sand, no two alike, and no pattern of any kind was formed. The project was dropped and the results I had waited so long for never arrived.

This makes sense because sugar sand is about as changeable as good sap weather. It's white and coarse one day and as black and sticky as tar the next. There's a reason for this.

A few years ago when we were running a research project for the USDA on the effect of U V lights to sterilize and store sap for a few days, we decided to take some samples of unfiltered syrup from each test tank as

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it was boiled down to see if there was any difference in the sugar sand. We found that if the sap was good enough to make light amber syrup the treated tank also made that grade and the sugar sand in it was white and coarse and plenty of it. In the control tank, where the sap had spoiled, what little sugar sand there was looked like tar. But we couldn't depend on the amount of sand in each sample being correct. There's too many variables — like if you've just reversed the evaporator, the finishing pans are cleaning out the sand so you get a lot of it. Maybe this is what happened in the sugar sand project to louse it up.

The bacteriologists tell me that all sap contains calcium malate in solution the same as hard water. The heat in the boiling process solidifies it and it sticks on places where you don't want it. If the bacteria count is low enough, like when you made that super light stuff this past season, you get a lot of nice white coarse grained sand. If the bacteria get a chance to work on the sugar in the sap, it makes the syrup darker colored. These same bacteria eat up the calcium malate and the resulting residue is just what you thought it was — tar. We have, on occasion, used another name for it that I wouldn't want to print here but actually that name was correct.

For several years we had a 14,000 gallon sap tank. Sometimes, in a good run, we would fill it with sap on a given day when we were making light syrup with a lot of white sand in it. If we had to hold the sap in that tank a couple of days while we rotated some of the smaller tanks, the syrup would naturally be dark when it was finally boiled down and the sand wouldn't be sand but a film of black tar on the

filters. Why should it be different? It was the same sap. Nothing had been added or taken away. It had to be caused by bacterial growth and had nothing to do with soil, location, elevation or anything else.

However, there's one good side to the sugar sand problem and that's filtering. I guess everyone knows the syrup filters best when you get a lot of that coarse, white sand. That's because it forms a porous filter bed on your felt that the syrup can go through.

A few years ago we ran into something you might find interesting and maybe helpful. We used to use the pre-filter papers over our felts. Thought we had to, to get any mileage out of them. Then we built a filter washer that worked pretty good and decided to not bother with the pre-filters any

more. You have to wash them pretty often. A felt probably won't take as much syrup but that's all right. The filter washer will take care of it.

You know what we found? The filters would take at least twice as much syrup as when we used the pre-filter! I guess the prefilter took out 95% of the sand but it let the fine particles through and they plugged up the felt. The coarse particles were not there to form a filter bed.

Several times we have put over 200 gallons of syrup through two 24"x24" orlon felts before we had to change them and the sugar sand taken out was enough to fill a 5 gallon pail.

There's been some experimenting done using a water softener to take the calcium out of the sap. I think I'll stick to the old way and let the sugar sand help me filter the syrup.

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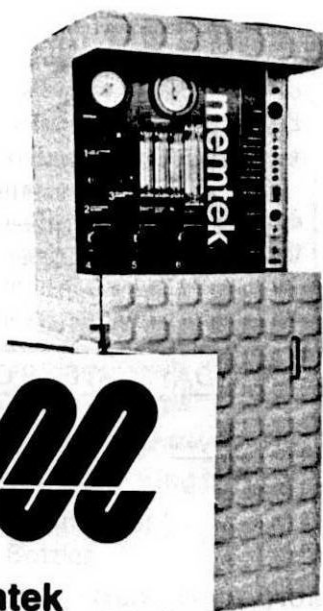
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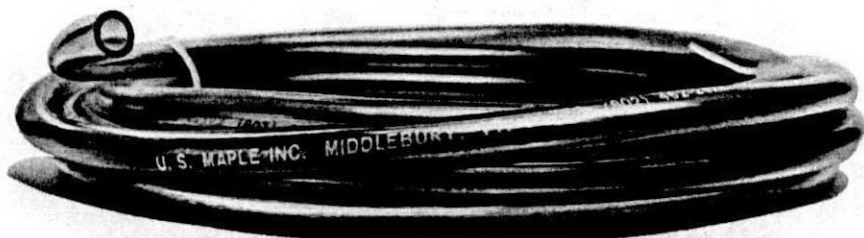
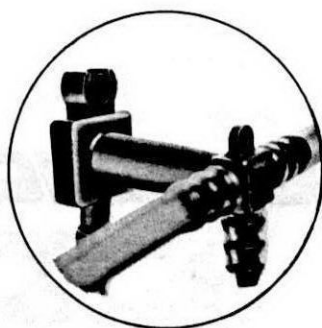
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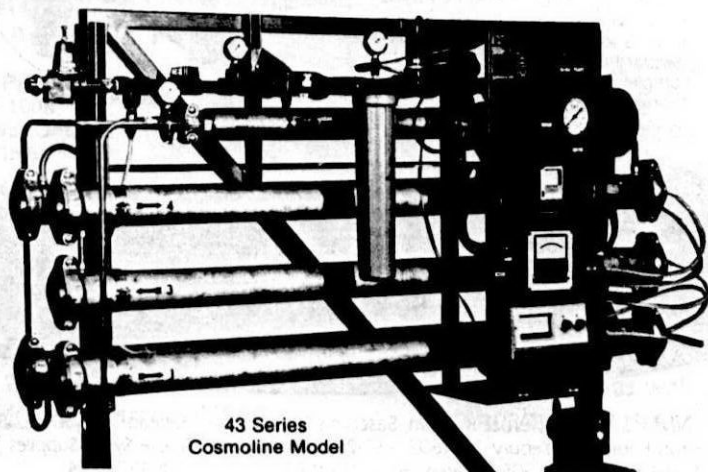
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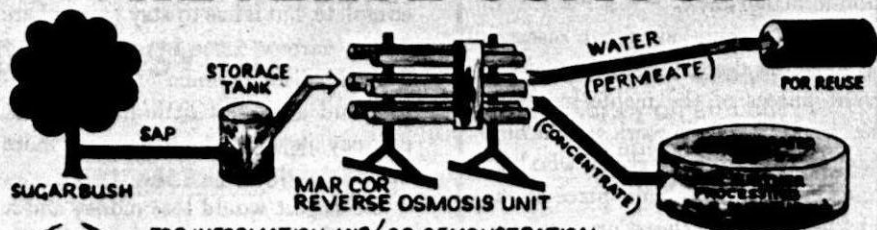


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# BOB LAMB'S CORNER

## LET'S TALK ABOUT THE DIGEST

The Maple Syrup Digest has been around for 20 years which is quite a while. It has done all of us a lot of good in many ways.

We have some excellent research departments doing work in many different phases of the maple industry. The results of their work would be a deep, dark secret to a very few who happened to be in the right place at the right time, but the Digest prints all the reports it receives on research and brings them into our homes so that we can read them at our convenience. It also prints all the notices sent in of meetings and tours and where and when they will take place. It contains a lot of advertisements, too, but they're important. They tell us about new equipment that's available, where to buy it, and they help pay a good share of the Digests bills.

After all, only a small percentage of the maple producers belong to an association and only a part of them attend meetings. Making a living interferes with a lot of things we really want to do.

The Digest is not a commercial publication but more of a non-profit type of venture. This is why it has to rely on research departments and you and me for something to print. If it was commercial and bought its copy the price would go up, the circulation would go down and that would be the end of it.

You and I and the research departments haven't done so well in helping but making a living interferes with our good intentions. Also, the average

maple producer would rather have his arm broke than write a letter.

But in spite of all the weaknesses we have inherited by being human, the Digest keeps plugging along, maintaining its position of being the school room of the industry. We'd all like to see it bigger, more varied and more complete, but it has to stay somewhere in the narrow space between a glorified "Madison Avenue" type publication and a modest little booklet that can pay its bills. Adding much more might tip the scales the wrong way — the Digest would lose money and it would have to die. So far there has been enough contributions and advertisements to keep it afloat.

Now I hear by the grapevine that the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association is unhappy with the Digest and has withdrawn their financial support. This means only those in Vermont who subscribe independently will get the Digest. I guess I don't understand this. I know an awfully lot of people in Vermont and I have never heard a word said against the Digest. I wonder if the average producer is aware of what is going on.

I've talked to Lloyd Sipple about this problem and he just doesn't know what to do. He'd like to keep on sending the Digest to all the producers as he always has, as long as he can afford to do it. If some folks really don't want it, a postcard saying so will stop it immediately. If the Vermont Association decides not to pay for their members, I've told Lloyd that I am willing to help defray the cost myself.

I'm sure most advertisers want all the producers to get the Digest as I do, and maybe some of them would be willing to help. I'd like to know what

you folks over in that part of "maple country" think of this arrangement.

*Bob Lamb*

This is a paid advertisement

## CUSTOMERS LIKE DARK SYRUP

by  
Roger Sage, Asst. Mgr.  
N.Y.S.M.P.A. Booth

While working at the New York State Maple Producer's Assoc. booth at the State Fair, a young couple with three children came to buy a gallon of maple syrup. Friends from Vermont had told them Grade A Light Amber was the best. Since we had no light amber in gallon containers, they decided to buy a gallon of medium amber.

We also had a display of Grade A Dark Amber and after paying for the syrup, they asked if they could taste some of the Dark Amber. As we were using dark amber on snow cones, we were able to give them a sample. After passing the cup to everyone in the family, they decided that Dark Amber was what they really wanted and wondered how much more the Dark would cost. "It must cost more," they remarked, "it has so much more flavor."

This situation was repeated several times during the fair. It indicates that some people are willing to pay as much or more for Grade A Dark Amber syrup. Maple producers should think about this when they are canning all that super light syrup.

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# MASSACHUSETTS SUMMER PICNIC

by  
Russ Davenport

Dan and Jesse Krug of Westhampton hosted the 1st annual Mass. Maple Producers Summer Picnic on August 9, 1981. Early comers helped husk the 400 ears of corn. Chicken barbeque and pot luck dishes completed the menu for the 170 that attended.

A short business meeting led by Milt Williams, president, introduced the new coordinator-treasurer, Rick Chandler. All the containers, etc. were transferred to his Murray Road, Ash-

field residence, August 1. Rick's wife and father, Douglas, will be helping him and were also introduced. Russ and Martha Davenport were given a hand in thanks for their 12 years on the job.

Scott Ewen is chairman of the maple booth in the Massachusetts building at the Big "E". He reported plans are going well and demonstrated the maple cotton candy machine to be used throughout the day. He had a sign-up chart to schedule workers for the 10 days the fair is open. He also showed aprons to be worn in the booth (extras were on sale) imprinted with "Massachusetts Maple Products" over a print from the Massachusetts can lithograph.

Several door prizes were drawn ranging from bumper stickers to \$1000



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off on an RO machine.

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All agreed this picnic should become an annual affair.

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Leon E. Wright, Franklinville, N. Y., long time maple producer and one of the founders of the New York State Maple Producers Association passed away September 8, 1981.

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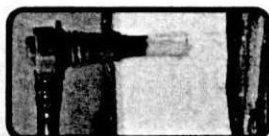
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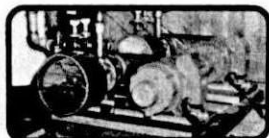
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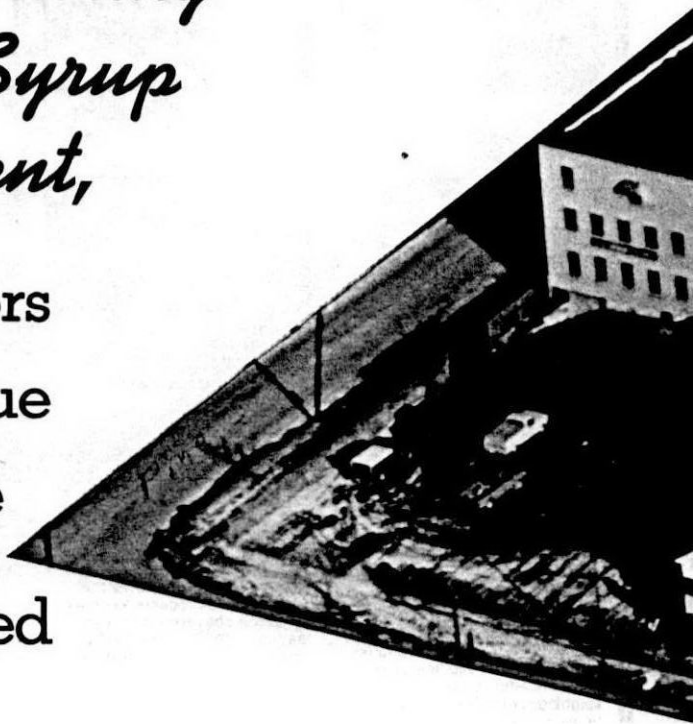
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Steel &

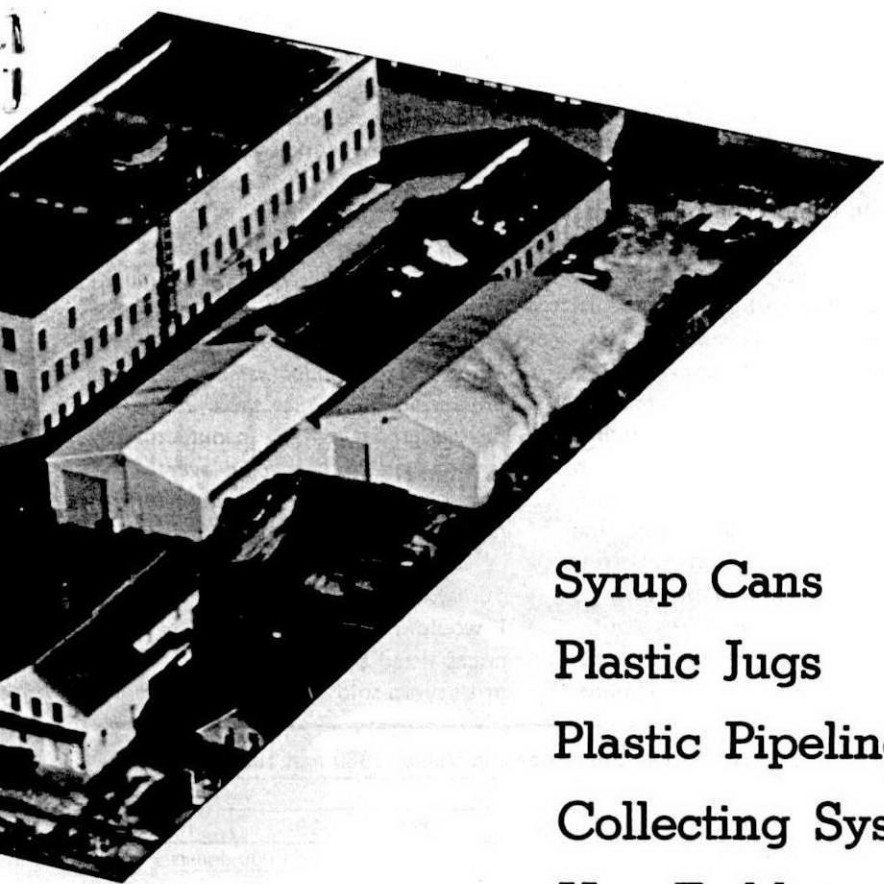
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# MAPLE SYRUP PRODUCTION

USDA Economics and Statistics Service

Nationally, production in the nine states for which estimates are made totaled 1,410,000 gallons, up 45% from the 973,000 gallons produced in 1980. The season average price, at \$18.10 per gallon, is up \$1.90 from last year. Value of production, at 25.5 million dollars, is up 62% from a year ago.

The 1981 sugaring season in New England was the best in recent years. The sap was much sweeter than normal, and mostly light syrup was produced. Weather conditions were ideal, with the season starting and ending about 12 days ahead of last year. Syrup production was the highest since 1926 in New Hampshire, and the highest since 1961 in Vermont. New York produced 36% more than in 1980 and 5% above the 1979 output.

Ohio and Pennsylvania also experienced better than normal seasons.

The Wisconsin season was about the same length as in 1980, but began nearly two weeks earlier. Sap sweetness was high.

**Editors Note:** The above average prices per gallon is quite misleading. There is no separation between retail and bulk prices and no one knows what percentage of the total crop is sold bulk. To illustrate: The following paragraph, included in the report shows how the New York average price was arrived at but still leaves questions unanswered.

*Prices to New York Producers for the lighter table grades of syrup, much of which is retailed directly, are expected to average \$19.00 per gallon. Wholesale and bulk sale, largely representing the darker table and commercial grades used by manufacturers, is expected to return an average of \$10.90 per gallon. The average return to producers for all grades and methods of sale is estimated at \$16.20 per gallon.*

I would like to see retail and bulk prices listed separately. Average price of all syrup sold means nothing.

**MAPLE SYRUP: Production, Price and Value, 1980 and 1981 <sup>1</sup>**

STATE	Production		Price		Value	
	1980	1981	1980	1981	1980	1981
	1,000 gallons		Dollars		1,000 dollars	
Maine <sup>2</sup>	5	12	19.80	21.40	99	257
Mass.	18	40	18.40	20.20	331	808
Mich.	83	91	17.10	19.20	1,419	1,747
N. H.	55	104	19.80	22.00	1,089	2,288
N. Y.	243	331	15.30	16.20	3,718	5,362
Ohio	88	100	16.60	18.20	1,461	1,820
Pa.	56	62	15.30	16.60	857	1,029
Vt.	315	545	16.40	18.00	5,166	9,810
Wis.	110	125	14.90	19.00	1,639	2,375

1/Preliminary.

2/ Does not include quantities produced on non-farm land in Somerset County, Maine

G. W. Suter, P. F. Bascom, P. H. Amidon

R42 81 May 1600



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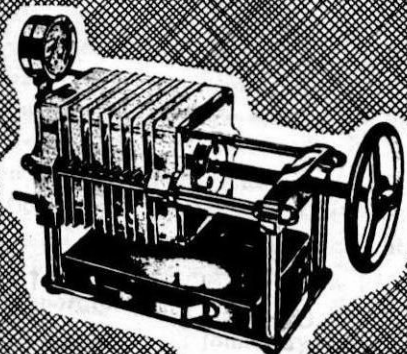
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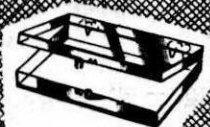


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# IMSI NEWS

by  
Gordon Brookman

As I attended the New York Maple Tour and the Vermont Maplerama, I thought, "what a pity every maple producer couldn't attend both." Here is a brief summary of the week.

Many producers asked, "what is I.M.S.I. doing?" It is doing general advertising as usual. Vermont has taken advantage of our 1/3, 1/3, 1/3 promotion program which is: A state or province association of producers, a state or province Dept. of Agriculture and Markets and I.M.S.I. match funds for a local promotion program for maple syrup in a given area. Vermont has their program approved and well under way. We are now putting one together in New York. The program has to be written and approved by all three organizations, then implemented.

How do we measure the value of promotion? Many producers report retail sales of syrup up with little or no complaints on the price increase this year. I have had several calls from people in large cities complaining that pure maple is not available in their area. It looks as though we all need to work together to develop a better promotional, merchandising and distribution system.

The New York Maple Tour is reported by Lew Staats in another article in this issue. Highlights of the tour, as I observed them, were: Good sugar bush management, cutting weed trees and laying out roads and tubing to make them efficient and practical, and the importance of developing good retail markets.

In between the New York Tour and

Vermont Maplerama, I rode my motorcycle the length of both New York and Vermont. The green farm lands and hills and eventually mountains had a beautiful splendor which most of us don't take time to appreciate. Particularly impressing to me was the different aromas encountered as I rode along. Bacon and eggs cooking as I passed a farmhouse in the early morning. New mown hay, pine trees, buckwheat fields, apple orchards and, of course, occasionally a field spread with well ripened manure.

The Vermont Maplerama is also reported in a separate article in this issue so I won't waste space repeating it. We toured many sugarbushes, each having it's own highlights from tubing lines on vacuum to converting oil fired evaporators back to wood and the importance of efficiency in labor and boiling in different operations. Both the New York Tour and the Vermont Maplerama brought out the importance of marketing, particularly the visit to the Maple Grove Candy Co., in St. Johnsbury. They do a good job of making maple sugar and cream and have a good distribution system.

Ron Shaw, chairman of the North American Maple Syrup Council reminded us about the coming joint meeting of the Council and the I.M.S.I. in Orillia, Ontario on October 19-21. This is a late reminder, but anyone who decides to go should call Ron immediately for reservations. His number is 705-325-6878.

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# NEW YORK MAPLE TOUR

by  
Lewis J. Staats

Registration for the 1981 New York Maple Tour took place at the Erie County Bureau of Forestry Sugar House near East Concord, New York. This roadside sugar house is designed to educate students and visitors on the process of maple syrup production. Over 7000 visited the sugar house last season. Sap from 1800 taps on aerial tubing and transported through an underground mainline produces 300 gallons of syrup on a 5 x 14 woodfired evaporator. The syrup is distributed to Erie County funded agencies and institutions. Other functions include conservation, wildlife management, and forestry including a sawmill.

The tour group of over 200 traveled by buses to Boyd Underhill's, located south of East Aurora. This maple operation has been in the family for 70 years. A good road system aids in collecting sap from 6500 buckets. Sap is evaporated on a 6 x 22 wood

fired evaporator in the picturesque sugar house which is visited by many school groups. Much of the syrup is sold retail along with sugar and cream.

The final stop took place at the sugar house of Mrs. Leo George and family. Here the group viewed a modern roadside operation with a 5 x 16 wood fired evaporator and maple product making and sales displays. Sap is collected from 2000 buckets.

Following a barbeque, an evening program was co-chaired by Merv Button, Regional Extension Specialist, and Lewis Staats, Maple Extension Specialists. Ron Shaw, chairman of the North American Maple Syrup Council, gave a preview of the next meeting of the NAMSC to take place October 19, 20 and 21 in Orillia, Ontario. Gordon Brookman, President of the New York Maple Producers Association gave an account of their activities. A slide program on the flora and fauna of Letchworth State Park was presented by Doug Bassett, a naturalist working at the park. Also, an update on the American Maple Museum was presented by Les Lyndaker, spokesman for the Lewis County Maple Producers Association.

The second day started at the Bill Campbell Maple Operation located south of North Java. A 5 x 16 wood fired evaporator handles the sap from 2,000 taps, 600 of which are on tubing. A discussion on sugar bush management was led by Dr. Robert Morrow of Cornell University and Jim Cheeseman, Forester for the New York D. E. C.

At the second stop at the farm of Albert and Jerry Seewalt, the group had to be transported by hay wagon

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to the sugar house due to slippery conditions caused by heavy rainfall. The new sugar house with a 5 x 16 wood fired evaporator and good fuel wood handling equipment is situated adjacent to the sugar bush. 2,000 taps were handled in 1981 with 500 on tubing. A discussion on tubing installation and proper sugar bush management was led by Jim Cheeseman and Lew Staats.

The final stop was at the Merle Farm Sugar House just south of Attica. Sap is collected by tubing from 9,000 taps, 3,500 of which flow directly to the sugar house. Mainlines are placed permanently and washed in place. The

modern roadside sugar house has a sap sterilizer with 30 feet of trough, a series evaporator (two 5 x 10 oil fired flue pans, steam preheater on first, 5 x 14 LP gas fired evaporator and 2 x 6 finishing pan). Much of the syrup crop is packaged in lithographed food-type, round tin cans. Crystal coated maple sugar and maple cream are also produced. Arthur Merle has served as secretary-treasurer of the New York Maple Producers Association for several years.

A few closing statements were made to summarize the tour, which was declared a success, and lunch was served immediately.



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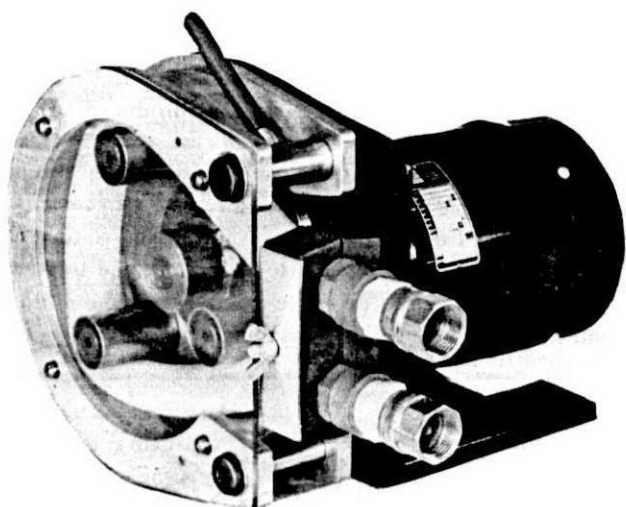
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# VERMONT MAPLERAMA

There are far more sugarmakers than the 300 who attended this year's MAPLERAMA in Lyndon Center, Vermont. If you are one who missed it, you really missed a nearly perfect event.

Maple producers from many parts of the Eastern United States and Canada enjoyed the twenty-four exhibits in the Ice Arena, the eight sugar places on the two day tour and plenty of good food. Special to this year's event was that each producer's syrup was tasted on the tour and breaks involved maple pecan rolls or maple ice cream floats.

There was a special technical panel on Sugarhouse Efficiency after the annual banquet and at one farm stop tourists got into the cider barrel.

We dedicated our forty-five page booklet to Arthur Dahlbergh, a good friend to all and past inspector of maple products for the Vermont Division of Markets. Bruce Gadapee of North Danville "MAPLERAMA 81" Chairman, was pleased to have everyone enjoy themselves. Dave Dolloff of Lyndonville was selected "Young Sugarmaker" by the Vermont Maple Producers Association. This was due

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to his continuous growth and active participation in the Caledonia County Maple Group.

Speakers included Everett Willard of the Vermont Department of Agriculture, who was also Master of Ceremonies; Bill Clark, President of the Vermont Maple Association, and Dr. Mariafranca Morselli of the University of Vermont Maple Research Laboratory; plus distinguished panelists.

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The sap was dumped in the storage

tank at the top and flowed down the 6" pipe. The syrup being heavy settled to the bottom, the steam to the top. So much syrup came out of that pipe that it clogged the filters, backed up in the pipe and burst the pipe and flowed at a very high temperature to the river, where the EPA said it poluted the river, by raising the temperature of the water.

We had to quit anyway because the airplane pilots went on strike. The experiment station said it wouldn't work because of the frictionless rotating semi translucent valves we were using wouldnt work in temperatures above 200 degrees. Anyway we sold out to Exxon who wanted to use the equipment for the oil refinery. We did all right financially, we got a lot of syrup and we got back what we had in equipment.

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H. W. Russell & Sons Maple Farms, Rome, PA 18837 . . . . .	(814) 274-9143
Sugar Bush Supplies, 2611 Okemos Rd., Mason, MI 48854 . . . . .	(717) 247-7361
Kinney & Hodgkins Maple Supplies, Thorndike, ME 04986 . . . . .	(517) 349-5185
Kinney & Hodgkins Maple Supplies, Yarmouth, ME 04096 . . . . .	(207) 568-3683
Maine Maple Products, Inc., Titcomb Hill, Farmington, ME 04938 . . . . .	(207) 846-4570
Wyman W. Manes & Son, East Orwell, Ohio 44034 . . . . .	(207) 778-3803
Richards Maple Products, 545 Water St., Chardon, OH 44024 . . . . .	(216) 583-2388
O. C. Stevens & Son, Maple Lane Farm, Mt. Gilead, OH 43338 . . . . .	(216) 286-4160
Reynold's Sugar Bush, Inc., Aniwa, WI 54408 . . . . .	(419) 946-3300
Ivan Puffenbarger, Rt. 637, Blue Grass, VA 24413 . . . . .	(715) 449-2057
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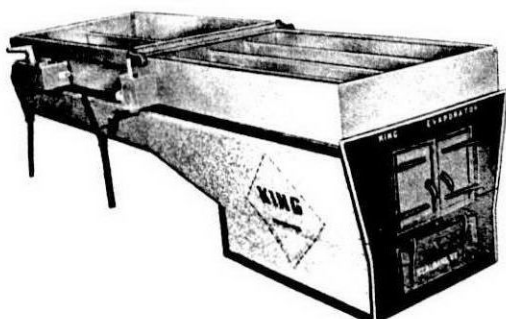
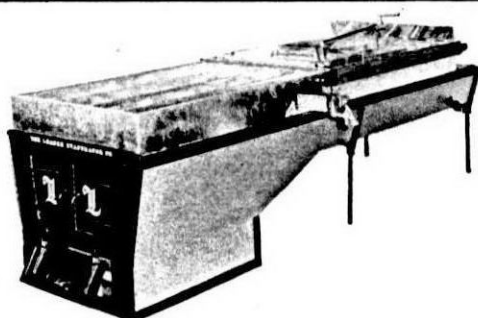
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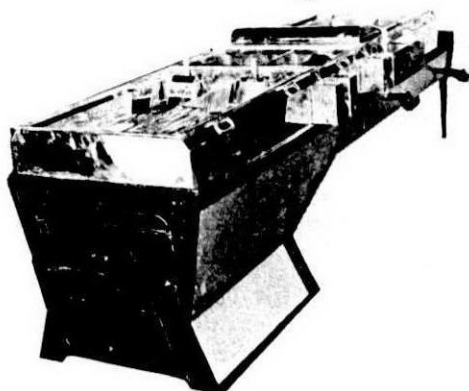
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