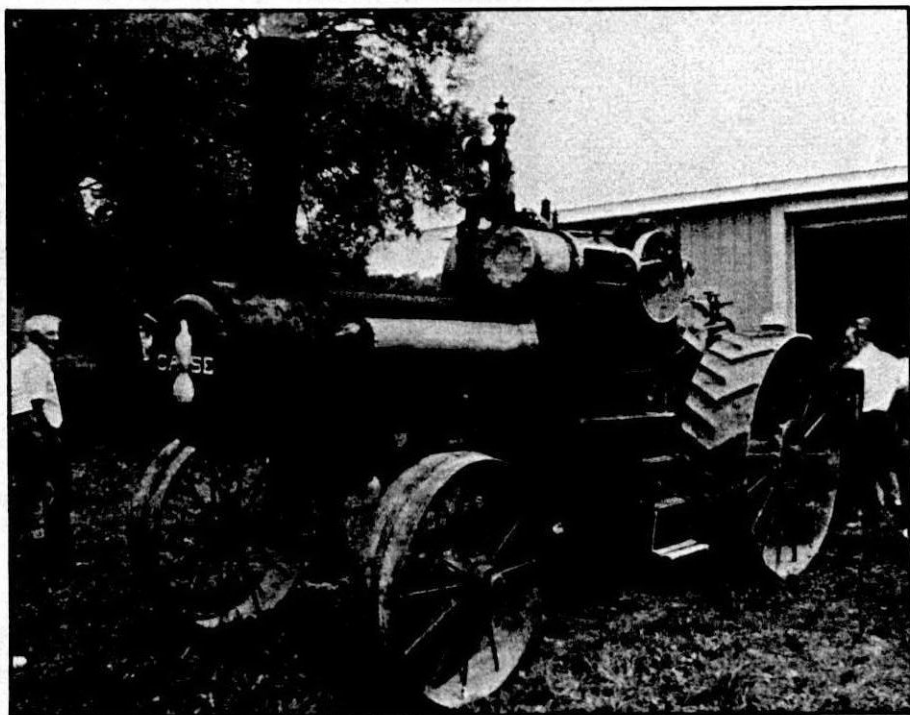




MAPLE SYRUP

DIGEST



Vol. 28 No. 3

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October 1988

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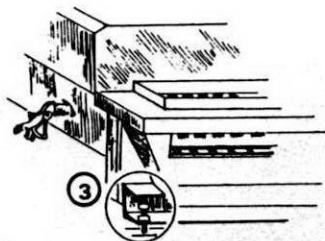
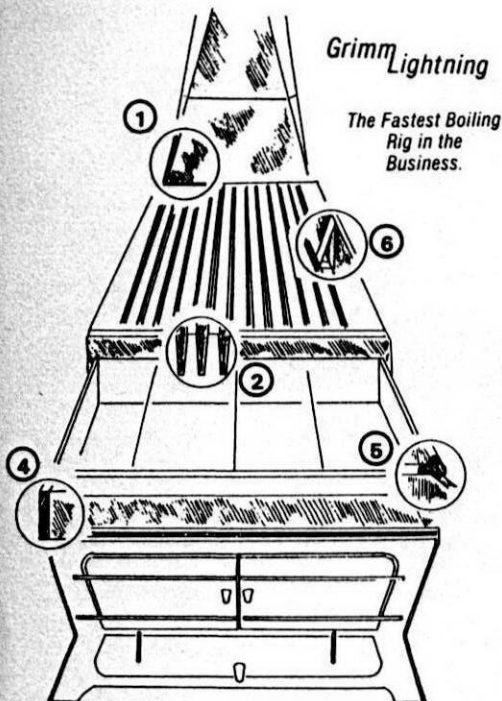
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EDITORIAL

I've got both good and bad news for this issue. The good news is: syrup seems to be selling better than ever this summer. Two container manufacturers report their stock moving out faster than ever which means someone must be filling them with syrup. Most summer fair sales are up. The supply of bulk syrup was better this year but better retail sales should easily take care of it by another season.

Up in Quebec, I'm told, there's a lot of syrup sitting in drums right in the sap house where it was made. The producers who made it would like to sell it for \$2.00 a pound, Canadian, which would mean \$2.40 to 2.50, U.S., but syrup isn't bringing that much this year, at least not in large quantities. If it isn't sold, those poor folks may decide not to make any next year. This could mean less syrup available. All this means the price next year shouldn't change much from this year's price.

However, there's always the bad news, too. If the Pear Thrips increase in the next few years at the same rate they did this year, it may not be long before there's no syrup made. For more on this destructive critter, see the article "Pear Thrips Damage to Vermont Sugar Maples" in this issue.

I hope I haven't caused you to worry too much but since there is no known way to control the pest, we should pay attention to the instructions in that article on what to do until a control is found. After all, Pear Thrips have been here for a good many years but it is only recently and in certain sections that they have reached a high enough population to do much damage. It could very well be that some natural enemy of the thrips will come along to hold them down like it did with the Gypsy Moth a few years ago.

In the mean time, until a solution is found to the problem I think we should

go on about our business as usual but don't cause any more stress on the afflicted ones by tapping them. Give them all the help you can to recuperate.

COVER PICTURE

A time for nostalgic remembering on the New York Maple Tour this summer when the group visited the Frank Buchal farm in Castorland. This steam engine, in perfect running condition was purring like a kitten just outside a barn overflowing with antique farm tools and implements.

Just goes to show you there's more to maple tours than sap houses and if you haven't been attending them you're missing a lot.

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OHIO NEWS

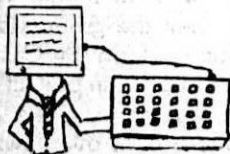
The Ohio Maple Tour and Annual Meeting will be held on Nov. 4 & 5, in Bellefontaine, OH, at the Mad River Ski Lodge. There will be 4 tour stops, maple equipment displays and round table discussions. For information and registration contact: Joe Dill, 4862 West Rt. 29, Urbana, OH 43078. Telephone 513-362-4262

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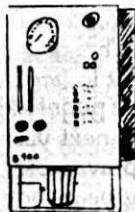
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AMERICAN MAPLE MUSEUM

By Martha Campany

Saturday, May 14, the excellent weather contributed to the large crowd that attended the annual opening of the American Maple Museum in Croghan, Lewis County Route 812. Tourists were present from throughout New York State and surrounding states. Between 7:00 A.M. and 10:00 A.M. a tremendous amount of pancakes were served.

Following the breakfast four young ladies competed for Miss New York State Maple Queen. Contestants were: Valerie Berry, Jefferson County representing Schoharie County; Melanie Yousey, Lowville, representing Lewis County; Barbara Bray, Sauquoit, representing Oneida County; and Jennifer McAdam, Gouverneur, representing St. Lawrence County.

Miss Valerie Berry was selected as the 1988 Miss New York State Maple Queen. She was crowned by Miss Lisa Hayes, Croghan, Lewis County, the 1987 reigning Queen. Miss Barbara Bray is the alternate Queen.



Valerie is the daughter of William and Marie Berry. As a Senior at Jefferson Central School she participated in musical and art activities, sports, and student publications. Valerie intends to matriculate at Delhi in Liberal Arts, then pursue a Career in Fashion Merchandising at Fashion Institute of Technology.

Following the pageant two outstanding leaders of the Maple Industry were inducted into the American Maple Museum Hall of Fame. They are: Paul S. Richards, Chardon, Ohio, and Arthur E. Merle, Attica, New York.

A chicken barbeque followed the early afternoon parade. Displays and demonstrations were a part of the day's activities.

WISCONSIN MAPLE SYRUP INSTITUTES SCHEDULED

Maple syrup producers can attend any of seven maple syrup institutes scheduled for Wisconsin in January and February, says University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Extension Forestry Specialist, Chris Hauge.

Agenda items will include an update on the insect and disease situation in maple, a new video on tapping and gathering sap (produced this past spring in Wisconsin), an update on Lymes disease, state and national council reports and producer participation panels. Other topics are yet to be scheduled.

The sessions start January 7, in Appleton followed by Rock Elm on the 13th., Cadott on the 14th., Newburg on the 21st., Aniwa on the 28th., then on Feb. 11 to Phillips ending in Poynette on Feb. 18. Last years turn out totalled over 400 persons.

With the increasing number of hobby producers many of the sessions will be held on Saturdays to encourage those folks who work at other jobs during the week to attend.

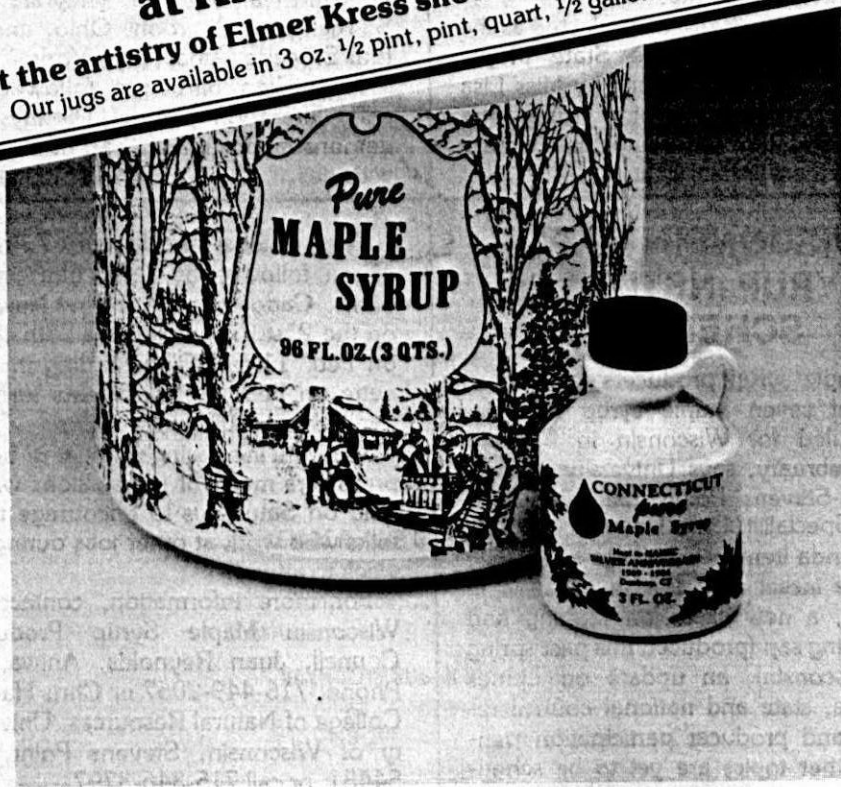
For more information, contact the Wisconsin Maple Syrup Producers Council, Juan Reynolds, Aniwa, WI Phone: 715-449-2057 or Chris Hauge, College of Natural Resources, University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point, WI 54481, or call 715-346-3797.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



I just hate to face up to the fact that with local and state fairs in full swing - another season is coming to a close. Summer of 1988 has been dry, hot and insect infested. Many areas have seen defoliation from aphids and mites as well as some damage from our old standbys - saddle prominent, gypsey, looper and canker. It seems that our forests continue to be under stress from nature.

This leads up to the Annual Meeting of the North American Maple Syrup Council to be held, this year, on October 23-25 in Portsmouth, New Hampshire. I hope many of you will be able to attend. This is an opportunity for any

and all to meet maple producers from the whole maple area. One of the purposes of the North American Council is to bring together maple folks to share experiences, ideas and problems. Areas differ but dialogue shows that there is a common ground where working together as a total industry will produce far more in promotion and research than struggling in small groups with duplication and inefficiency.

We especially urge the State and Provincial delegates and their alternates to be present to help chart the future course of the Council and make decisions on this year's agenda. In an organization covering such a vast area and meeting only once a year it behooves each member unit to have their delegate and alternate present, if possible. This gives broader thinking and makes for better understanding on the part of the alternates for the time they may be required to act as delegate. There is, of course, only one vote per unit but opinions are welcome from all.

The New Hampshire committee has a tentative program prepared and registration forms and hotel room accommodations have been distributed. If you did not receive it, contact Roy Hutchinson, Route 2, Box 124, Hackleboro Road, Canterbury, NH 03224.

See you at Portsmouth where hopefully, we will find answers to some of our problems.

Arthur Merle

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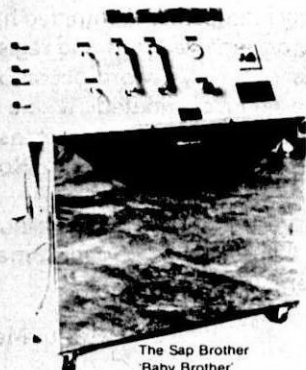
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NEW HAMPSHIRE MAPLE NEWS

By Frank Owen

The summer meeting of N.H.M.P.A. was held in Loudon, NH at Sunny Side Maples. Our hosts were President Richard Moore and his wife, Lanie.

Secretary Hank Peterson and Treasurer Larry Moore gave their reports. We are in good financial shape.

Frank Owen gave the can report in the absence of Chairman Bob Moulton. The jug division of Hussey Plastics is being sold and a new owner has not been decided yet. We hope to get the rights and silk screen for our jugs. We have a good supply of jugs now, but not enough to go through 1989.

Roy Hutchinson reported on N.A.M.S.C. We are all looking forward to the meeting October 24 & 25 in Portsmouth, NH where we can show our guests parts of our great Granite State.

Dave Scanlon, President of IMSI, reported the spring lobby trip to Washington on acid rain gave them a chance to meet about 20 U.S. Senators and Representatives and some representatives from Canada.

The fall meeting of IMSI will be in Portsmouth on October 23rd. IMSI focus will be on marketing this coming year. IMSI has a lawsuit going as someone from Mississippi is again making fake syrup and using IMSI logo.

A new N.H.M.P.A. booth will be at the Springfield Exposition this fall. There will be a living tree costume that looks like a maple tree with a live person inside. The arms will serve as branches. This will be used for promoting maple products like Smokey the Bear promotes forest fire prevention.

The afternoon program was in charge of Sumner Dale and Karen Bennett. Barbara Schultz Burns, insect and disease specialist from Vermont gave a slide and talk show on the latest threat to our maples, the Pear Thrip in-

sect. The second part of the afternoon was spent at Sunny Sides sugar bush where we viewed the Pear Thrip and other insect damage. We all learned that we must keep a better eye on our sugar bushes to check on insect or other damage.

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AMERICAN MAPLE MUSEUM Hall of Fame

ARTHUR MERLE, JR.

Arthur Merle, Jr. was born on August 11, 1915 to Arthur and Mary Merle. He attended Attica High School and after graduating went to work with his father. In 1935 he and his father and brother moved to the farm next to the one where he now lives. Five years later he married Florence Chamberlain.

They were blessed with 5 children, a daughter and 4 sons. All are married and there are 11 grandchildren. The sons all work on the Merle Farms which has grown to over 1000 acres.

Arthur has always been active in organizations, especially 4-H. He has been a 4-H club leader for 55 years. Florence has been a leader for 45 years so between them they've accumulated an even 100. It's possible the reason they're so interested in 4-H is because a 4-H meeting is where they first met.

He is a member of the Trinity United



Methodist Church in Attica, held many offices through the years and has been church treasurer for the past 4 years. The Merle farm has been affiliated with Dairylea for 50 years. He is a member of Farm Bureau and Cooperative Extension and still serves on committees.

He has served on the Wyoming Co. Fair Board and was an Attica School Board Member and Town of Bennington assessor at the same time - apparently liked the punishment and abuse these people have to take.

Art's extra curricular activities in maple include helping organize the Wyoming County Maple Producers Assoc. in 1964 and serving as the first president for 18 years. He has been the only manager of the maple booth at the Wyoming Co. Fair, serving for 15 years. He filled in for Charles Hager as assistant manager of the State Fair Maple Booth for several years until the State Fair conflicted with the Wyoming County Fair. During that time he was appointed secretary and treasurer of the New York State Maple Producers Association, a position he still holds and one which requires a great deal of time and effort.

Art has served for several years as New York Delegate to the North American Maple Syrup Council and to top it all off, last October was elected president of that organization.

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HALL OF FAME

PAUL RICHARDS

Paul Richards, of Chardon, Ohio, was born in Chardon, August 26, 1924. He was the son of Will and Rena Richards. Will Richards and his wife were the founders of Richards Maple Products in 1910 in Chardon. Mr. Will Richards was an Agriculture and Tree Farmer for 30 years when he moved into the village of Chardon.

In these early days most of the syrup was shipped from this area to eastern United States. However, Will and his wife started making most of their syrup into maple sugar blocks which they sold in Painesville, Ohio.

Paul and Clara Jean were married in Chardon on August 10, 1946, and to this union was born one son and five daughters. Some of the children are involved in the family as secretaries and production line employees, plus two sons-in-law on full time. At the present time there are six grandchildren.

Paul and Clara Jean attended High School in Chardon, and graduated in 1942, at which time Uncle Sam called Paul into the Navy for a two year stint, coming out as a Motors Macinist Mate. Paul has been very active in the Veterans of Foreign Wars, serving as Commander and other offices of the Post.

Their peak maple season is in the spring with Maple Festival and all. Summer and fall they are at the County and State Fairs and very busy during the Christmas season, together with the year around mail order business.

Paul's extra curricular activities in maple include serving on the board of the local Geauga County Maple Festival for 25 years. He has served on the board of the Geauga County Forestry and Maple Institute since the early 1950's. He helped promote the maple



industry at the Ohio State Fair by seeing that local entries were displayed at the fair. The new Ohio Maple Producers Assoc. took over in August, 1988.

Paul has been an alternate delegate to the North American Maple Syrup Council for many years.

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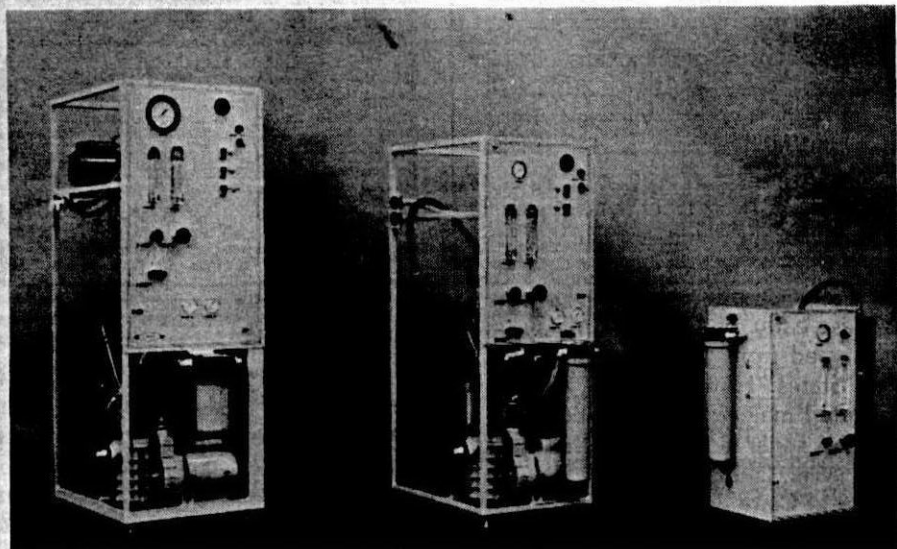
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MAPLE NUMBERS ADD UP



The following address was delivered by Lynn Reynolds at the 1988 Data Users Meetings to the participating United States Department of Agriculture Agencies in Des Moines, Iowa, on March 2, 1988. Those agencies participating from the U. S. Department of Agriculture were as follows:

- (1) National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS)
- (2) Economic Research Service (ERS)
- (3) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS)
- (4) World Agricultural Outlook Board (WAOB)
- (5) The Office of the Secretary of Agriculture USDA

PRELIMINARY REMARKS:

I want to thank Carrol Spencer of the Agricultural Statistics Service and the various members of the U. S. Department of Agriculture Agencies for inviting me here to speak to you concerning a serious need for the Pure Maple Syrup Industry of the United States. Our request is simple. We require reinstatement of the crop reporting service for the Maple Syrup Industry of America which was discontinued in 1981. I realize this may take legislation to accomplish, but your awareness, support, and being on record as supporting our cause can only be a positive step towards our goal. I respectfully offer you the following statement for consideration.

THE ADDRESS:

I proudly address you as the Vice President of the Wisconsin Maple Syrup Producers Council, the Secretary-Treasurer of the North American Maple Syrup Council, as a member of the Board of Directors of the International Maple Syrup Institute, as a 5th generation maple syrup producer, and as the Chief Executive Officer of Reynolds

Sugar Bush, Inc. the world's largest producer of pure maple syrup. I am appealing to your compassion and requesting your assistance. Our industry needs your help. Please recognize our need.

Our industry is small, but is considered one of the very best alternative farm income sources in America. As I stand here today, I represent approximately 10,000 United States Maple Syrup Producers. Many of these would be categorized as hobbyists. Categorized as hobbyists maybe, but mighty in spirit and deed. We are a dedicated industry.

As our industry tries to be recognized, it is faced with non-existent reports of production. It would appear to the average consumer that the United States does not produce any maple syrup. This is obviously not true. Our industry is a vibrant force in U. S. Agriculture. Across the maple belt, State Maple Associations sponsor maple festivals, crown maple queens, conduct maple tours, attend fairs, shows, participate in agricultural affairs, provide promotional and educational activities, and represent their states in the highest standards of Americanism. BUT, in simple terms, we cannot afford the cost of conducting an accurate and nonbiased statistical report of production for our industry. Eleven midwestern and northeastern states are severely affected and several other maple border states feel the effect. I repeat, WE NEED YOUR HELP-----

HOWEVER-----This only partially explains our case. Our industry's main concerns are atmospheric pollution, acid rain, environmental stresses, maple decline, and the overall welfare of the maple tree. Our industry has come off of three of the worst crops in history. We do not know whether to blame "Mother Nature" or to look to other reasons for these poor crops. Without a comprehensive National crop reporting picture it is difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain cause or to correlate accurate data. If "Mother Nature" is in fact simply the cause, so be it. We accept that. If

other factors should be addressed, we would like to face them in an informed and intelligent manner. This is our primary concern and shall guide us in our course of action.

Our industry is proud that we do not have price supports, commodity loans, guaranteed production prices, tariffs, import duties, production limitations, or any other tax-payer sponsored programs. We are an independent, fully acclimated to the supply and demand system, and function proudly within the limits of capitalism and fiercely defend ourselves from Governmental controls. In fact, maple syrup is far more American than baseball, apple pie, or Chevrolet, because we have been here a lot longer than all three. We truly offer the most American of all American products. This is why we hold our heads high when we request your assistance in an area that we as an industry just cannot afford. We desperately need it, but just cannot afford it. Therefore, we are respectfully requesting that the U.S. Government provide the U. S. Maple Syrup Industry with a complete individual State Maple Syrup Crop Reporting Service as was discontinued in 1981.

I thank you for this opportunity to present our maple syrup industry's most dire need. I respectfully request your support and endorsement for re-instatement of this valued service. Any assistance you can provide to construct legislation to re-create this service to our industry will be greatly and sincerely appreciated.

The United States Maple Syrup Industry plays a very significant role in producing and promoting America's Agriculture. Please help us and you, by providing recognition for this very worthwhile cause.

Thank you.

Following Mr. Reynold's comments, the Board of the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection unanimously passed the following resolution:

The Board of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection, requests that the Secretary forward to each member of Wisconsin's Congressional delegation an appeal for their help in reinstating funding for USDA for statistics on the maple syrup industry.

To all United States Maple Syrup Producers. If you believe in this cause and want this Government service re-instated, please write your U. S. Senators and U. S. Congress Persons immediately. I sincerely believe we have an excellent opportunity for this to happen, but it will take a sincere effort on all of our part to make it so. The time is ripe -- please don't delay.

Lynn Reynolds
Secretary, NAMSC

**DEADLINE
NOV. 1st.**

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PENNSYLVANIA OUTSTANDING MAPLE AWARD

The third annual award for Outstanding Service to the Maple Industry was presented to Mr. and Mrs. Milton Butler of RD Knoxville, Pa. on May 7 at the annual Potter - Tioga Maple Festival in Coudersport.

The Butlers have been maple producers and equipment dealers for many years on their farm at Butler Hill. They joined the Potter - Tioga Maple Producers Association as charter members in 1964.

Mr. Butler served as a director for several terms and held the offices of President, Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer at various times. He also served as the Tioga County delegate to the Pennsylvania Maple Producers Council for Many Years.

The Butlers were lauded for exemplifying high quality in their products and being willing to share their knowledge and high standards with both producers and consumers.

Due to Mr. Butler's health, the couple were unable to attend the ceremony. Their son Darryl Butler and grandson Lori Butler accepted the award on their behalf.

The award is a large handcrafted clock, made of solid maple and shaped like a maple leaf. It was designed by Paul Snyder of Coudersport. The couple also received a floral arrangement in a wooden maple - leaf shaped basket.

The presentation was made by Tom Leete, President of the Potter - Tioga Maple Producers Association.



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BRING BACK MEMORIES ?



This picture was sent to us by Robert F. Moore, Rutland, VT, former owner of the G.H. Grimm Co. It was taken by his mother, Mary, and shows his father, Comer Moore and a friend, Alvin Mackay rolling snow in the winter of 1910.

MAPLE SYRUP BLUES

by
William Coolidge III

I'm wearin' my camouflage pants and a
Carhartt vest
Got home late last night, didn't get
much rest
But I'm down in the sugarhouse, doin'
my best
Yeah, I got them maple syrup blues
again.
My wife wants to party, but I'm pretty
tired
It can wear a man out, keepin' an
evaporator fired
Went to take a No-Doz, but my
prescription's expired,
And I got those saphouse blues again.

Dad's got shin splints, tractor's radiator
leaks
The snowplow knocked the buckets off
my roadside trees
Temperature's in the 50's & I'm waitin'
for a freeze,
Yeah, I got them maple syrup blues
again.
Got done boilin', went to take a little nap
My brother pulled in with a tankful of sap
It's the 3rd week in March and I'm ready
to snap
'cause I got them saphouse blues again.
Think I'll write this all down and put it in
a book
People'd be amazed if they knew what
it took
But when I say "\$20 a gallon" and they
just give me that look,
I get them maple syrup blues again.

PEAR THRIPS DAMAGE TO VERMONT SUGAR MAPLES 1988

What is the Extent of Damage?

Pear thrips has damaged sugar maple throughout Vermont and other northeastern states in 1988. Damage severe enough to be mapped from the air occurred on 466,000 acres. This is over one-sixth of the maple forestland in the state. In 1987, 22,000 acres of thrips defoliation were mapped.

The most widespread damage is in southern Vermont. One-half of the maple forestland in Bennington County and one-fourth of the maple forestland in Windham County has serious damage.

The acreage defoliated by pear thrips in 1988 exceeds the worst year of defoliation by forest tent caterpillar (332,000 acres in 1982) which resulted in over 33,000 acres of mortality.

Damage is most severe in sugarbushes and other forestland where sugar maples predominate.

What Will Happen To The Trees?

Most pear thrips have returned to the soil, and will remain there until next spring. There will be no more defoliation from thrips in 1988.

Pear thrips defoliation hurts trees because

- the loss of leaves reduces their ability to manufacture food
- serious damage kills next year's (1989) buds, which will lead to twig dieback
- more sunlight hits the forest floor, increasing drought stress

Defoliated trees are beginning to produce a new crop of leaves (refoliate). These trees will be able to take advantage of the remainder of the growing season to manufacture food. The trees' ability to refoliate and replenish their food reserves will be seriously reduced if dry conditions continue.

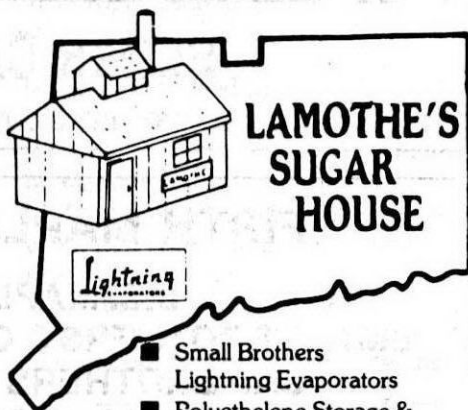
What is Being Done?

Needed research is underway to provide answers and make recommendations for next year. Research planned or in progress includes:

- positive identification of the causal agents, by thrips experts
- a soil sampling system to assess thrips distribution and density
- experimental insecticide and fertilizer applications
- preparation of a technical report summarizing all existing knowledge of the insect
- remote sensing of damage region-wide using photography and/or satellite imagery

What Should Landowners Do?

Forest landowners and sugarmakers should inspect their maple woodlands now to find out whether their trees have been defoliated and whether or not trees



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are refoliating. Refoliating leaves are still small and red or yellow in color.

Trees which have been defoliated should be disturbed as little as possible. Sugarbushes should be tapped conservatively. If trees have been severely stressed, it would be best not to tap at all the following season. Thinnings should be postponed for three to five years after the last year of defoliation.

For More Information Contact:

Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation Brent Teillon, Chief of Forest Resource Protection

244-8711

University of Vermont
Dr. Bruce Parker, Entomologist
658-4453



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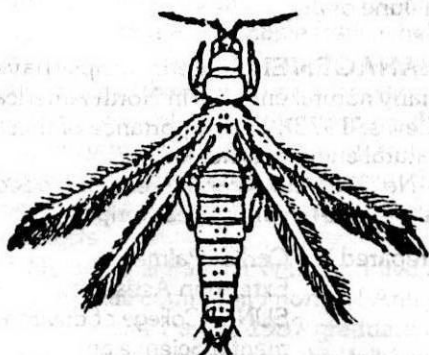
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SUGAR MAPLE AND THE PEAR THRIPS



x = actual size

PICTURED ABOVE: ENLARGED ADULT PEAR THRIPS

Tiny black insects, commonly called thrips, could be responsible for the abnormal appearance (leaf tatter) of sugar maple foliage in many areas across New York State. Recently, foresters in Pennsylvania associated the pear thrips (*Taeniothrips inconsequens* (Uzel)) with sugar maple leaf distortion and defoliation (Simons, 1985).

The pear thrips, a native of Europe, was introduced as early as 1904 to California and later was found on the East Coast (Stannard, 1968). The pear thrips is economically important to growers of plums, cherry, apple and pear on the West and East Coasts (Borror, et al., 1979). Additional hosts of the pear thrips are maple, basswood, birch, beech, ash, and black cherry (Simons, 1985). In Europe, this insect is associated with woodland vegetation (Lewis, 1973).

LIFE CYCLE AND DESCRIPTION:

The adult pear thrips has a slender

brownish body and is 1.2-1.5 mm long with a yellow to orange subintegumental segment. Its head is swollen behind the eyes and has red pigmented ocelli. Antennal segments V and VI are broadly jointed, the third segment is yellowish brown. Tarsi are yellowish-brown and the fore tarsi have an apical tooth adapted for digging. Wings are long, narrow, and fringed with long hairs. The fore wings are brown and the hind wings are pale.

Only female pear thrips are known to occur in North America. Therefore, the thrips probably reproduce asexually (parthenogenesis). Both sexes are found in Europe (Stannard, 1968). Eggs are laid mainly in the petioles of blossoms and leaves as soon as buds open. Egg laying is performed with a sharply pointed down-curving, saw-toothed ovipositor. Small brown scars develop soon after eggs are laid.

Young pear thrips are small and white with red eyes. Because the larvae feed on the foliage, they may add to the injury caused by adults. After two or three weeks of feeding, the larvae fall to the ground, enter the soil to depths of

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up to 40 cm (Cameron et al., 1916), and form pupal cells. Strong spines on the 9th and 10th abdominal segments are used to penetrate the soil and mold a pupal cell. In the fall, the insects pupate within the cells and remain in the soil until the following spring. Adult pear thrips emerge in spring when soil temperature has risen to between 7 or 12 degrees Celsius (= 45 to 50 degrees F) (Lewis, 1973). After emergence, adults migrate to the expanding buds and begin to feed. There is apparently one generation per year, adults appearing in late April to early May, and larval feeding finished by early June.

INJURY: Foliar damage is caused when thrips scrape and rasp tender plant tissue with their sharp, needle-like mouthparts to feed on plant liquids. Leaves damaged by the pear thrips are dwarfed, mottled yellow to green-brown, and distorted. This causes the tree to have a thin crown, and the effect resembles late frost damage. Blister-like

scars develop along the veins and petioles of the foliage. Moderately damaged foliage can place the trees under some stress and possibly cause premature leaf drop in early fall. Severely damaged foliage could result in early spring defoliation followed by refoliation in June or July.

MANAGEMENT: Pear thrips have many natural enemies in North America (Lewis, 1973). The importance of these natural enemies is not known.

No insecticides can be recommended at this time to control pear thrips.

Prepared by: Carl E. Palm
Extension Assistant
SUNY: College of Environmental Science and Forestry
Syracuse

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WISCONSIN MAPLE QUEEN

My personal highlight of 1988 was being crowned the Wisconsin Maple Queen. In the two short years following my coronation at the maple festival held at Reynolds Sugar Bush in Aniwa, Wisconsin, I have become increasingly more aware of the major impact the maple syrup industry has on my state's economy. Therefore, I welcome the opportunity to promote maple syrup products.

My name is Patricia Witman. I live in Lily, a small community north of Antigo in Wisconsin. I am a 1987 graduate of Antigo High School, and this fall I will be entering my sophomore year at the University of Wisconsin in Milwaukee where I am a member of the Target M.D. Program (an accelerated pre-med program.) I am also a member of the Pre-med/Pre-health Society, Phi Eta Sigma (a national honor society), and am on the Dean's Honor List. I have been a member of the Flying Comets 4-H club for the past ten years, currently serving as president and youth leader.

My future plans include attending the medical college of Wisconsin, specializing as an obstetrician/gynecologist, and eventually practicing medicine in Wisconsin.

I have enjoyed the parades I have



Pictured above is Wisconsin's Maple Queen Miss Patricia Witman of Lily, Wisconsin.

had the opportunity to participate in so far and am looking forward to representing the maple syrup industry at my state fair. If there is any producer who would like me to appear at some function promoting maple syrup, I will make every effort to attend. You can contact me at my home address:

General Delivery
Lily, WI 54445
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ConNews Notes For The Maple Syrup Digest

by Darrell F. Russ

The 12th Annual Meeting of the Maple Syrup Producers Association of Connecticut will be held on Saturday, November 5th at Bob Coombs place in Jacksonville, Vermont. Registration will be from 10:00 to 10:30 a.m. Bob Coombs will put on the main morning and afternoon shows with emphasis on

candy making and packaging. The return trip to Connecticut will be via Heath, Massachusetts and Mike Girard's sugar house.

The Associations January 1989 workshop meeting will be held at Rob and Jean Lamonthé's new sugarhouse in Burlington.

The Connecticut maple syrup producers contributed \$500.00 towards reconstruction of the burned-out Vermont Maple Research Lab and \$100.00 to the NAMSC Maple Research Fund.

NEW COLUMN

This is a new column starting in the Digest this issue. It's written by Russ Davenport, past president of the North American Maple Syrup Council and now Co-owner of Sugarhill plastic containers. ED.

RUSS'S HINTS FOR THE MAPLE PRODUCER #1 DENSITY

Remember the syrup that comes out of a plastic syrup bottle and onto the pancakes is only as good as the syrup that went into the bottle in the first

place. Be sure of the density of your syrup. Heavy syrup will crystallize in time. Light syrup will spoil. If the bottle becomes round on the bottom, don't blame the bottle. It is the syrup that is spoiling. The pressure within the bottle blows the bottom out. The cap and seal are good, they have held the pressure. This syrup usually can be boiled and brought up to correct density. As more boiling is done, more niter or sugar sand is produced and therefore the syrup must be filtered.

It is much easier to have the syrup correct in the first place than to have the problem later. The quickest way to lose a customer or sales outlet is to have a poor product.

Russ will be happy to talk with you about any maple problem.

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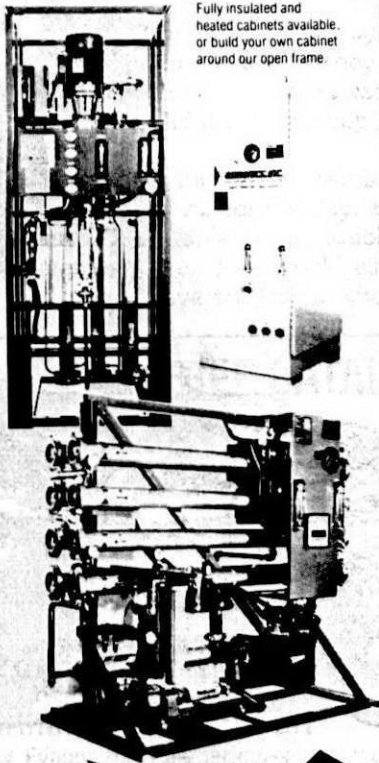
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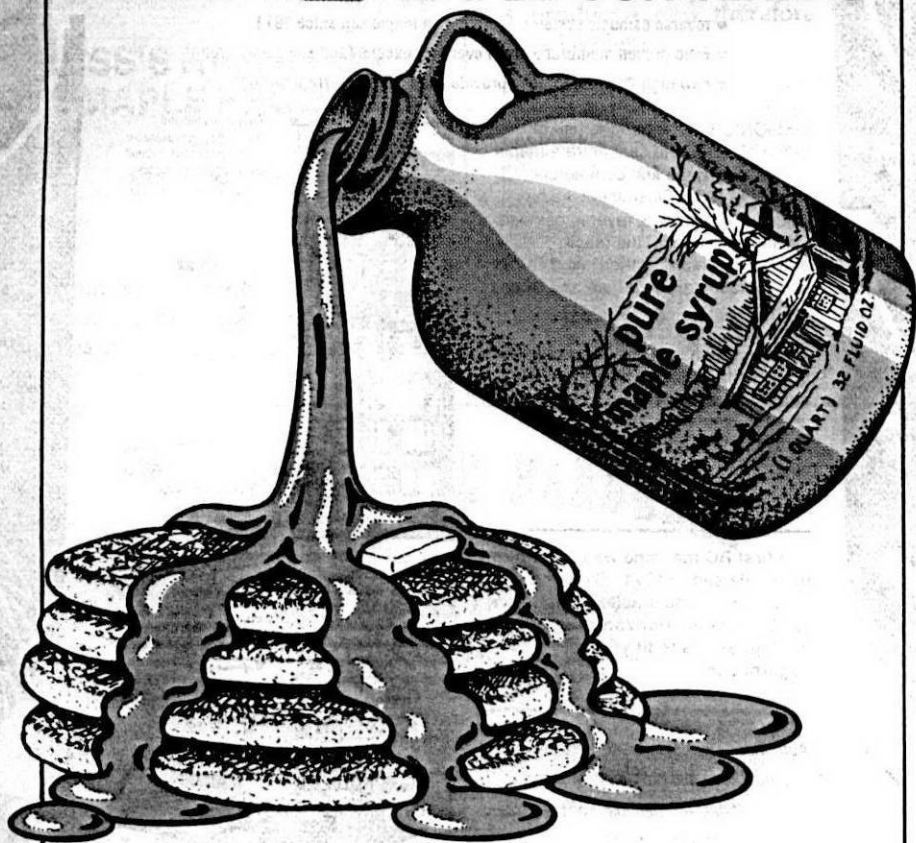


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By Angela Maxfield, Grade 8
RFD #3 Box 3750, Stowe, Vermont 05672
Stowe Junior High School
Barrows Road, Stowe, Vermont, District #2

It's a warm, sunny day in February, 1988, and the sun is shining brightly on my leafless branches, slowly warming the sap that runs through me. I stand tall and firm amongst many other maples on the east side of Mount Mansfield in Stowe, Vt.

I am one of the oldest maples on the mountain, with 300 years behind me. I have broad upright branches, and a beautiful, well shaped crown, like a round-topped dome. My wood is heavy, strong, tough and a light brown color. Within it is my lighter colored sap wood, which holds my precious sap that sugar producers seek.

I can remember when I was not as big and strong as I am now, and the many

sugарers with their families would walk throughout the forest tapping many different trees, but they wouldn't look at me and would just go on. I lived through this for forty-seven years until finally the day came when they no longer passed me by.

The first to tap my trunk and use my sap were the Indians. "Ninautik" was their special name for me, which meant "our own tree". When the crows first appeared in the middle of March, they knew the sugaring season was to begin. Using vessels of clay, hollowed out wood or pieces of birch bark sewed together, the Indians would collect my sap. Then, they would boil it by placing hot stones into the liquid. They repeated this process until the water had evaporated and the thick syrup remained.

Then, after the Indians had boiled all the sap there was for the day, and had made all the maple syrup possible, I can remember when they would all get together and have big feasts, where they

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would use my syrup as sauces for venison or wheat cakes.

The Indians weren't the only people to use my rich syrup. During the revolution it was a popular choice for Thomas Jefferson, and continued to be popular in 1760, when some French Canadian settlers discovered how to use it as a cure for colds and arthritis.

As the many years passed, and as I matured our forefathers continued to pass down the maple sugaring traditions to the way sugaring is done today. In the modern process mechanized equipment is used, such as oil heaters to heat the sap instead of wood, and plastic tubes that run straight from my trunk to storage tanks, instead of buckets. There are large companies where all of the work is done by machines instead of people doing the jobs.

The modern sugaring process may be more efficient and less costly than the old days, but I still miss the sound of the sugarer working his way across the crust, the birds flying as he approaches,

and the breaking of nature's silence as the bucket is emptied into his storage tank. It's a lonesome sound when the sugarer and his horses leave my sugar woods and head to the sugar shack.

The newer methods of sugaring may have changed over the years, but I still stand tall on the east side of Mount Mansfield waiting for the spring sun to warm my roots and for the sugaring season to begin.

Just like so many times before, this year I once again hear a man walking across the crunchy snow towards me and I know that the sugaring season has begun.

NEW MANUFACTURERS OF BACON MAPLE SYRUP JUGS

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the Bacon maple syrup jug along with the manufacturing molds and associated silk screen decorating equipment to a new corporation, The Bacon Jug Co., Inc. of St. Johnsbury, VT. The corporation is owned by Roger Ames of Newport, VT and David McLure of Littleton, N.H.

The new company is having the high quality plastic jugs molded to the same specifications as in the past, and has set up an operation to decorate (silk-screen) the jugs to customer specifications in St. Johnsbury. The jugs are being sold through the existing network of more than 50 dealers.

McLure commented: "We are very pleased to have acquired the rights to the Bacon jug. We look forward to supplying the maple industry with the jug that was the pioneer plastic maple syrup container".

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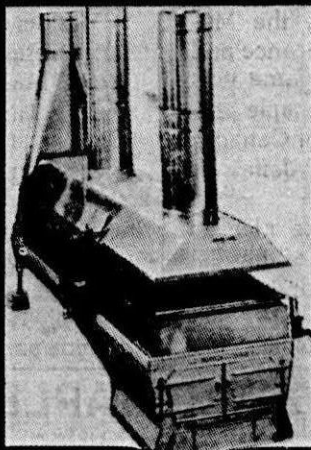
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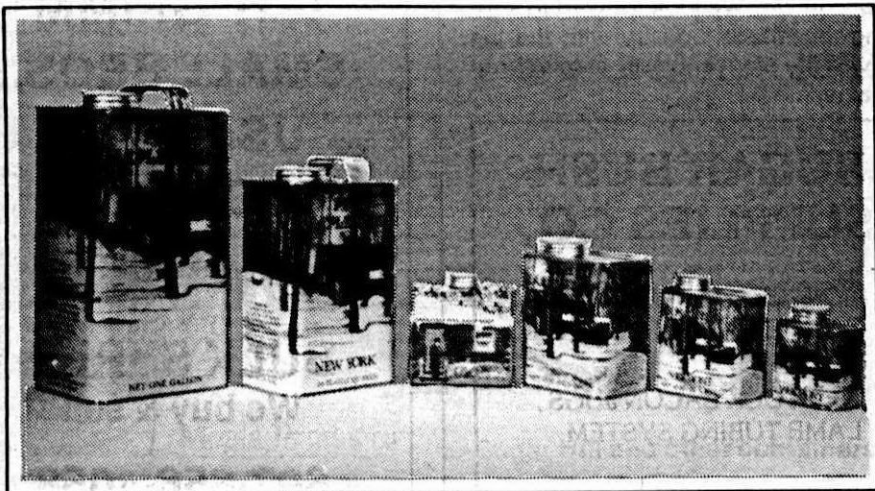
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1988 N.Y. STATE MAPLE TOUR AMERICAN MAPLE MUSEUM VISITORS

By Fred Schnelder

On Monday, August 1, over 300 members of the New York State Maple Tour visited the American Maple Museum in Croghan. Since the Museum is of international significance and includes the Maple Hall of Fame with members from nearly all the maple producing states and provinces of Canada, the visit was included in the Jefferson county based tour.

The Museum visitors were pleased and astonished at the scope of the displays and the amount of work done by the Directors and volunteers. They learned that a grant from New York

State has been received for the improvement of the exhibit areas and information.

Last year a new roof was constructed because the original leaked and patching proved to be only a temporary solution. Exhibits were in danger of damage from the water and so with donations and a membership campaign amounting to \$12,000 the new roof was paid for.

Visitors to the Museum with the New York State Maple Tour were New York, Massachusetts, Vermont, Ohio, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania and Canada. Many left cash donations for the support and operation of the Museum. To those people we are grateful and thank them for their kindness.

Other visitors to the Museum since the opening in May have been from Texas, Tennessee, Washington State, Florida and England.

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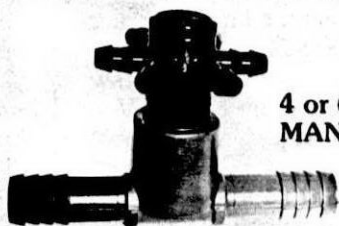
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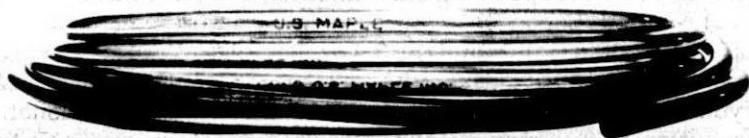
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TAP ROOTS

FILTERING SYRUP

Sometimes filtering syrup is easy but more often it's a real pain. Here are a few tips that may make the pain a bit more bearable.

First, you need a good filter. Most folks start in with cheesecloth. Why, I don't know. Probably because someone told them to. I guess several layers of it might take out the leaves, bark and millers but that's about all. It won't do a thing for the sugar sand. Flannel is usually the next thing tried but any woven material is almost water proof so syrup won't go through it. A milk strainer works pretty well to filter milk. By now

it's time to start using something made for the purpose.

For many years, Canadian wool felt was the standard material used for filtering. It's so thick you wouldn't think syrup would go through it at all but it will because it isn't a woven material. It worked very well and did a good job but had a few disadvantages.

Wool, as it comes off the sheep, is filthy. Sometimes the chemicals used to clean it aren't thoroughly washed out so you might get an off flavor in the syrup with a new filter until it's washed a few times. There is also a storage problem. Moths like wool and will eat it up if you leave it out in the open. If you put the felts in a plastic bag to keep the moths

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out when they aren't thoroughly dry, they might mildew. Store them in moth balls and that's what your syrup will taste like next year. The only safe place to keep them is in a freezer but that's probably already full.

Several years ago, Orlon felt was found to be almost identical to wool felt. Being a synthetic material, it is perfectly clean and will give no off flavor, filters as well as wool, takes syrup even when dry, wastes less of it because the fibers won't absorb anything, can be stored anywhere since moths won't touch it and costs no more than wool. Also, Orlon lasts longer because the fibers are tougher than wool.

There are also polypropylene filters available that are very similar to Orlon in both cost and the way they work.

Regardless of which material you choose, your best bet is a flat sheet. The cone shaped bags were used for many years and while they are easy to hang in a milk can or filter tank, they're very difficult to wash. You have to turn them

wrong side out to wash off the sand and after you've done that a few times you'll wish you had never seen one. The flat felts are much easier to wash and most folks agree they take syrup better than the cones.

They do require a hardware cloth screen to hold them up. The frame of this is preferably made of metal but can be 1" x 2" wood of a "flavorless" variety such as maple. While many of the filter screens are flat on the bottom, I prefer a slight cone shape. About 4 or 5 inches lower in the center than around the edge is fine.

There is also a prefilter on the market that's made of rayon. This is a pressed material, not woven, that looks like paper and washes like cloth. Syrup goes through it easily, it washes easily, and takes out most of the sand. Used on a screen over the felt it is supposed to make the felt last longer between washings.

Several years ago we built a machine to wash our felts. It worked so well I



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decided to not bother with the prefilters which I always thought I should use but had to be washed quite often, and use a felt as long as I could, then change it and let the washer do the hard work. I was surprised to find that most of the time the felts took about twice as much syrup as when I used the prefilter. I think the reason is because the prefilter takes out most of the sugar sand, the part which contains the coarsest particles and lets the fine particles through. This is the stuff that plugs up the felt. If the coarse particles are left mixed in they help to form a porous filter bed that holds up the fine particles and lets the syrup leach through. I've told many producers about this and after trying it without the prefilter they reported better results.

I suppose pressure filters are the ultimate in filtering devices and have some advantages over felts. I've also been told by those who have them they

have some disadvantages but since I have never used one, I can't very well write anything on that subject. Here are a few tips to remember when getting started.

Wool felts must be used wet. Synthetic felts will take syrup when dry but work better if slightly wet.

Filter syrup as hot as possible. Drawing directly from the evaporator or finish pan into the felt is best. Drawing into a pail first may cool it too much.

Don't filter between the evaporator and finishing pan, if you use one. That takes out the coarse particles that help final filtration.

Be sure syrup isn't too thick. A slight increase in density increases the viscosity quite a bit.

If all this fails, maybe you should go back to letting it settle in a tank for about two weeks and draw off the cleaner syrup from the top. By then it will only have a little sand in it.

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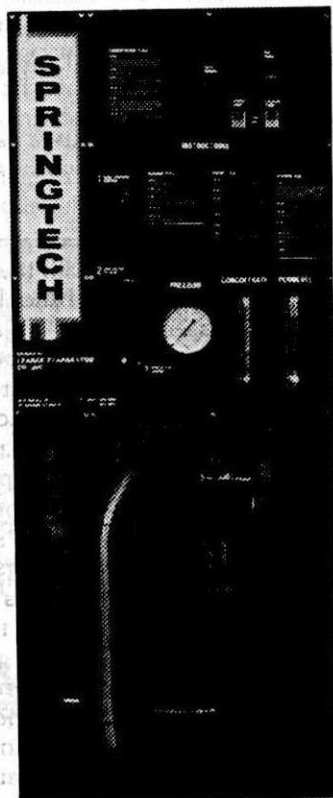
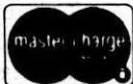
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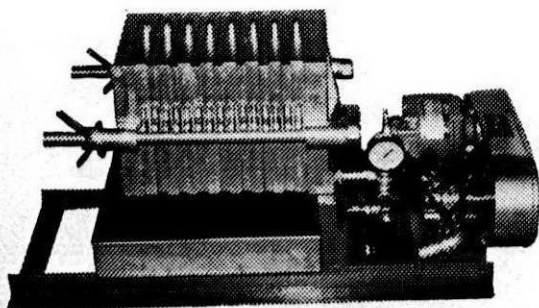
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