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**Vol. 28 No. 4**

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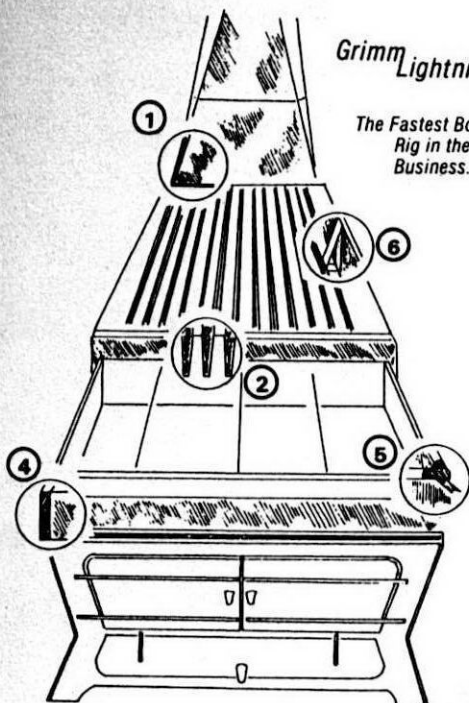
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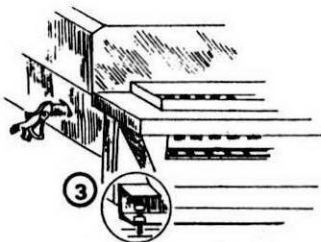
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# MAPLE SYRUP DIGEST

Official publication of the  
NORTH AMERICAN  
MAPLE SYRUP COUNCIL

## DIRECTORY

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## THE CONTROVERSIAL TAP HOLE PELLETT

The tap hole pellet was developed in the late 50's by a research team at Michigan State University headed by Dr. Costilow and Prof. Robbins. The project was supervised by Dr. C. O. Willits of the maple research division of the U.S.D.A. Laboratory in Philadelphia.

Costilow and Robbins found that paraformaldehyde, the solid form of the chemical formaldehyde, when placed in the tap hole controlled the growth of micro-organisms for 6 to 8 weeks and prevented premature stopping of the sap flow due to bacterial growth sealing up the pores in the wood. This was the only material they could find that could accomplish this task and have no effect on the color or flavor of the syrup.

The pellet was approved on February 20, 1962 by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the equivalent agency in Canada. At that time a maximum allowable tolerance of 2 parts per million of formaldehyde in the syrup was set.

In due time the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets inspectors started picking up samples of syrup. They had them analyzed and found several that contained more formaldehyde than was allowed. At first a warning was issued but the second time they threatened to seize the producers entire crop.

This prompted the New York State Maple Producers Assoc. to ask the Dept. of Agriculture and Markets for a hearing. This was held in Albany on July 10, 1969. At the hearing, one case in particular shed considerable light on the problem.

About 3 years prior to this time, a sample from a producer in northern New York yielded a formaldehyde content of about 4 parts per million. He was warned by the department so he cut down on the number of pellets used

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## ADVERTISING RATE INCREASE

**The Maple Syrup Digest hasn't had to increase its advertising rates for 5 years but costs of printing and postage caught up this year. An increase of approximately 15% will only keep our heads above water and will begin with the February, 1989, issue.**

**Please see advertising rates listed in Directory on page 4 of this issue.**

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the next year to 1500. He tapped 5000 at that time and only placed them in the earliest trees tapped. He was much surprised when the next sample contained 5 ppm. After some arguing they allowed him to make syrup the next year but if the formaldehyde content didn't go down he would be out of business. Thinking he would probably be shut down anyway he decided he might as well go out flying so he continued to use the pellet. To everyone's surprise the next year's sample reported no trace.

There was one significant change in this producers operation. The year his formaldehyde content dropped, he had replaced his old evaporator with new flue pans and a steam finishing pan powered by a high pressure boiler.

At that time another producer in New York was making 7 to 8 thousand gallons of syrup a year from 17 to 18,000 taps. He and his sap suppliers used the pellet in every tap every year. Samples of his syrup produced no trace of formaldehyde at any time. He also finished his syrup with high pressure steam which has a much lower temperature than organic or fossil fuels such as wood, oil or gas.

Dr. C. O. Willits, who had recently retired from the Philadelphia laboratory, attended the hearing and told of his experience analyzing syrup for formalde-

hyde content. The year before the hearing, he asked for samples of syrup from producers who had never used the pellet. He received 21 and upon analyzing them found that the formaldehyde content averaged as much or more than the samples where the pellet was used.

I realized this may not be official proof, but it is certainly enough evidence to tell us the formaldehyde in syrup does not originate from the pellet. It would be very easy for any agency who wishes to condemn the pellet to find out exactly what is happening between the tap hole and finished syrup. Analyzing sap, partly finished syrup and the finished product would be the first step. I doubt very much if you will ever find any formaldehyde in sap since paraformaldehyde can change from a solid to a gas without becoming a liquid. It is very volatile and is certainly gone before the sap ever reaches the evaporator.

When syrup samples are collected, a note should be made on each sample

as to what kind of heat was used to finish the syrup (wood, oil, gas, or steam). You will probably find a definite pattern showing that the hotter the heat, the higher the formaldehyde content. This is because there is a slight toasting effect from high heat on the bottom of the pan just as syrup reaches standard density. The higher this density is, the higher the formaldehyde content may be.

All of these occurrences indicate this is where the formaldehyde comes from. It's a natural formation in the process of condensing sap to syrup the same as in smoking meat where the formaldehyde content sometimes runs high as 1000 ppm but is deemed permissible by the Food and Drug Administration.

If anyone who uses organic or fossil fuels to finish syrup thinks their syrup contains no formaldehyde just because they don't use the pellet, they're in for a rude awakening. Before the pellet is condemned, someone had better do some homework.

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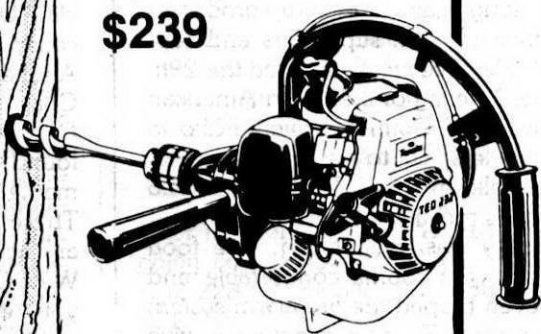
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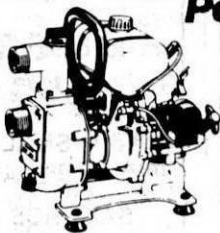
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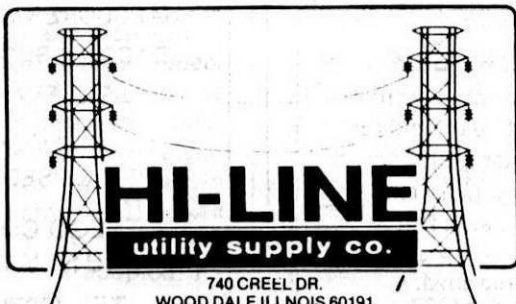
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# FROM THE PRESIDENT



Greeting to all maple syrup producers and their staunch supporters and suppliers. We have just completed the 29th Annual Meeting of the North American Maple Syrup Council. I would like to take a little space to thank all the wonderful folk in New Hampshire who made this meeting very successful. The hospitality was outstanding. The food delicious, the rooms comfortable and they even tripped the fire alarm system around three Tuesday morning to give us some exercise and fresh air while clearing the building. Fortunately it was a false. New Hampshire Association president, Richard Moore, and their Council delegate, Roy Hutchinson, ran a very smooth and on time schedule.

All 14 member states and provinces were represented by their delegate and many of the alternates were also present. Many items pertaining to maple were discussed. One being the Maple Syrup Producers Manual, Agriculture Handbook 134, which has been the Basic Reference Book for years, have nearly all been distributed. The U.S. Department of Agriculture has printed it in the past. It has not been printed or re-

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vised since 1976. The delegates felt it should be brought up to date and printed by the Department, if they can be persuaded. A committee of five has been appointed to do this work.

The research projects partially funded by grants from the Council were completed. At least two of them will be continued. The one monitoring maple decline will be continued through the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. Adulterated maple syrup on the West Coast and elsewhere, funded by the Council and the Vermont Association, found many flagrant violations - pure maple syrup from Mississippi is one. These will be followed up and disciplinary action sought. If you travel to the West Coast or a non-maple State keep your eyes open and report what you see.

Two new research projects will be helped with funds from money collected on maple containers. The smaller is to help with the housekeeping at the sweet tree project at Grand Isle under the Forest Service at Durham, New Hampshire. The second a study of pear thrips

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which have defoliated thousands of maple trees in the Northeast this year and in previous years. The project is mainly to develop a mechanized system to determine the population of thrip in the soil.

The general theme which evolved seemed to be save, maintain and improve our timber with special emphasis on maple. Many of these topics, I am sure, will be covered in depth by our newsletter the "Maple Digest". Dr. Alex Shigo of Shigo and Trees Associates gave a presentation on the make-up and health of trees in a very different way. Its chemistry, food and nutrient storage, effects of adverse weather, defoliation, etc. A tree in good health has a built-in defense against disease and injury. Like a person this defense is weakened in many ways. Tapping time finds the tree's defenses at peak. It walls off the injury. When the leaves come out reserves are used and the tree is more easily damaged. The other low point is in the fall after the leaves have been shed and the roots are sending out fibers. I had never heard such a presentation and did not know many of these things. Perhaps you are ahead of me and knew all this and I have taken up space better used otherwise. To better understand our trees we need to spend more time in the woods during the summer observing. There were other good presentations on soils, insects, and pests (there are at least 164) major and minor, and of course selection of trees for better sugar content and more sap.

Anyway the response from the appeal to adopt a tree was wonderful. The Lab at the Proctor Maple Research Center which was destroyed by fire will be rebuilt. More money is needed though and in spite of the poor summer in Vermont they still have a few thousand or more maple trees which can be adopted. It's not too late to help out.

Arthur Merle

## VERMONT MAPLE MEETINGS

by Ray Foulds

Dates of the 1989 Vermont County Maple Meetings, Annual V.M.S.M. A. Meeting, and Maplerama are as follows (as per your telephone request of this morning):

County	Date
Orange	Jan. 4
Washington	Jan. 6
Caledonia	Jan. 16
Lamoille	Jan. 17
Orleans	Jan. 18

For more information about the foregoing contact George Cook, R. R. 1 Box 228, Morrisville, VT. 05661. Tel. 802-888-4972

County	Date
Addison	Jan. 5
Rutland	Jan. 10
Bennington	Jan. 11
Windham	Jan. 12
Windsor	Jan. 13
Franklin	Jan. 19
Chittenden	Jan. 19 (evening)

For more information about the foregoing contact Larry Myott, 4A Laurette Drive, Winooski, VT. 05407. (Tel. 802-655-4452).

The Annual Meeting of the Vt. Maple Sugar Makers Assoc. in 1989 will be held at the Vt. Farm Show on Tues., Jan. 24, at noon in the Auditorium in Barre, VT. For more information contact Everette Willard at 802-828-2437.

The 1989 Vt. Maplerama will be held in Orleans County on July 28 & 29. For more information contact George Cook, RR 1 Box 228, Morrisville, Vt. (Tel. 802-888-4972).

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John and Ellen

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## **N. Y. MAPLE SCHOOLS Tentative dates of 1989**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Host County</b>	<b>Phone No. for Information</b>
Jan. 12	Allegany	716-268-7644
Jan. 13	Chataqua	716-664-9502
Jan. 14	Wyoming	716-786-2251
Jan. 17	Cortland	607-753-5077
Jan. 18	Chenango	607-334-5841
Jan. 19	Delaware	607-865-6531
Jan. 20	Otsego	607-547-2536
Jan. 24	Warren- Washington	518-623-3291
Jan. 25	Clinton	518-561-7450
Jan. 26	St. Lawrence	315-379-2311
Jan. 27	Lewis	315-376-6551

## **WISCONSIN'S THANK-YOU**

Congratulation to Roy Hutchinson and his great group from New Hampshire for a superb job on hosting the North American Maple Syrup Council convention. Fellows you did so excellent, every detail went so smooth. There was so much good and interesting information given out by excellent speakers and researchers.

Our President Arthur Merle also did a great job by keeping our business meeting well organized and informational to the audience.

It was a very happy and pleasant two days to be with all you outstanding Maple people at the convention in New Hampshire.

John Polak of Polaks Sugar Bush, a Senior Member of our Wisconsin Council has followed the North American Maple Syrup convention for many years, but this year was unable to attend because of a severe car-truck injury about a month ago, and we all missed seeing this faithful Maple Producer. John is doing quite well now and hopes to see all you Maple folks next year in Maine.

Wishing Happy Holiday to all.

Roland Jorns

*it  
boils down  
to one  
thing...*



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## PENNSYLVANIA MAPLE SWEETHEART

Patricia Fox, daughter of James and Lillian Fox of Covington, PA., has been named Pennsylvania Maple Sweetheart

for 1988. Patty is a senior at North Penn High School in Blossburg. She is President of Student Council and an active member of Key Club, Chorus and National Honor Society. After graduating from high school, she plans to attend college studying to become an occupational therapist.

To make it to the state level, Patty was selected from a group of twelve candidates representing their schools in the Potter and Tioga Counties of Pennsylvania.

She gained her knowledge of the maple industry with the help of a neighboring maple producer, Lee Hoar. She has helped promote maple at the Tioga County Fair, has been in several parades, and is looking forward to doing more maple promotion during her reign as the State Maple Sweetheart.

**DEADLINE**

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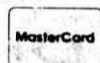
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## **THE TAP HOLE PELLET**

I feel it is time to put all the cards on the table concerning the tap hole pellet, and get some facts straight. The pellet has never caused any formaldehyde to be in maple syrup. It is impossible for it to do so.

The pellet was developed over an intensive period of research of 7 years by Michigan State University and the U.S.D.A. Laboratory in Philadelphia. Their work showed there was no effect what-so-ever on the syrup when the pellet was used.

The trouble started when the U.S. Food and Drug started testing samples and the majority of the samples from the little guys had a slight amount more formaldehyde in them than was allowed. Then the little guys syrup was condemned and not saleable. This also con-

demned him and he was a social outcast. He just as well could have had leprosy. Later, Food and Drug reversed their decision and told the little guys they could sell their syrup. But the damage was done. They were outcasts and had lost their market.

So I started my own research which was on a level of when I followed a one horse cultivator, bare footed, with dirt between my toes. Not what you would call scientific.

My main concern was of the little guy on a small farm, raising a family and paying taxes. He is the real vanishing species and a lot more important to me than some big bird. The big bird doesn't really need maple as he can make a success of almost any other business he cares to get into.

Most of the syrup I had tested was produced without the tap hole pellet. I

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found out that when the U.S. Food & Drug said there was formaldehyde in syrup, they were right. But when they tested syrup from one run to another less than a week apart, some contained formaldehyde and some did not.

This became very confusing, to say the least. The tests were from little guy operations, mostly wood fired and no covered evaporators. Then I heard about food products that were loaded with formaldehyde and disgracefully illegal, like smoked bacon and hams. I was told they had no control over smoked meats because they came under the grandfather clause. This means it had gone on for so many years they had no control so it must be all right.

So instead of making any progress, I was worse off than when I started and knew even less. To confuse me even more, no one who had a steam finishing pan ever had any formaldehyde in their syrup, tap hole pellet or no tap hole pellet.

Eventually I found out, due to no credit to myself, that formaldehyde comes from finishing syrup with too much heat. It can even come from oil or gas burners and wood fires are up and

down, especially when one is busy.

Now they can stop the pellet, but that is not going to get rid of formaldehyde. If they keep testing syrup, 90% of the little guys will be put out of business. There's no way they can all change their systems to avoid it. Without the pellet, production will drop 25 to 30% some years and we'll have to do without a lot of the best syrup in the world. The only way the little guy will be able to keep on is to buy a bunch of wash tubs and drop hot stones in them.

In maple, our state researchers are human. We talk, they listen. They talk, we listen. But now the E. P. A. (Environmental Protection Agency) is taking over. Apparently they think they can do a better job than Food & Drug. You've got to remember that the E. P. A. is a federal agency that receives good pay and pensions. As long as they can see lightning and hear thunder, they're set for life. When we talk to them, we're just hollering into an empty barrel.

Seems to me they could find something better to do.

Bob Lamb

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## THRIPS QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO VERMONT SUGARMAKERS

Vermont sugarmakers voiced their concern this year over the massive damage caused by pear thrips. In response, the state of Vermont has given a high priority to addressing this problem. Although many answers are not yet known about the insect, the injury it causes to sugar maples and how best to control the pest, the State Forestry Division is preparing to offer some programs, based on what is known, that may be of benefit to landowners affected by pear thrips.

The first step, however, is to determine how many sugarmakers will be interested in any of the thrips programs offered. Therefore, a questionnaire has been mailed to over 2000 known sugarmakers in the state. Based on the responses, the following programs aimed at the thrips problem, will be implemented.

First, is a service to measure the health of trees in a sugarbush. Using a root starch analysis technique, an estimate of the tree's starch reserves is determined. Trees with low to depleted starch reserves are susceptible to mortality from additional stress. So, in a sugarbush where most of the trees have low to depleted starch levels, stress from tapping or defoliation by pear thrips, could hasten mortality. Results from this tree health analysis could be used by landowners to decide whether or not to tap next spring.

The second pear thrips program to be offered by the state will be one that estimates the thrips population in a sugarbush. This will be done by taking soil samples in the spring, once the insect's winter mortality has occurred. The number of thrips found in a sugarbush can then be used by the landowner to decide if any control measures will be used in the spring.

## THE ONTARIO REPORT

The 22nd annual meeting of the Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association was held at the Quality Inn at Woodstock on October 14 and 15, 1988. The program theme was Marketing Maple for Profit. The speakers on the program were Dermod Mark who is manager of the field marketing program for OMAF and Gary Gander who is a Marketing Consultant. The afternoon program featured Ruth Marcon, manager of the field services region of the Rual Organization and Services branch from OMAF and Chris Papadopol a research scientist from the Ontario Tree Improvement and Biomass Institute of the Ministry of Natural Resources.

A Maple Auction rounded out the afternoon with \$730.00 being raised for OMSPA. The evening banquet featured George Collin as speaker who is the assistant Deputy Minister of Agriculture for Ontario. Entertainment followed.

The Saturday program highlight was a tour of Timberjack Industries who make all types of logging Equipment and a tour of a local Maple plantation.

Bill Robinson

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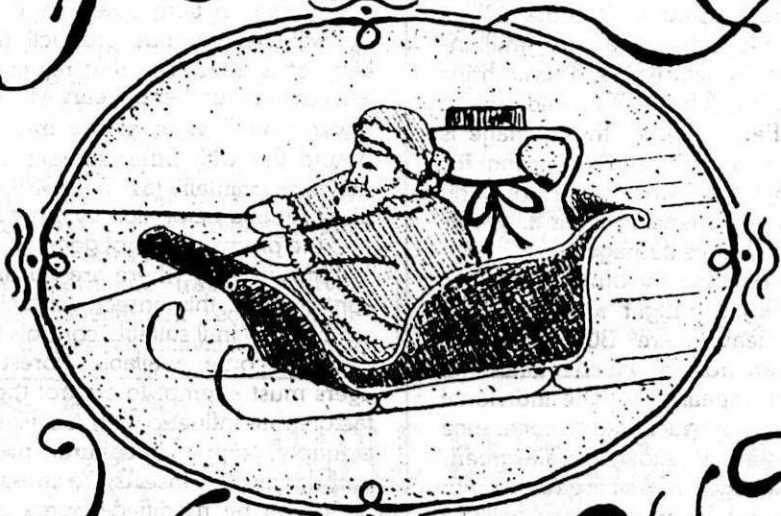
Lastly, the state wants to know how much public interest there will be in aerial spraying to control adult thrips next spring. Currently, there is only one insecticide that can be used in a sugarbush that will be tapped for syrup production. That insecticide, Sevin (carbaryl), would be applied in the spring, just before budbreak, and after the tapping season. Although there are no guarantees that this insecticide will give total protection of leaves, some protection should be accomplished.

To obtain a copy of the Vermont Thrips Questionnaire, contact Sandra Wilmot at Vermont Department of Forests, Parks, and Recreation; 103 South Main Street; Waterbury, VT 05676; Telephone 244-8716.

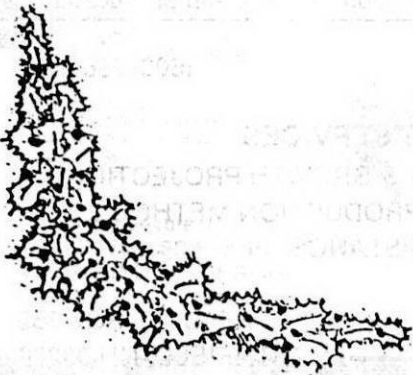


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# PEAR THRIPS A THREAT TO NORTH EASTERN SUGAR MAPLE

Gary E. Laudermilch,  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Department of Environmental Resources  
Office of Resources Management  
Bureau of Forestry  
Division of Forest Pest Management  
Northern Area, Wellsboro, Pennsylvania

Sugar Maple foliage throughout much of northeastern United States was damaged this spring by a very small insect known as pear thrips, *Taeniothrips inconsequens* (Uzel). To residents of northern Pennsylvania, this damage is common and has been occurring for nearly a decade. Other more northerly states are experiencing their first encounter with thrips damage.

Foliage damage by thrips resembles late frost injury. Light to moderately damaged leaves are 30-50 percent smaller than normal which makes the tree crown appear thin. The individual leaves have a puckered appearance and are mottled yellow to pale green. Heavily damaged leaves are reduced in size by nearly 70 percent and will be more severely puckered and mottled. The leaf margins have a tattered or torn appearance. The tree crown has a brownish cast to it and is noticeably thin.

What effect is this insect having on

sugar maples and what implications does it have for syrup producers? Very little research has been conducted to measure the impact of the thrips on the health of infested sugar maples. However, based on what we know about a tree's food production system, we can make some assumptions.

A tree needs foliage to produce the food it needs for both the current season's growth and some to store in the root system to fuel foliation the following spring. It is probably safe to assume that thrips damaged foliage, which is sub-normal in both quality and quantity, will alter the food production capability of a tree. Also that repeated attacks over a number of years will result in lower overall vigor of the tree. Compound this with other stresses such as deficient rainfall (as in 1988), frost damage, and defoliation by other insects, and the prognosis is not good.

Unfortunately, there are no practical controls for this insect, chemical or otherwise. Until suitable controls for this insect become available, forest managers must attempt to control the other factors that influence a tree's vigor. For example, tapping, cultural practices, and damage by insects are stresses that often can be modified. Some suggestions for stressed stands are:

- Monitor trees periodically for damaging agents or signs of stress.
- Identify those trees with such signs of stress as branch dieback, defoliation, reduced sap production or su-

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gar content.

- Limit tapping on stressed individuals.
- Forego thinning operations or operating heavy equipment in affected stands. The initial effect of thinnings and root compaction are stressful to residual trees.
- Intervene when insects such as fall cankerworm or forest tent caterpillar pose a further threat to tree vigor.

Work is underway to look for answers to the multitude of questions we have about thrips. Several states and the U.S. Forest Service have formed the "Regional Pear Thrips Committee." The objectives of this consortium are:

1. To gather and disseminate pertinent information about pear thrips impact, surveys, control, biology, and research action on sugar maple.

2. To coordinate training, survey methods, management recommendations, and research activities on sugar

maple.

3. To identify needed research and training.

In addition, research is being initiated by the States of Vermont, Pennsylvania, and Massachusetts and the U.S. Forest Service to investigate ways to survey for pear thrips and methods to control the effect of pear thrips. Investigation into the biology and control of pear thrips will not yield results quickly. There is only one generation of thrips in a year. This species gives us only a fleeting glimpse of the adults, the larvae are quite small and furtive, and for about nine months of the year, they are completely secretive because they are in the ground. None of these habits are conducive to easy observation.

Until we have answers to the pear thrips mysteries, forest managers and sugar bush operators are advised to do what they can to limit other stresses on these trees. Perhaps it will be possible to have our maples and eat them too.



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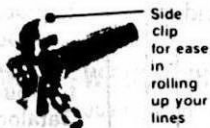
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## CONNECTICUT NEWS

by Darrell Russ

The 12th annual meeting of the MSPAC was held at Combs' Maple Products in Jacksonville, VT, on Nov. 5th. The Coombs family put on the whole show with demonstrations of grading and canning syrup and making and packaging maple sugar products.

Following the tours, Pres. Rich Norman called the meeting to order. Barbara Atwood's secretary's and treasurer's report were accepted. The meeting voted to donate \$100.00 to NAMSC for maple research, \$500.00 to the Univ. of Vermont Laboratory rebuilding fund, and \$100.00 to IMSI in lieu of a \$3.00/member dues request. The Connecticut Agric. Inf. Council dues of \$25.00 was approved.

Bud Gavitt, editor of the "Drop in the Bucket" newsletter reminded the members of the free "For Sale or Swap" column.

The following officers were re-elected: President-Richard Norman; Vice President Kenneth Sherrick; Sec'y-Treas.-Barbara Atwood; Coordinator-Avis Norman. Directors for two years are: Newell Atwood, Robert Lamothe and Glen Boies.

President Norman urged those who wished to make their sugarhouses available to visitors next season to sign up for the Conn-Grown brochure.

Following a hearty thanks to the Coombs family, the meeting adjourned to tour the Mike Girard's sugarhouse in Heath.

The Connecticut Assoc. spring workshop will be held at Rob and Jean Lamothe's new sugarhouse in Burlington, CT, on Sat., Jan. 21, 1989. All syrup producers and interested persons are urged to attend.

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## 1988 RESEARCH FUND AWARDEES

The North American Maple Syrup Council proudly announces:

The following research proposals were approved for funding at the annual convention of the NAMSC in Portsmouth, New Hampshire:

University of Vermont: Burlington, VT \$5,000.00 grant for study of: "A MECHANIZED SOIL EXTRACTION SYSTEM FOR DETERMINING POPULATION DENSITIES OF PEAR THRIPS IN SUGARBUSHES"

Northeastern Forest Experiment Station: Durham, NH \$1,000.00 grant for study of:

"MAINTENANCE OF VERMONT SUGAR MAPLE CLONAL SEED ORCHARD"



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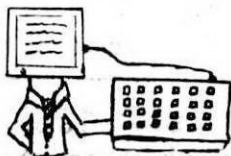
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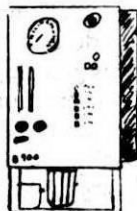
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## RESEARCH FUND GROWING

The second year of the North American Maple Syrup Council Research fund shows steady growth and acceptance. During the 1987-88 period, contributions have increased significantly and the number of container companies participating is also increasing. It is a proud moment in the maple industry's history to see self determination of the research that it deems necessary and critical.

We in the maple industry have the opportunity to reward those that have cooperated and contributed to our Research Fund by purchasing our containers from those that are participating in the Research Contribution program. I urge you to do this. This is the way that we can show our appreciation and also encourage more container companies to join with us in establishing research projects which can benefit the maple syrup industry of North America. Those container companies that are not or have not to date joined with us in the .01 per container contribution to maple research, we urge you to do so immediately. Your efforts may be the added efforts required to save our maple trees and to reverse the current maple decline spreading across our land.

Thank you to all of those listed below who have contributed over \$20,000.00 this year to the North American Maple Syrup Council Research Fund. I ask each maple producer to give them all your container business. They are doing a magnificent job of supporting our

maple syrup industry. Let's make sure we thank them properly with our container business.

And a special thank you to the thousands of Maple Producers who have purchased maple containers and have paid the .01 per container contribution.

You are the main reason this project works. Your continued support is critical.

Lynn Reynolds  
Treasurer  
NAMSC Research Fund

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### 1987 - 1988 Contributions to the NORTH AMERICAN MAPLE SYRUP COUNCIL RESEARCH FUND

Warren Allen - Castorland, NY  
Clem-Dee, Inc. - Lyndonville, VT  
Connecticut Maple Producers Assoc. -  
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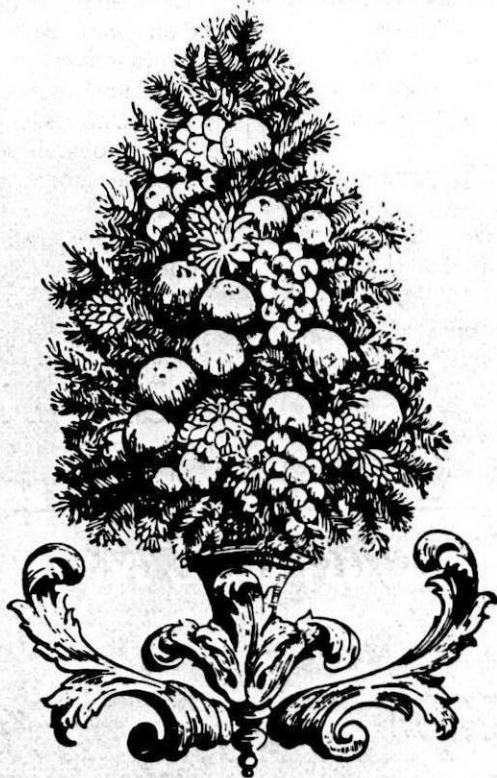
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## IMSI HOLDS ANNUAL MEETING

The International Maple Syrup Institute conducted its annual meeting in conjunction with the NAMSC in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, October 22-23, 1988.

The annual meeting opened Saturday evening with a Board of Directors meeting to discuss 1988-89 budgets and the upcoming days agenda. One of the important topics was an all-out membership drive to increase the IMSI's numbers and its revenue.

Sunday started with registration and renewing old friendships. The official program began with Dave Scanlon and the President's Report. Usual business of Secretary-Treasurer's reports, appointment of auditors, and other routine matters were handled in proper order.

The election of officers was held:  
John Hyndman - President

Juan Reynolds - Vice President  
Vito Vescio - Treasurer

The program was well attended and very interesting. It started with an update on "Acid Rain Situation", by David Gardiner, Legislative Director, Sierra Club, Washington, D.C. and by Brian Watson, Canadian Consulate. The acid rain segment of the program was moderated by Michael Herman.

Dr. Mariafranca Morselli was presented an award for her dedication and contributions to the maple syrup industry.

The keynote speaker Dr. Thomas Funk, University of Guelph, Ontario, gave an overall address to "Marketing Strategies for the Maple Syrup Industry".

The IMSI provided a morning brunch and an opportunity to exchange international ideas. There were interpreters available for both English and French. Since the NAMSC meeting followed this meeting, it provided an opportunity for Canadian and U.S. maple syrup producers to socialize as well as conduct business and exchange information.

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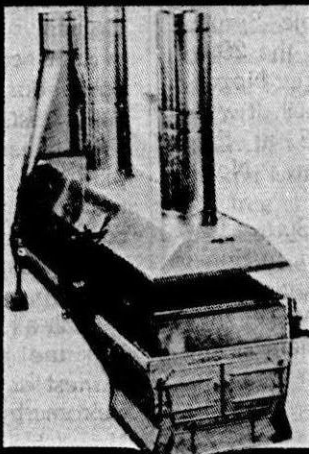


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# 1988 NORTH AMERICAN MAPLE SYRUP COUNCIL CONVENTION

By Lynn H. Reynolds  
Secretary, NAMSC



## "A Convention As Solid As Granite"

The New Hampshire Maple Syrup Producers Association hosted the 29th annual convention of the North American Maple Syrup Council. It was held October 23-25, 1988 at the Sheraton in Portsmouth, New Hampshire.

The International Maple Syrup Institute held its annual meeting on Sunday, October 23rd. Sunday also served as registration day for the NAMSC. The dual conventions added an element of two informational sources with the convenience of only one travel. Sunday was packed with meetings, speakers, registration, and re-establishing old and lasting friendships.

Sunday evening officially opened the convention with a Board of Directors meeting. Business conducted included a familiarization with procedures for new Directors and Alternates. A discussion ensued concerning the status of the Research Review Committee. The Board was advised of the status of the

Research Fund. A lengthy discussion developed concerning the status of incorporating the Maple Syrup Digest into the NAMSC.

The Directors meeting was followed by an opening complimentary banquet fit for any King. The New Hampshire Maple Producers Association provided a bountiful feast, a beautiful slide show of New Hampshire, and some superb entertainment hosted by Gordon Gowen.

Food certainly played a significant part of our enjoyment. The New Hampshire hosts sure know how to please their guests. From the opening complimentary buffet all the way through the closing banquet, we were served constant bountiful tables and sincere warm hospitality. Both were enjoyed and appreciated.

After a huge breakfast Monday morning, the business meeting began in earnest at 8:00 a.m. with the official welcome by Commissioner Taylor of the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture. Richard Moore, President NHMPA welcomed the Council. Arthur Merle, President NAMSC welcomed the Delegates and the business at hand began. Roll call confirmed all 14 States and Provinces were properly represented on the Council. The usual business of Secretary-Treasurer Reports showed the Council was progressing well and in good strong financial posi-

*Warmest Holiday Wishes  
to all our maple friends*

**The Reynolds Family**

tion. The most significant aspect of the council finances was the Research Fund which showed a balance of \$15,290.23. Everyone in attendance expressed their strong optimism towards continuing success of the Research Fund Raising System. The auditing committee determined all financial accounts to be in order.

This meeting as in the past 28 years, we listed intently to the crop reports and activities of each member Province or State. The news was not great, but a considerable improvement over the past two years. All Provinces and States reported improved crops. The Midwest U.S. and western Ontario indicated near normal crops. The Eastern U.S. was poor, but better than last year. Eastern Canada had good crops. Many Delegates reported how early the season started and then simply warmed up. This seems to be a trend in recent years. The seasons seem earlier and shorter. The one thing in common was that the quality, especially flavor was excellent in all parts of the syrup regions. The additional production of this year fueled enthusiasm for festivals,

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pancake feeds, parades, Maple Queens, fairs, expositions, and other maple syrup promotions. There seemed to be a real feeling of "I've got something to sell this year for a change", a feeling we just haven't had in the past few years. Maple products are moving well and the price appears adequate for good profitability.

The Committee on including the Maple Syrup Digest into the Corporate structure of the NAMSC reported that the Council must contract for the editor of the Digest, include all financial data into the financial reports of the overall council, to start the numbering system on the issues to correspond to the new tax free status of the Corporation, and possibly a name change for the publications. The name change was referred back to the committee for further study. All other changes shall be enacted immediately.

Lloyd Sipple, Editor of the Maple Syrup Digest discussed the progress of the publication. The financial report showed the books in order and exhibited optimism for the future years concerning the digest. Lloyd also discussed the value of the tap hole pellet to many producers and pointed out that formaldehyde content of smoked meats far exceeds that in maple sap. No evidence has been shown that any formaldehyde is found in maple sap as a result of pellet use and it is doubtful if any damage to the tree is the respon-

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sibility of using the pellet.

One highlight was the proposal to review and rewrite the Maple Syrup Producers Handbook. A committee was formed to study ways to re-issue the fine publication with current added information.

A final report on the "Investigation of Sugar Maple Decline in Wisconsin" was presented to the Council by Cheryl Rezabek, Environmental Specialist, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. The research project indicated some maple decline in Wisconsin but not wide spread. The interesting point of this research is that the Council contributed a total of \$2,500.00 to help initiate the research project and now the U.S. Forest Service will fund the project for continuation of this valuable information source. This clearly illustrates how small contributions from our Maple

Research Fund can lead to bigger and better things.

Tuesday mornings' meeting was led off by Lynn Whalen reporting on the final results of "Study of Decline of Sugar Maples by the Evaluation of Metal Toxicity and the Loss of Nutrients in the Sap". Results generally reflect that as decline proceeds, nutritional content decreases and toxicity increases. This study has been a continuation of a project which revealed environmental stresses may produce sap of very different biochemical composition than in trees without undue stress affecting them.

A report by Bruce Martel, Chief of Investigations Wholesale Food Inspection Division, Vermont Department of Agriculture revealed that the fact finding trip to California produced many samples of adulterated maple syrup.

# EZ TACH

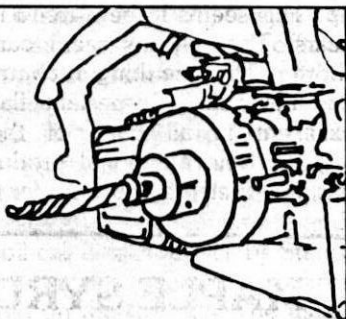
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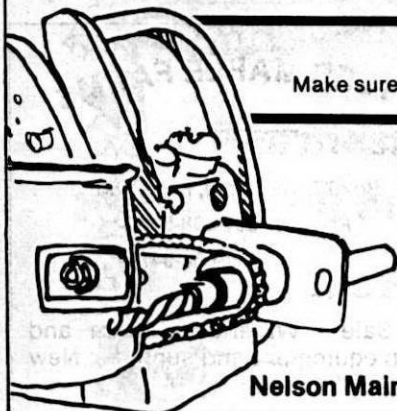


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Probably, the most flagrant violation of pure maple syrup were the samples collected from Mississippi which has **NO** maple at all (mostly corn syrup), labeled as pure maple syrup, and has the International Maple Syrup Institute logo on the container. This logo is supposedly to guarantee consumers that the product in the container is pure maple syrup.

The Council passed a resolution supporting the re-instatement of crop reporting for the maple syrup industry as was discontinued by the USDA in 1981. The Council urges all producers to write to their Congressional constituents requesting this re-instatement.

Dave Scanlon provided a report of the International Maple Syrup Institute and its activities. The news was primarily centered on the meeting as was held on Sunday, October 23rd. Dave pointed out that our communication was improving through the use of the IMSI Newsletter and that the IMSI is commencing an all-out new membership drive. The IMSI held a significant lobbying effort in Washington D.C. during March of last spring, for acid rain legislation. Dr. Morselli was presented an award of appreciation by the IMSI for all of her work and dedication to maple. The new officers elected for next year: President John Hyndman; Vice President, Juan Reynolds, Treasurer, Vito Vescio and Executive Secretary, Alice Switocz.

to raise money for the research fund was an optimistic high. The highest honor of the meeting is giving credit to those companies and individuals who so generously donate these funds. For only the second year, it appears that this effort is a success and shows visions of those syrup makers and companies who are faithfully contributing their .01 per maple container. Please review the list shows a balance of \$15,290.23 as of September 30, 1988 and is growing every day. Our sincere thanks to all of these syrup makers and companies who are faithfully contributing their .01 per maple container. please review the list

of known contributors listed in another article within this issue of the digest. Please give them your maple container business. They are supporting your industry.

The Research Review Committee made recommendations to the Council to contribute funds to two proposals for 1988. The council voted to fund both projects as recommended. The U.S. Forest Service Research Station of Durham, New Hampshire was awarded \$1,000.00 to update and maintain the sweet-tree program at Grand Isle, Vermont. The research project is entitled, "Maintenance of Vermont Sugar Maple Clonal Seed Orchard". The other project is extremely critical in the Northeastern states, especially in Vermont. Pear Thrips are devastating the foliage on sugar maple. A current update was given to the Council by the University of

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Vermont Entomology Department. Due to this report and the seriousness of the situation, a \$5,000.00 award was granted to the University of Vermont to develop "A mechanized Soil Extraction System for Determining Population Densities of Pear Thrips in Sugarbushes". The fund raising system works. Maple Research is proceeding because of your efforts. All maple producers can be proud that they are contributing their share. All container companies can be doing their part in sending in the contributions. The real shame lies in the fact that not all Maple Container Companies are yet participating. This is a new year, Let's all get involved.

Officers and members were elected as follows:

President - Arthur Merle, New York  
V-President - Wilson "Bill" Clark, Vt.  
Sec'y. -Treas. -Lynn Reynolds, Wisc.

The following Life Members were added this year: Lloyd Sipple, Elmer Kress, and Charles Bacon.

The following Associate Members were elected this year:

Orlando Small, Producer Maine  
Bill Langenberg, Kempville College,  
Ontario

Clarence Coons, Ont. Ministry of  
Ag. & Food

Gaston Allard, Quebec Dept. of Ag.

Mel Koelling, Extn. Forester, Mich.

Ken Bascom, Bascom's Maple, New  
Hampshire

Richard Haas, Hillside Plastics, Mass.

Gordon Gowen, Past President,

NAMSC, New Hampshire

Dave Marvin, past President, IMSI

Juan Reynolds, Reynolds, Sugar

Bush, Inc., Wisconsin

Ronald Shaw, Past President,

NAMSC, Ontario

Portland, Maine was confirmed as Meeting Location for 1989. New York was voted for 1990, and Wisconsin was designated for 1991. Ohio requested to be the location in 1992.

The book of "Tap Roots", a handbook of published articles by Lloyd Sipple was given the go-ahead for publication. Other business included sending



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awards and certificates of recognition for the council to the Maple Museum, Croghan, New York.

The 29th annual convention of the NAMSC certainly did not begin nor end with the business sessions Monday afternoon, the entire group was entertained by a tour of Strawberry Banke. This was a beautiful setting to observe four centuries of history and culture. This setting, depicting over 350 years of social and architectural changes, was thoroughly enjoyed by all. We were able to browse through shops, restorations, gardens, collections, buildings and the like. A delightful time was had at our own leisure.

During the morning session a harbour tour was enjoyed by many in attendance. The tour was over three hours in length. It toured Portsmouth Harbor and Bay, cruising past forts, anchorages, lighthouses, a naval prison, and a beautiful setting of water blended with New Hampshire wilderness.

And finally a submarine tour at Albacore Park was attended by many guests. The USS Albacore was just one

of many submarines built at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard. The film, history, and visit were thoroughly enjoyed by all attending.

The technical presentations were interesting varied and almost overwhelming in number. Those New Hampshire Planners sure know how to pack-them-in and keep to a schedule. We were welcomed by John Conde' to the technical sessions. The moderators were Summer Dole and John Sargent. Morning presentations included "The Trees' Viewpoint of Tapping", by Dr. Alex Shigo; "Sugar Maple Soil", by William Leak; "Insect Pests of Sugar Maple", by Dr. Douglas Allen; "Sugar Bush Management", by Clarence Coons; and an interesting humorous summary by George Buggell. The afternoon sessions included "Questions that Foreign Markets ask about Maple Syrup", and "Concerns and Insights Relative to the Maple Community and it's Future", by Dr. Mariafranca Morselli; "Syrup Darkening During Storage", and "What's New In Detecting Syrup Adulteration", by Lynn Whalen; "Adopt-A-Maple Program", by Sumner Williams, and "Vapor Compression Evaporator", by Lewis Staats.

Judging from the list of technical presentations, the tours, the business sessions, and the hospitality, you would conclude this was one fantastic convention. But the fun was just beginning. Not to mention the huge breakfasts, the ap-

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petizing lunches, and the tantalizing break snacks, the banquet was still to come. Bob Austin was the emcee. His humor and wit were relished by all. Bob Lamb awarded Outstanding Syrup Maker Awards to most deserving individuals.

They were:

Barbara and Richard Kinnan, Middlebury, Pennsylvania

John Conde, Northfield, Massachusetts

Robert Barlow, Springfield, Vermont

Bob and Florence Lamb certainly are to be congratulated for their unselfish recognition of deserving maple individuals. Certificates of recognition were awarded to all those companies and individuals that contributed to the Research Fund of the NAMSC during 1987-88. Awards were given for the Best Syrup. Winners for "The Best You Have to Offer" were:

Light Amber - Richard Moore, New Hampshire

Medium Amber - Zubell's Sugar Shack, Wisconsin

Dark Amber - Zubell's Sugar Shack, Wisconsin

and the overall winner for 1988 -

Richard Moore, New Hampshire.

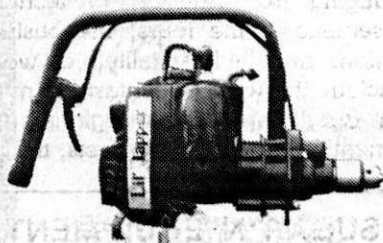
Following all of the awards, we were treated to a tremendous Barber Shop Quartet. They sang, they had audience participation, and they presented a puppet show. They were spectacular.

A few quick personal "Thank You's". Thanks to Gordon Gowen, Richard Moore, Bob Austin, to all of the New Hampshire Maple Producers Association, to all of the New Hampshire cooperative Extension Service, and especially to Roy Hutchinson who did so much for so many to insure our comfort, enjoyment, and your shared hospitality. It will be a long time before we forget your friendliness, New Hampshire.

way to say it, thanks New Hampshire.

Another one down. Goodbye New Hampshire, looking forward to Maine. See all of you in Portland, Maine, October 26-29, 1989.

Happy Holidays, Sugarmakers.



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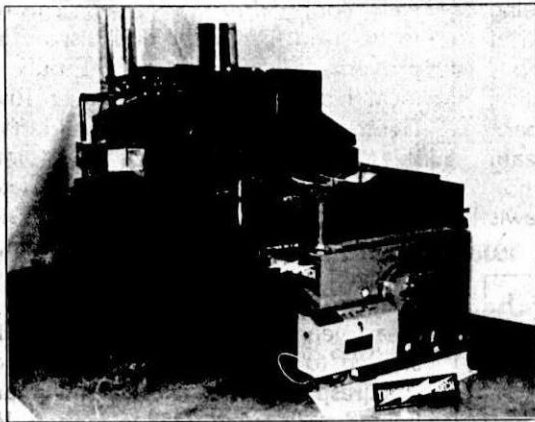
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# YOUR AMERICAN MAPLE MUSEUM


by Fred Schneider

Many things have been happening at the Maple Museum in Croghan. From the season opening until the October closing, hundreds of people, including the New York State Maple Tour, have visited the exhibits and bought maple products and souvenirs at the gift shop.

To raise funds needed for operation of The Maple Museum 4 pancake days are held during the year with the first being just before sugaring and the second at the official season opening. The third is during the Croghan Lumberjack Festival in September and the fourth in November.

Other activities include an ice cream social in the summer and the operation of the food concession at the Lewis County Agribusiness Field Days.

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Starting this year, the Museum gets \$500.00 from the County of Lewis which has already been put to good use. A new steel door has replaced the old wooden double doors at the main entrance. It is easier to open and close and plans are to replace the other doors as funds allow.

This fall, volunteers have painted the trim on the outside of the building and inside painting is planned for the winter. This will be in conjunction with planned exhibit renovations.

In the October issue of the Digest, we reported that a grant from the State of New York had been received. This has to be used for exhibit and display improvements and Kenneth Proulx, a local history teacher at Beaver River Central School has agreed to undertake this task. During the course of the winter these improvements will be completed by volunteers so the money will stretch further. If all goes according to plan, a pleasant surprise awaits those who will attend the May opening.

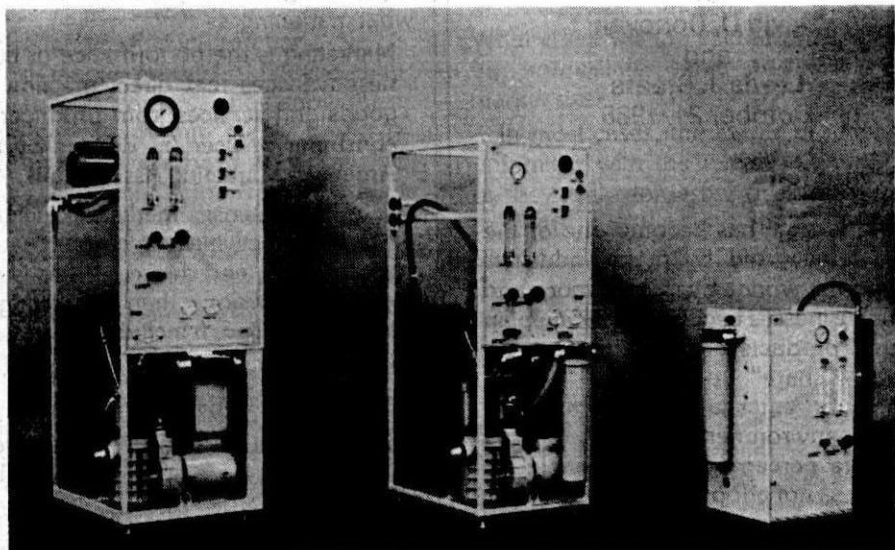
Last year a membership drive was instituted to help pay for the new roof. The response was overwhelming and helped raise much needed money. We will continue to offer memberships and for those who subscribed last year, we hope you will renew your membership for 1989. For those who did not but would like to become members of the American Maple Museum, the fee is \$3.00 for an individual and \$5.00 for a family membership.

Membership entitles the holder to unlimited visits during the year and we at the Museum are grateful for your support. Checks may be sent to: The American Maple Museum, P.O. Box 81, Croghan, N.Y. 13327. Your new membership cards will be mailed to you.

Should you have comments or questions about the Museum, please write.

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# MARKETING OF YOUR MAPLE PRODUCTS

by  
David D. Donovan  
and  
Lewis J. Staats  
October 21, 1988

## Introduction

"Marketing" has become one of the latest terms used by many industries around the world. Every day more and more businesses begin a marketing plan for their products to maintain or expand "market share", develop a "market niche", or enter a more competitive "market environment".

A large percentage of the maple industry has not adopted these processes. In large part, this is due to the production process and the physical characteristics of the commodities. Considered specialty or gourmet foods by many retail outlets and consumers, maple products are processed through a relatively small facility that typically captures a limited geographic area. Therefore, the need for an active marketing program is hard to justify. Often the producer states, "Everything I produce I can sell in my area. Why should I be interested in marketing?"

## Marketing Defined

The problem with this notion is equating marketing to sales or advertising. In actuality, a good marketing plan will re-

sult in increased sales, but selling and advertising are parts of the whole marketing process. To understand this concept, it might be a good idea to define what marketing is.

Marketing is the performance of business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producer to consumer or user (as defined by the American Marketing Association)

In a broad sense, marketing includes all business activities which help satisfy human needs and desires. If this is our working definition, then marketing is more than selling. It includes:

The identification of quality standards and adherence to those standards

Those activities that identify and describe your customer-knowing his/her wants and needs;

Pricing of products at a level that will meet your goals and objectives as well as the customers;

Development of a distribution system to deliver the product to the consumer (this includes the mail order system)

Methods to communicating product information to the customer

## The Maple Producer

This list is by no means exhaustive, but let's evaluate the "typical" maple producer against these marketing activities. Many producers know the USDA standards and adhere to them. Many maple producers have developed

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effective distribution systems for their products ranging from road-side stands to the use of grocery retail outlets and mail order systems. Maple producers and associations do a good job of communicating product information.

Most maple producers believe they know their customers. They know most maple consumers buy maple products every year, always have and probably always will. This holds true for many maple producers in the state. However, the producer may not know maple syrup is purchased as a gourmet food and serves as a gift item. Furthermore, the producer may not know that the customer has been buying more over the last three years because he can afford it, or that he is buying less because the price is increasing.

The producer may not know the mail-order business is based on the holiday season, and knows little about the person who purchases the maple syrup at the grocery store. Is he a first time buyer, does he use it on pancakes and waffles only or does he use it in baked beans and as a topping for ice cream? Has the recent price increases limited how the consumer uses the product? These are all marketing activities and should be identified if the producer is to make informed decisions about expansion, pricing, distribution system development, etc.

Few producers know the potential of the international market. Will the

European countries, Korea, Japan and other industrialized nations be interested in the maple product? Why would they want to buy it, how would they use it, and what would they be willing to pay? What effect will the exchange rate have on immediate sales and potential market size?

In most cases, the maple producer is unfamiliar with the expansion capacity of the local, domestic, or international market. Will an increase of



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\$5.00/gallon push many of his customers out of the market? Will increased educational programs by industry, Cooperative Extension, etc. affect his market? Will the entry of new producers serve to strengthen industry and expand the market or cause a surplus and falling prices?

### Resistance to Marketing Plans

Many producers are reluctant to actively market their product. They believe increased prices may result in market stagnation, or worse yet "market shrinkage" (consumers leaving the maple product market). Utilizing an active market plan will result in management of these issues. Therefore, any marketing plan must incorporate the entire production - sales process.

As marketing activities are increased, the industry must expand production, develop and implement better sugar bush management procedures, identify and use efficient and complete record keep-

ing systems, incorporate justifiable price development procedures, support educational programs, become more familiar with the potential of all maple product markets and become more active in the research - technology transfer process.

### Conclusion

Some of these activities can not be accomplished by a single producer. Therefore, local, regional, state, and international associations can encourage these important activities. The growth and development of a strong maple industry depends on the understanding and implementation of proper marketing techniques. With these principles in mind, continued economic success of the individual maple producer will be enhanced.

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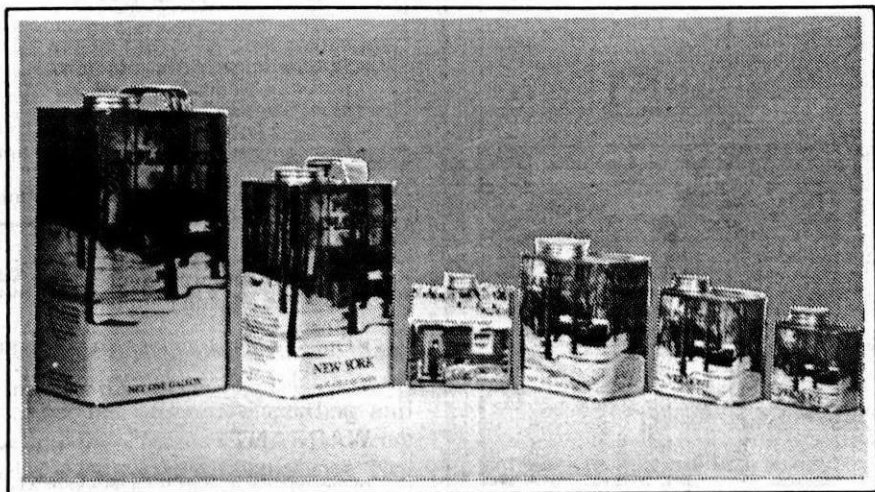
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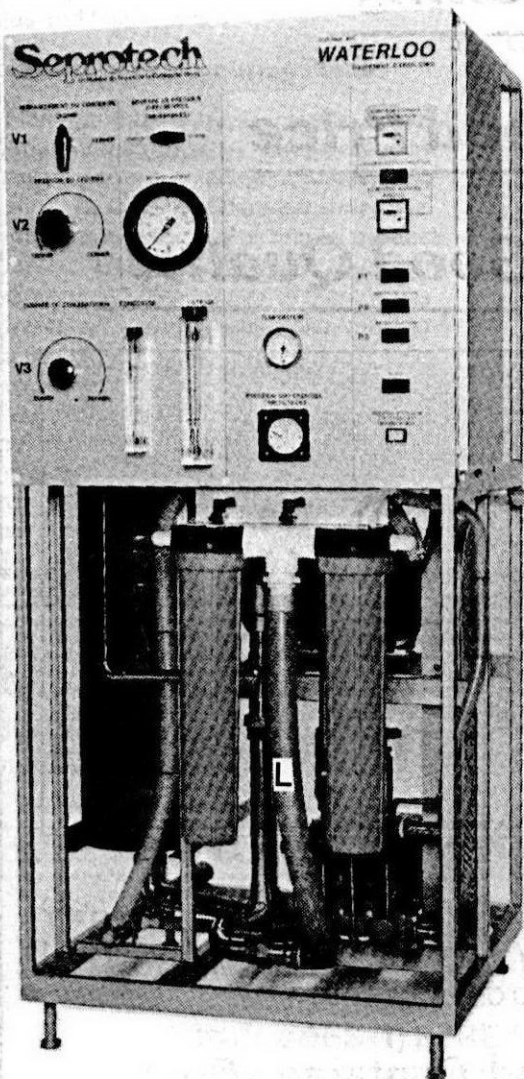
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## MAPLE SIRUP MANUAL

The directors of the NAMSC have asked the chairman to appoint a committee for the purpose of revising and updating the "Maple Sirup Producers Manual" (Agricultural Handbook No. 134. Last revised July 1976.)

Chairman, Arthur Merle, appointed the committee - Russell Davenport, Chairman - Tower Road, Shelburne MA 01370 . . . . . 413-625-2866  
Fred Winch, Warner Rd., Bradford, New Hampshire, 03221

. . . . . 603-938-2124

Dr. Maria Franca Morselli - Univ. of Vermont, Burlington VT 05401

. . . . . 802-656-2930

Roger Sage, 4449 Sage Rd. Warsaw, New York, 14569 . . . . 716-786-5684

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FOR SALE: 6 x 16 Leader, wood fired; 2000 15 qt. Wheeling buckets; 4 x 14 Grimm pans; 42 x 12 Grimm pans; 5 x 12 Lightning w/SS pans, preheater; 5 x 14 King; Memtek R.O.; various sizes of used arches, storage tanks, etc. Smada Farms, Greene, NY (607) 656-4058

FOR SALE: 40 x 12 Grimm/Lightning pans, raised flue, good. One syrup, fair. \$500.00 Phone 203-263-4550

WANTED: Used "King" plastic maple sap bags - in good condition. Dale Hallock, 19 Johnson St., Franklinville, NY 14737. (716) 676-3342

FOR SALE: Glass lined vacuum tanks 7000, 3000 gallon, \$.55 a gal. SS vacuum tanks 400 through 1300 gal. \$1.00 a gal. SS truck mount or storage tanks 3500, 2800 & 2500 gal. \$.60 a gal. 3 milk can vacuum unit \$350.00. New 5 x 7 copper Leader syrup pan \$850.00. Fonda, NY 12068. Phone 518-853-4022

FOR SALE: 5000 plus tap sugarbush, vacuum pipeline, 3000 gallon stainless steel tank, 145 acres, 4 bedroom ranch home on Rt. 14, Coventry, Vt. Owner, 508-747-4266. \$135,000.

WANTED: Dealers to sell & service Coster RO's Factory training available. Contact Schambach Maple, Inc. 716-652-8189.

FOR SALE: Two used Reverse Osmosis Machines - One season - Limited Warranty - 2,500 Tap size! Both in excellent condition. Prices start at \$4900. Schambach Maple, Inc. 716-652-8189

FOR SALE: Pipe wood racks, hold 3/4 full cord. Maple Hill Farms 1-800-543-5379

WANTED: Operator for 600 - tap sugarbush mostly pipeline. Please call 1-203-824-5225

Chairman, Russ Davenport, asks that anyone with suggestions or ideas for new topics please contact one of the committee.

# LEADER EVAPORATOR CO., INC.

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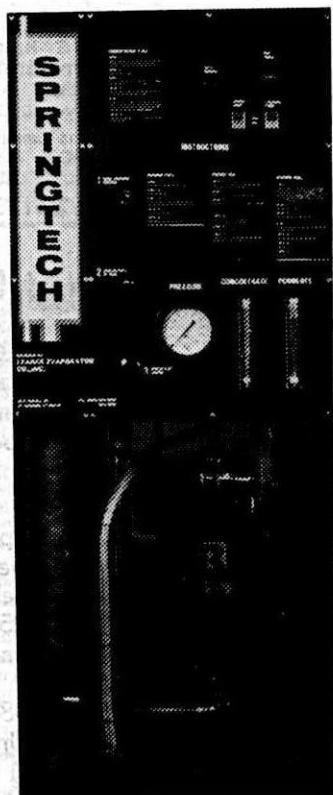
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Take out up to  
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of the water

Cut boiling time  
**IN HALF**

Cut fuel cost  
**IN HALF**

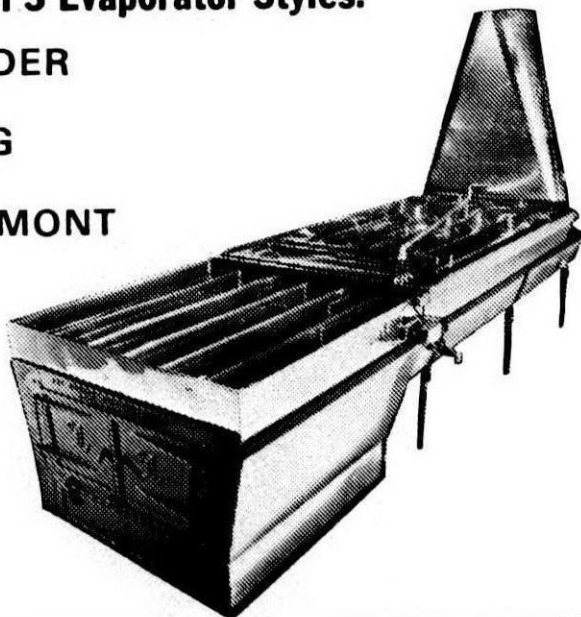
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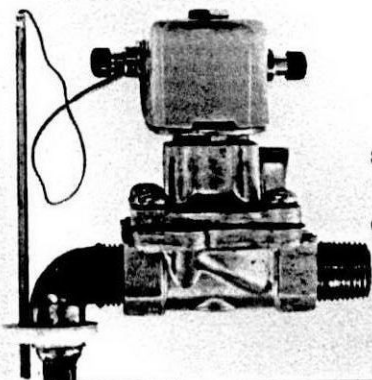


The  
Leader  
Style

# SEASONS GREETINGS

**NEW ITEM**

## FILL-STOP™



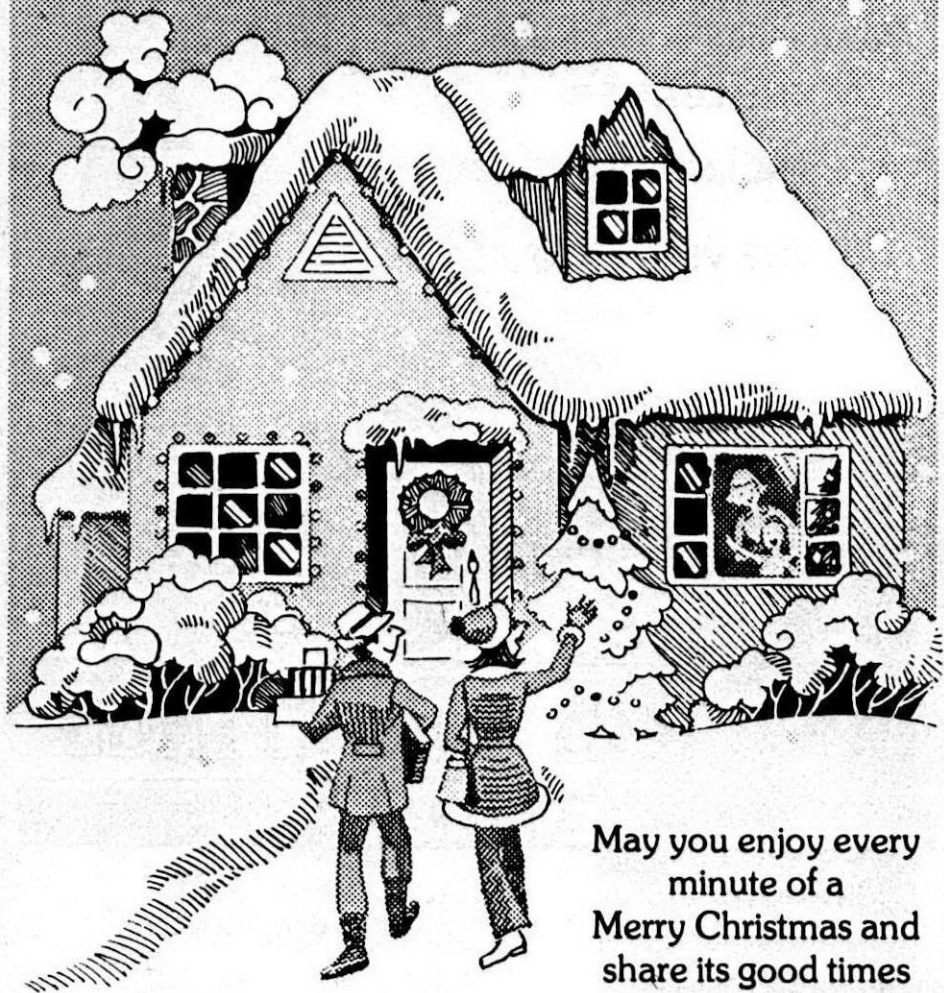
## *Dispenser Valve Control*

Adjustable probe fills containers to desired level and shuts off automatically.

Runs on 12 volt battery. (Battery not included.)

One Valve Unit..... 296.00  
Two Valve Unit..... 499.00

# GREETINGS



May you enjoy every  
minute of a  
Merry Christmas and  
share its good times  
with those dear to you.  
Thanks all.

*Bob & Florence Lamb*