

Maple Syrup Digest



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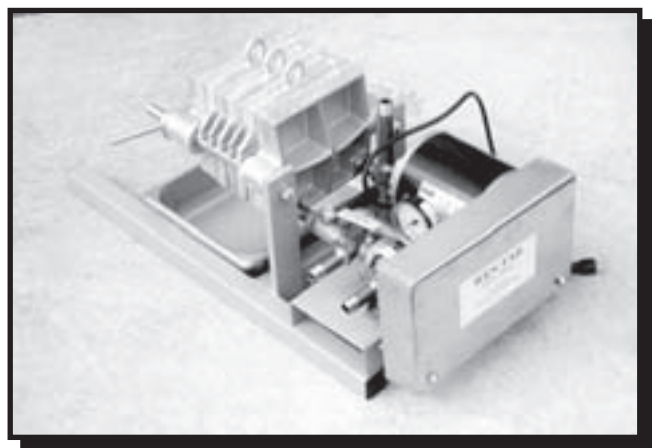
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COVER: Dale McIsaac,
Nova Scotia

GREETINGS FROM YOUR PRESIDENT



Dear NAMSC friends,

Another sugaring-off season is pretty much behind us, though some of you are still wrapping up and others have a ways to go.

It was quite the roller coaster ride, what with all the snow and the deep freezes. But it is looking like a very respectable season in Canada as well as the U.S.

What's great this year is that the syrup is very good. I think that given the abundant harvest, whether we're north or south of the border we need to all roll up our sleeves and get that precious stuff in.

We'll wind up the season exhausted, but proud of a harvest well done.

I hope you get a well-deserved break after all your hard work.

Bonjour chers amis du NAMSC,

Une autre saison des sucres, qui pour certains est presque terminée, et pour d'autres continuera encore un peu.

Quelle saison époustouflante... avec sa neige, ses gelées. Mais il semble que ce sera une très bonne saison tant aux États-Unis qu'au Canada.

Ce qui est merveilleux cette année, c'est que le sirop est très bon. Je crois, que compte tenue de la récolte abondante, nous devons, tous

ensemble, quel que soit notre pays, nous serrer les coudes afin d'écouler tout ce précieux liquide.

Nous terminons la saison épuisés, mais combien fiers de notre récolte.

Je vous souhaite à tous de prendre un repos bien mérité après toutes ces heures de travail ardu.

Cécile B. Pichette
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IMSI NEWS

*By: Dave Chapeskie, R.P.F.,
Executive Director, IMSI*

INTRODUCTION

The International Maple Syrup Institute held their quarterly Board of Directors meeting at the Holiday Inn in South Burlington, Vermont in early February. The meeting was well attended by IMSI Directors, IMSI members and guests.

By the time you are reading this update, the IMSI Board of Directors will have met again in Ottawa. The New Brunswick Maple Syrup Producers hosted a Reception for Canadian Senators and Members of Parliament in conjunction with that event. All members of the IMSI Executive Committee attended the reception and Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia were represented with maple exhibits.

Summaries from the IMSI Board meetings are posted on the IMSI's website www.internationalmaplesyrupinstitute.com. The summary from the May Board of Directors meeting will be posted on the website by May 15th.

The 2013 maple production season has come and gone with reports of a very good to excellent crop of high quality syrup from many producing areas.

The Standard Maple Grades Initiative remains a very high priority for the IMSI. The IMSI continues to monitor progress made by federal and state/provincial government regulators to incorporate the proposed changes in regulation.

Maple producers in both the US

and Canada continue to express interest in the maple nutrition and potential health benefits information compiled by the IMSI. This information can be accessed on the IMSI website.

2013 PRELIMINARY MAPLE SYRUP CROP REPORT

Preliminary reports regarding the 2013 Maple Crop from both Canada and the United States suggest that the Crop either met expectations for a good production year or was considered a bumper crop, depending on the jurisdiction. When the numbers are finally tallied, it is anticipated that the overall North American Maple Crop will be well above a median or average year. The quality of syrup produced has been reported as excellent from all areas. The production season was very long in some producing areas, particularly in areas located further north or at higher elevations due to cool weather conditions. The crop will replenish supplies of syrup for producers and packers in circumstances where supply was depleted as a result of the mediocre crop in 2012. There may be an effect on the Strategic reserve of bulk syrup administered by the Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers in Quebec.

STANDARDIZED MAPLE GRADES AND NOMENCLATURE

Progress is being made in moving the IMSI's proposal through the regulatory process at the federal level in Canada (CFIA) and the United States (USDA) as well as in Vermont, Maine, and New York State. The IMSI recently learned

that the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets would proceed with writing the new grade rules. Other state and provincial regulatory agencies are awaiting additional progress at the federal level to assist their approvals process. For example, Ohio's regulatory agency representative indicated that the state would be adopting the changes once they have been accepted by USDA.

Expressions of interest in production of the new colour classification system kits to-date include Centre Acer, Vermont Sugarmakers Association, Atkinson's Maple Products (Ontario) and Lovibond International. Centre Acer and Lovibond have already produced kit mock-ups to accommodate the new colour classification and grade standard.

MAPLE NUTRITIONAL AND POTENTIAL HEALTH BENEFITS RESOURCES

Maple nutritional and potential health benefits resources compiled by the IMSI include a bilingual (English and French) rackcard and a compilation of information related to potential health benefits of maple syrup. The IMSI's purpose in developing and providing these materials is for awareness and education purposes. It is permissible for IMSI members, including their individual maple producer members, to utilize the maple nutrition and potential health benefits related information for awareness and education purposes, as some IMSI members have already done very effectively. IMSI members may add their own business identifiers to the poster and

rackcard as long as the information content and inclusion of the IMSI logo on the resources is not changed.

The IMSI's maple nutrition and health benefits resources can be accessed on the IMSI website. The IMSI's Executive Director should be contacted if assistance is required in accessing and utilizing these resources.

IMSI'S ADULTERATION TESTING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

For many years now, the IMSI has facilitated the testing of syrup samples in the international marketplace that have been suspected as being adulterated. All IMSI members are strongly encouraged to take advantage of the IMSI's adulteration testing assistance if they suspect that syrup is adulterated anywhere in the world marketplace.

Over the past year, the IMSI has been reviewing their protocol to facilitate adulteration testing of syrup. All Canadian IMSI members who wish to submit samples of syrup for adulteration testing through the IMSI sponsored program, must send the samples to Yves Bois of Centre Acer who will facilitate laboratory adulteration testing of these samples in Canada. All US IMSI members should continue to submit syrup samples suspected of adulteration to Tim Perkins at UVM Proctor Maple Research Center who will continue to facilitate laboratory testing of samples in the United States. This arrangement will circumvent issues with moving related syrup samples across the US-Canada border and may increase IMSI member

utilization of IMSI's adulteration testing service.

DISCUSSION OF PRODUCT LABELING

An independent lawsuit was filed in Vermont against Pinnacle Foods regarding use of the term "all natural" as well as for use of the traditional maple jug design.

While the IMSI has been active in follow-up on specific labeling claims, a growing number of IMSI members are asking for the IMSI's position on labeling different products containing maple syrup. Examples of these products currently in the marketplace include blueberry maple syrup and vanilla-infused pure maple syrup. It was agreed that the IMSI's Executive Director would work with Eric Prud'Homme, Henry Marckres and others as required to consolidate information pertinent to labeling products containing maple syrup in Canada and the United States. The IMSI will also input into proposed regulatory amendments affecting the labeling of products containing maple syrup on an ongoing basis.

DISCUSSION OF FOOD SAFETY CONCERNS

There was discussion regarding the importance of maple producers remaining vigilant regarding food safety and quality issues. All maple syrup producers are strongly encouraged to adopt best practices for the production of maple syrup and other pure maple products. A critical aspect of this is to take steps to avoid potential sources of contamination in all phases of maple syrup production and packing. There

are some excellent references and resources available to help producers and packers. These include, but are not limited to, the IMSI approved Maple Equipment Manufacturers Guidelines (equipment standard to avoid contamination) as well as provincial and federal quality assurance programs or regulations in the United States and Canada. A very important part of our industry product brand is that maple syrup destined for retail markets is pure and of high quality.

IMSI SPONSORED AWARDS (2013)

The IMSI continues to sponsor two awards annually, the Golden Maple Leaf Award, which recognizes contributions to progress and innovation in the North American and International Maple Syrup Industry, and the Lynn Reynolds Memorial Leadership Award, which recognizes outstanding service and accomplishments of an individual for the North American/International Maple Syrup Industry. The IMSI members are strongly encouraged to submit nominations for the two awards to the IMSI's Executive Director by August 31st, 2013. Guidelines and a Nominations Form for the two Awards are posted on the IMSI website www.internationalmaplesyrupinstitute.com.

IMSI SPONSORED MAPLE GRADING SCHOOL

Participants in the IMSI sponsored schools continue to greatly value the educational experience offered. The three school offerings in 2013 Skowhegan, Maine (May 10th and

11th); in Cornwall, Ontario (July 9th and 10th) and in Fairfield, Vermont (October 4th and 5th).

IMSI members may learn about the IMSI sponsored Grading School and its offerings by accessing the University of Maine - Cooperative Extension website with the following link:

<http://extension.umaine.edu/maple-grading-school/>

Applicants for the grading school may register on-line. If additional information is required please contact Kathy Hopkins at 207-474-9622 or khopkins@maine.edu.

Wednesday, October 23rd - Delta Beauséjour Hotel, Moncton, New Brunswick

2013 IMSI/NAMSC ANNUAL MEETINGS

The 2013 Annual NAMSC-IMSI Meetings will be held from October 23-25th at Delta Beauséjour Hotel, Moncton, N.B. The IMSI Annual General Meeting will be held on Thursday, October 24th. For further information, contact Yvon Poitras at yrp@nb.aibn.com or Dave Chapeskie at agrofor@ripnet.com.

UPCOMING IMSI BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

Tuesday, August 20th - Bangor, Maine



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MAPLE HALL OF FAME

On May 18, 2013, the Maple Hall of Fame in Croghan, New York inducted two new members.

JERRY KLESS

Jerry joined Citadelle Maple Syrup Producers' Cooperative in 1994 and has been involved since then in the promotion and marketing of pure maple syrup around the world.

He was born in Granby(Quebec), and was living near Montreal prior to joining Citadelle. He decided without hesitation to move his family in the region of Plessisville where we have maple production.

He graduated from Concordia University in 1975, in Business Administration, cum laude (with distinction), with a Major in Marketing.

Prior to join our Cooperative, Jerry worked for various major food companies such as Unilever and Pepsi, where he was involved in both sales and marketing functions.

He has been president of the IMSI as well as held the position of Executive Director. He is still a director of the IMSI board.

He has worked on many committees concerning promotion, production of marketing material for the industry, control of adulteration, the standard grading system program as well as various other committees.

He is an international leader in the industry and, due to his sustained passion for our industry, is referred to as Mr. Maple, particularly in Asia where he is very active and very well known. Staff involved in exporting food products in the various Embassies around the world know

and have worked with Jerry. He has promoted our product in more than 40 countries around the world. Each year, he is present on the various continents for food shows or business meetings. He is one of the most senior representatives of the industry and is very professional in the educational process when presenting our maple products.

Jerry has been married to his wife, Ginette Gadbois Kless, for 40 years as of June 23, 2013 and they have one son and one daughter as well as one granddaughter.

DALE McISAAC

Dale grew up on a potato and beef farm along the Saint John River in Florenceville, New Brunswick, Canada. The eldest of the four children of William and Lois McIsaac, Dale developed a passion for working on the farm, playing sports, and school work, in that order.

After graduating from high school, Dale was accepted both into the engineering program at the University of New Brunswick and the degree program at the Nova Scotia Agriculture College (NSAC) in Truro, Nova Scotia. He chose NSAC, which led to a lifelong career in agricultural extension. Dale completed the first 3 years of his degree at NSAC and then transferred to Macdonald College of McGill University in Montreal. He graduated from there in 1975 with an Honours Bachelors of Science degree in plant science, majoring in plant protection. He also played 4 years of varsity basketball and a year of varsity soccer while at college. It must have been an omen that while at Macdonald College

Dale's apartment was on Maple Avenue.

Dale spent his summers and Christmas breaks working at the Bon Accord Seed Potato Farm in northwestern New Brunswick. After graduation, Dale accepted a position as seed potato specialist with the New Brunswick Department of Agriculture. One of the perks of that job was spending much of the winter in Florida monitoring New Brunswick's seed potato trials there. Susan, who he had met while studying in Montreal, was attending NSAC in Truro. On one of his many trips to Truro, Dale went to the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture offices to speak with a few of the Directors. One director, Gordon Kinsman, offered Dale a job working with maple producers, despite the fact that Dale's experience and training was in the potato industry. Walter Humphries, the Maple Specialist working for Mr. Kinsman, had just retired and the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture needed a new person to work with the fledgling industry. Dale has worked as extension specialist in Nova Scotia for more than 35 years, initially with the maple industry and maple producers, and later with lowbush blueberry producers as well.

In addition to providing extension services to the maple industry, Dale administered the maple development program for many years, has done the annual Nova Scotia Maple Industry Survey and Situation Report since 1977, edited the Nova Scotia Department of Agriculture maple newsletter for many years and worked closely with the Maple

Producers' Association of Nova Scotia, acting as its treasurer for a long time. In 2010, Dale was recognized for his work with the maple industry of Nova Scotia by being inducted into the Nova Scotia Maple Hall of Fame. In the years since Dale started working with the Nova Scotia Maple industry, it has grown from an average of less than 75,000 taps with a farm gate value of about \$100,000 to consistently over 375,000 taps and an annual farm gate value over \$1,500,000.

Dale and Susan were married in 1977. They live in Amherst, Nova Scotia where Susan is the founding partner of a local chartered accounting firm. They have two adult sons. Ben lives and works in Halifax, Nova Scotia and Zac lives and works in Toronto, Ontario. There is no plan for retirement in the near future for either Dale or Susan as long as their health continues to be good. They both love what they do. The flexibility of their respective careers lets them spend a lot of time together, be it in the city for meetings or in the rural areas for maple business.

Dale's motivation to continue working is to help the industry further develop and expand to take advantage of the opportunities that are available including the very good demand for the great Nova Scotia maple products. A maple research program is just getting underway, and is a source of great interest and enthusiasm. Most of all, however, Dale enjoys working with the maple producers and their families.



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NOVA SCOTIA MAPLE PRODUCER DAVID DICKINSON HONOURED

At the recent Maple Producers' Association of Nova Scotia annual general meeting held at Dalhousie University Faculty of Agriculture campus in Bible Hill, Nova Scotia, David Dickinson of West Brook, Cumberland County was recognized for his contributions to the maple industry and was inducted into the Nova Scotia Maple Industry Hall of Fame.

David is a 4th generation sugar maker and his legacy began when his Great-Grandfather, David Dickinson, purchased 100 acres of Crown Land at a cost of 44¢/acre in the 1880's. David's Grandfather, Chesley Dickinson, started buying excess maple syrup from other sugar makers in the Canaan and Mapleton areas and began marketing it. David's father Seymour and Uncle Karl carried on this business along with having a small 2.5 by 6 foot evaporator, and tapping about 300 roadside trees in the West Brook and Canaan areas. Seymour and Karl formed a partnership called Dickinson Bros. which David continues to operate under to the present day.

In 1964 and 1965, David attended MacDonald College near Montreal which had an operating sugar bush. Professor Archie Jones was doing some of the early experimental pipeline work there at that time and in 1966, David's first spring back on the farm, he purchased enough tubing from Dominion & Grimm for 50 taps. The next year he put out 150

more taps with blue 'Lamb' tubing. This was all on a vented system that had to be taken down and washed every year, then put back up the next spring.

By then David, his Dad, and Uncle were boiling from 500 taps and still purchasing syrup from other producers to sell in markets throughout the province. In 1972 the decision was made to expand and the first step was to lease a former sugar bush in Canaan. In the fall of 1972 they built the sugar house which is still used today, ordered an oil-fired 12 x 5 foot evaporator with steam hoods and tubing. In 1973 they boiled from 1,700 taps which rose to 3,300 taps by 1974. They knew that they would be developing the sugar bush further, purchasing land next to the leased property, so a second oil-fired evaporator (14 x 5 foot) was purchased, also with steam hoods.

It was getting too expensive to continue boiling with two oil fired evaporators, so in 1982 David bought his first Reverse Osmosis machine, with one 8-inch membrane and two 4-inch membranes. It seemed to work pretty well, so the next year, David removed one of the oil-fired evaporators. Since 1973, there has been a slow, but steady increase in the number of taps from 1,700 to the 19,000 he hopes to have in the upcoming season. David is now on his 4th Reverse Osmosis machine and over the years he has added a pre-heater hood, air injection system, a filter press and a maple butter stirring machine. These are just a few examples of his continued updating of equipment.

Over the past 40 years David has

changed from buying bulk syrup to selling some bulk syrup. He sells product directly from the camp and supplies several markets with maple products year round.

David is a charter member of the Maple Producers Association, has served several terms on the Board of Directors and as President. Over the years, David has served in many leadership roles in the Maple and Wild Blueberry industries, and has been a board member of the Nova

Scotia Crop and Livestock Commission. His knowledge, dedication and contribution are certainly recognized by the Agriculture Industry in Nova Scotia.

David and Karen have three sons. Tim lives and works in Australia. David and Karen recently spent a month visiting him there. Andrew lives on the farm in West Brook with his wife Denise and their three children; and Dan lives and works in Toronto.

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SUGAR MAPLE SAP YIELDS USING ONE OR TWO TAPHOLES PER TREE

By: Tim Wilmot

University of Vermont Extension

When sugarmakers set up a sap collection system in their woods, they generally have three goals in mind: to collect as much sap as possible, to collect high quality sap, and to preserve their trees for future years of sugaring. This article will discuss one way we might influence the first goal of maximizing sap collection. While many sugarmakers continue to increase their yield from individual tapholes, using the latest information about pumps, spouts, tubing design, and spout sanitation, there is also continuing focus on limiting damage to tapped trees by limiting the number of tapholes in each tree. Every taphole is a small wound, and internally the wound results in an area of the wood that is compartmentalized - walled off from the trees' sap flow system. The ability of the tree to maintain its vitality depends in part on the number, size and spacing of these compartmentalized areas, as does our ability to tap each year into functional wood that will yield a good flow of sap. Studies currently underway at the University of Vermont Proctor Maple Research Center (PMRC) are examining the effects of accumulating internal taphole damage on the ability to support future tapping, as well as related subjects such as the effects high vacuum sap extraction might have on tree growth,

all with the goal of developing new sustainable tapping guidelines. However, along with focusing on the possible negative effects of tapping and sap extraction, it is important to examine how certain practices might lead to greater sap yields.

Many producers refer to some established tapping guidelines for advice on the number of tapholes to place in trees of different diameters. These guidelines, however useful, may not be based on science, and are certainly inconsistent. For example, the North American Maple Producers Manual, 2nd edition (2006), offers two guidelines: the "traditional" version suggests one tap in a minimum 10" DBH tree, a second tap in a 15" tree, a third in a 20" tree, and so on; while the "conservative" version suggests one tap in a minimum 12" DBH tree, a second in an 18" tree, and no more than two tapholes. Additionally, sugarmakers who must follow rules for their organic certification will find that these rules vary considerably depending on the certifying organization: for example, NOFA Vermont allows a second taphole in a minimum 15" DBH tree, New York in a minimum 14" tree, Ecocert in Canada in a minimum 16" tree, but Maine limits the second taphole to a minimum 21" tree. Some of these differences may be the result of perceived differences in the growth rate of trees in each region, as trees with higher radial growth rates can support more areas of compartmentalized wood.

Before setting up this research, I polled Vermont sugarmakers in an annual survey about their tapping guidelines; specifically, in what diam-

eter tree would they place a second taphole. At the time of this survey (2009), fully 50% of the 128 producers who used more than one tap in trees of any diameter, claimed that they placed a second tap in a tree as small as 16" DBH. Most of these producers used high vacuum. In subsequent polling of audiences, I have found far fewer sugarmakers who admit to placing a second tap in trees this size; for many the cut-off is 18" DBH. Based on these responses, and the current published guidelines, I chose to examine sap yield from 1 or 2 tapholes in trees of two size classes: approximately 16" DBH, and approximately 19" DBH.

METHODS

The study took place during 2010 and 2011 using sugar maples located at the PMRC in Underhill Center, VT. Twenty healthy trees with sound trunks were selected, and divided into two groups; 10 trees averaged 16.1" DBH and 10 trees averaged 19.5" DBH. Sap was collected in 4 gallon vacuum chambers attached to the trees (Figure 1), these chambers allow the researcher to capture and measure sap from an individual taphole while the taphole is under vacuum. Chambers were connected to the tapholes via new droplines and new 5/16" spouts (Darveau in 2010 and Leader standard spouts in 2011). Vacuum was achieved using an oil-cooled liquid ring pump, and the vacuum level at the taphole was approximately 24" Hg.

Each tree had two 1.5" deep tapholes drilled on opposite sides of the trunk and staggered from each other vertically by approximately 2 feet.

Tapholes were placed on the east and west sides of the trunk in 2010, and on the north and south sides in 2011. Each dropline was fitted with a valve which would, when closed, completely shut off the flow of sap from the taphole (Figure 1). Thus, by opening or closing the dropline valves, sap was collected from either one of the tapholes, or from both tapholes. The treatment consisted of collecting sap from one taphole in five 16" trees and five 19.5" trees, and from both tapholes in the remaining trees. At the end of each sap run, or every few days, the treatment was reversed by changing the valve position, so that the one-taphole trees became two-taphole trees, and vice versa. The location of the single open taphole was also varied with each run (i.e.



Figure 1. Vacuum chambers for capturing sap from individual tapholes. Arrows point to valves on each dropline that allow the tapholes to be opened or closed.

from east to west in 2010). In each tree the valve position was switched approximately 12 times during each of the two collecting seasons.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In Northwestern Vermont, weather conditions varied considerably between the two years of this study. In 2010, the study trees were tapped on February 25th and the season ended 36 days later. There were few freeze-thaw cycles during this period and two long stretches without freezing temperatures. Sap was collected on 28 days during the season. In 2011 the trees were tapped on February 17th and the season ended 53 days later. There were many freeze-thaw cycles. Sap was collected on 26 days during the season.

In 2010, all trees yielded more sap during the time that both tapholes were open, with an average of 45% more sap collected with two tapholes open in the 16" trees, and 59% more sap collected with two tapholes in the 19.5" trees. In 2011, the increase in yield with two taps averaged 57% in 16" trees and 79% in 19.5" trees (Table 1). The average increase for both years was 52% in the 16" trees and 66% in the 19.5" trees. Statistically, the increase in sap yield using two vs. one tapholes was highly significant, using a two-tailed T test, for each year and each diameter class.

While a second taphole did not yield twice as much sap as a single taphole, the increase with the second taphole observed in this study was more than expected. Previous experiments studying the vertical and horizontal flow of sap within a tapped

Table 1.

Year	Tree DBH	Mean increase w/2nd tap	Increased yield with 2nd tap: range
2010	16"	45%	17% - 82%
2010	19.5"	59%	8% - 93%
2011	16"	57%	-36% - 84%
2011	19.5"	79%	38% - 91%
Both yrs.	16"	52%	
Both yrs.	19.5"	66%	

sugar maple have shown that when sap begins to flow toward a taphole, it initially moves in a vertical direction. This can be demonstrated by observing the rapid decrease in pressure above and below a taphole that is just drilled (or opened with a valve, as in this study). Within several hours, there is evidence of horizontal sap flow, as the pressure in the trunk on the opposite side of the taphole also decreases. Over time, the pressure decreases over a large area of the trunk, indicating that a considerable area of the tree is contributing sap to the open taphole. When there is more than one taphole, the areas of the trunk contributing sap to each hole soon overlap. The amount that these two areas overlap is related to the distance between the holes and the amount of time that the sap has been flowing.

Higher vacuum levels may also increase the amount of overlap. The more distant the tapholes are from each other, as happens when tapping the opposite side of larger and larger trees, the longer it will take for the overlap to occur, and thus, the greater the increase with a second taphole.

This was borne out by the greater

increase in yield with a second taphole from larger trees seen in this study. In addition to distance between the holes, the other major variable is the duration of the sap run. As mentioned above, the sap runs-i.e. the number of hours between freezes-were generally longer in 2010 than in 2011.

A closer examination of the data showed that during sap runs that lasted less than 24 hours, the average increase in yield with the second taphole was close to 90%, but during sap runs that lasted 3 days or longer, the average increase with a second taphole was less than 50%. Thus, a more "traditional" spring with many freeze-thaw cycles is more likely to bring benefits to the sugarmakers with two-tapped trees, compared to the more recent weather conditions seen in much of the maple region, where freezes are followed by long stretches of warm weather.

The increase in sap yields recorded in this study - 52% and 66% in 16" and 19.5" DBH trees respectively, may sound very inviting to producers wishing to collect more sap, but several caveats should be observed.

First, this study took place in one location over two years in northwestern Vermont, using 20 trees, and the results seen here may not carry over to all other sites. The trees used in the study were all healthy; trees with significant dieback have been shown to yield less sap and may not respond well to higher tapping intensity.

Second, adding taps to trees adds more places for vacuum leaks to occur, and adds equipment that

must be maintained and often replaced. Most importantly, increasing the number of tapholes adds to the amount of brown, compartmentalized wood in the trunk. Eventually, if this compartmentalized wood is added to the trunk at a rate faster than it can be replaced by new wood growth, it will become more and more likely each year that a drill bit will strike brown wood. This will result in a hole that will produce less sap, no sap, or poor quality sap. Spacing the holes vertically along the trunk by using long droplines and tapping as high as possible some years will help spread out the brown wood. Likewise, drilling shallower holes, even though research may show that holes deeper than 1.5" can produce more sap, is one way to avoid striking a buried compartment from an old taphole.

Slow-growing trees are particularly susceptible to this problem. For producers using buckets, where the holes are placed in a narrow vertical band, the addition of more tapholes is particularly problematic because the wound compartments are not spread as they would be with tubing and long droplines.

As mentioned above, new tapping guidelines for sugar maple are being developed at the PMRC with research data collected by researchers Dr. Abby van den Berg, Dr. Tim Perkins, Mark Isselhardt and myself. Many variables must be examined, such as the sap yield from different numbers of tapholes, the yield from different taphole depths, the average growth rate of sugar maples across the region, and the effects of carbohydrate (sap

sugar) removal on tree growth. We hope that these science-based guidelines will in the future provide guidance that the current conflicting guidelines may not offer.

This study was partially funded by grants from the North American Maple Syrup Council and the Chittenden County (VT) Sugarmakers Association.

VERMONT MAPLERAMA 2013 Jay, VT July 25 - 27

Orleans County maple producers will host the 2013 Vermont Maplerama. Thursday and Friday's events will be headquartered at Jay Peak Resort and will include a trade show, tours of maple and other food producers in the northern part of the county, and a banquet at Jay Peak. Saturday's events will be headquartered at the Orleans County Fairgrounds in Barton, VT and will include a pancake breakfast, tours of maple and other food producers in the southern part of the county, and a barbeque.

For more information, visit www.facebook.com/Maplerama2013 or contact Ted Young (802) 525-4462.



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CROP REPORTS FOR 2013

CONNECTICUT

By: J. Mark Harran

As of this writing on April 20, 2013, the final official results are not available, but an informal ad hoc survey says that Connecticut had a great 2013 sugaring season. Conditions were just right for most of the State. Indeed, some folks reached an all time high in terms of production. All-in-all, the 2013 season will go down as a one to pleasantly remember as we continue to clean up from this past season and then all begin to prepare for the 2014 season.

Other than good sap flow, this past year was highlighted by the very successful NAMSC/IMSI meetings held in Mystic, CT. Under the able leadership of Ron Wenzel and his all volunteer staff the meetings as well as the vender exhibits, meals, hotel accommodations and the like were all very well received by the 200 plus attendees. We wish the same success to the New Brunswick Association in Moncton, NB October 23-25, 2013.

Two Connecticut producers test implemented the new IMSI grade classification system this past year and received very positive consumer feedback. This new consumer friendly grading system, hopefully to be broadly implemented in 2014, combined with the recently released maple syrup nutritional information have the potential to dramatically improve the sales and consumption of maple products in Connecticut.

Looking ahead, we will continue to

stress the importance of quality. Toward this end, we have three great speakers lined up for our upcoming meetings. Henry Marckres, VT Agency of Agriculture, and Ray Bonenberg, President of OMSPA, will be at our November 2013 Membership Meeting and Kathy Hopkins, U. of Maine, will address our January 2014 Pre-season Meeting.

INDIANA

By: Keith Ruble

If someone would have told me in advance the type of maple season Indiana would have in 2013 I would have really questioned it. According to the Indiana Division of Forestry, Indiana forest lands have been suffering from several years of drought. Last summer, Indiana and many other states had one of the worst droughts in recorded history. Due to the concern of additional stress to maple trees, I called and talked to Dr. Tim Perkins of Maple Proctor Research Center to get his recommendations on tapping after a severe drought. His advice was to either not tap or to put only one tap per tree. I talked to Glenn Goodrich, veteran maple producer from Vermont. His advice was if you have normal soil moisture conditions at tapping time, tap as you normally would.

The last two maple seasons have been good in Indiana. 2012 was excellent, but in 2013, most maple producers are reporting above or a record breaking season. Sap/sugar content was above average from 2.5 to over 3%. Tapping started about mid to late January in southern

Indiana to mid to late February in northern Indiana.

This year, March was one of the coldest months on record and prolonged maple production. Five to six weeks of syrup weather was common.

Thanks to the producers who responded to me with their Indiana crop report.

MAINE

By: Lyle Merrifield

Maine saw a very good 2013 Sugaring season. Some of the lower part of the State got the early runs and where producing syrup as early as mid January and continued to produce to the first of April. Many producers reported no real heavy sap flow days, but a very steady sap flow, daily.

The upper half of the State saw good to excellent production, holding on to the cold weather and snow pack allowed some of these producers to make syrup to the first of May. Over all, Maine seemed to have produced a very good crop in all four table grades.

MASSACHUSETTS

By: Winton Pitcoff

The 2013 sugaring season in Massachusetts made up for 2012's dismal crop, though it was not without its challenges. Some very early runs in mid-February left many producers scrambling to get their taps in. Then, just when the season seemed to be well under way, a deep freeze settled in that stopped the sap from running through much of the middle of March, particularly for those in the Hilltowns where much of the state's syrup is produced. But the eventual warm-up was slow and steady, with some producers still boiling in mid-April.

Most members reported that they produced an 'average' amount of syrup, with many reporting above average crops and nearly everyone reporting production levels well above 2012. Sugar levels in sap were definitely better than last year, and many producers said they made light syrup throughout the season. A handful of members used the new spout design and reported that sap did indeed run longer, and quite a few installed new evaporators and



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MICHIGAN

By: Larry Haigh

Greetings from the Great Lakes State and the Michigan Maple Syrup Association. The 2013 season was very different from 2012. Remembering last year and not wanting to be surprised again, everyone was prepared to tap early. With the extremely hot and dry summer and fall we had last year, there was a lot of concern about what kind of year this would be. Fortunately we had much cooler weather all winter and spring. Most folks here in the southern part of the state began tapping around March 1st. Boiling got under way the first week of March. We heard many people say that their first boil this year was on the same day as their last boil last year. We had very good syrup weather all through March and into the first week of April. Some folks referred to it as the season that would not end.

The Upper Peninsula was blessed with an abundance of snow and cold weather. Most production up there did not get under way until the very end of March and in some cases early April. Boiling continued until the end of April. The northern part of the Lower Peninsula started in mid-March and continued boiling until mid-April or later.

While all were pleased with the production this year, the most often heard comment was that "it was a good season with just a little above average production". Almost all have

reported yields of at least a quart per tap. Many in our area got a little over 1/3rd of a gallon per tap.

There was a lot of expansion occurring this year. Many syrup makers were adding taps either in their existing sugar bushes or adding new wood lots to their operation. There was also a great deal more activity by hobbyist and back yard people.

Retail sales remain very strong. There is a lot of emphasis on the "Buy Local" and "Buy Nearby" marketing campaigns which is helping our retail sales. The nutritional benefits of Maple Syrup is also very important. We would like to thank the IMSI for all their work on the nutrition posters and rack cards. They are great and we have distributed a lot of them.

NEW BRUNSWICK

By: David Briggs

Mother Nature was very kind to New Brunswick's maple producers this season.

Many producers saw one of the best seasons in a long time. Snow cover this year was average to moderate in most parts of New Brunswick.

Some producers saw some early runs around the first of March but the season didn't really kick into full gear until around mid to late March. We saw many average running days with no warm spikes in the temperatures this seasons.

The southern area of the Province saw a good to average production with reports of 1.5 to 2 lbs per tap (this is average for this area). As you start to travel north into the middle regions of the province the crop

seemed to get better. Some of the larger producers in the north received an excellent crop with production reaching over 5 lbs per tap.

The quality of this year's run seems to be more in the lighter grades, a lot in the medium grade and very little in the darker grades.

NOVA SCOTIA

By Avard Bentley

Nova Scotia's season started early. Those who were ready have had a tremendous year, especially if the operation used a vacuum pump. Those who were not on a vacuum pump had just a so so year. In some cases woods that the North winds touch had a poor year in some cases the sap did not run at all. All being said Nova Scotia should have better than average year with a lot of light syrup.

OHIO

By Les Ober

What does it take to make a perfect maple syrup season? To tell this story you have to go back to last year. In 2012 Ohio producers that tapped at the end of January had an average or above average season. What prevented last year from becoming a bumper crop was the warm up in late February, which continued into March. This brought the season to an early end by the second week in March. Those that tapped early had average to above average seasons, those that tapped the end of February came up short.

That brings us to the start of the 2013 season. Back in January the

new season looked like it might be a rerun of 2012. You can fool a maple producer once, but it is pretty hard to fool them twice. Based on observations of a potentially early start to the season, coupled with lessons learned last year, there was a lot tapping the last week of January, first week in February, across the state.

Then came the deep freeze lock down, but once you're in, you're in, no turning back. In-between the freezes were some pretty good warm ups that yielded tons of sap with surprisingly good sugar content. The trend continued with flood runs on March 7th and 15th. The weather on the 25th of March saw single digit temperatures at night and 10 inches of snow followed by one of the best runs of the season on Easter weekend.

The majority of the producers in the state tapped within the first two weeks of February and most ran into the last week of March. Sugar content of the sap was high from start to finish, running over 2.25 % in most sugar bushes. I expect when everything is factored in the syrup yield per tap in Ohio to be as high as last year if not higher.

One of the ironic things about this season is how well the producers with buckets did. Aggie Sojka and the Gingerich Brothers from Geauga County reported a record season on their 2000 tap operation. The same was true for Paul Snavelly in Seneca County, with over 2000 on buckets. Paul also said it was fortunate that this was the year they decided to add an RO. It made handling the big runs a lot easier and his daughter in law was thrilled to see her husband a little more often during the syrup sea-

son. Many claimed that due to the cold weather the tubing simply froze up for longer periods of time while buckets could still be gathered. Across the state new highs in production were achieved. Bonhomie Acres in Knox County, home of the Brown Family set an all-time record as did many of the producers in Central Ohio. In Southeastern and Southwestern Ohio OMPA Director District 2, Dean Dohner, reported average to above average production.

How long will a maple tree produce sap under favorable conditions before the tap holes dry up? We now know that the trees in many Northeast Ohio sugar bushes ran sap for 9 weeks.

Sure, sap flow dropped off but the trees were still running at 50% or better on April 4th. First and foremost it goes without saying it takes a favorable weather pattern; continued cold weather keeps the trees from budding and the sap flowing.

Another secret to extended sap flow is proper taphole sanitation and a well-managed tubing system. Two local producers tapped in January, James Miller of Sugar Valley Maple in Middlefield Township and Jeff Burr of Geauga Maple Company in Claridon Township.

Both made syrup in January, both used check valves and maintained production for over 9 weeks. Check valves are still popular but many producers are simply changing spouts every year and changing drops more often to promote tap hole sanitation.

Dan Brown, President of the Ohio Maple Producers Association, summed the season up this way, "It

was a great year to be producing maple syrup in Ohio".

PENNSYLVANIA

By: Wayne Clark

Pennsylvania, like other areas of the maple belt, experienced a mid-March freeze-up. Eastern, Southern and Northwest areas recovered in time to end up with a normal crop.

One producer in the Northwest reported it was like having two seasons, but they ended up with a good year with good amounts of light syrup. The Endless Mountains area, Bradford County and East also had an average crop.

The North Central mountains were a little different story. Eastern Tioga County had a good year with one producer reporting his best year of actual production in over 30 years of sugaring, with most half of his crop being light syrup.

Western Tioga County and Potter County, which are the more wooded, higher elevation areas, did not recover until the last few days of March. With April came warm weather. They ended with below average production.

All areas of the state reported making a good bit of light syrup.

WISCONSIN

By: Fred Hedmark

What a difference a year makes. Wisconsin went from probably one of the worst years in 2012 to possibly a record breaking season in 2013.

Most producers in the state were

preparing for another early season by tapping as early as or even earlier than 2012, only to have temperatures colder than normal in March and April. The cooler temperatures were a blessing in disguise by prolonging the season. I don't think we had any temperatures above mid-forties until the end of April in the Northern part of the state. The additional snow that fell was not as welcomed for the producers that didn't have tubing and had to gather buckets or bags. The snowfall for the two months was also well above normal.

The sap sugar content was the highest in at least 4 years. Many

producers were averaging 3% for most of the season. The higher sugar content and the cooler temperatures help the producers to make mostly light amber and medium amber maple syrup. It looks like dark amber could be in short supply this year.

Most of the producers in the northern half of the state were making syrup into the last weekend of April, with some producers in the northwestern part of the state having their season going into May because of the abundant snow in the woods.

There are a lot of happy faces in the state of Wisconsin this spring!

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The NAMSC Research Fund is a non-profit, volunteer based committee of the North American Maple Syrup Council, Inc.



2013 WINTER INSTITUTE HOSTED BY WMSPA AT THE PLAZA INN & SUITES, WAUSAU, WI

By: Gretchen Grape
Executive Director

Close to 200 maple syrup producers, friends and family attended the winter institute in Wausau . There were many from other states, such as MI, MN, VT, IL, IN, OH and of course WI. It was very interesting meeting many new faces and old ones alike.

Our equipment vendors did a wonderful job for all of the people in attendance.

We had representatives registered from CDL, Leader Evaporator Inc, Lapierre USA, plus our own WI dealers; Anderson's Maple Syrup, Inc., GBM LLC / All American Maple Outfitters, Smoky Lake Maple Products, Lorbecki Company LLC, Roth Sugarbush, INC., Kickapoo Gold, Maple Hollow, Autumn Ridge Maple Farm, Adamski's Sugar Bush, Sippl's Sap Shack, Sunrise Metal of IN, Derkins Label, MP&G, and Midwest Maple along with the reps for their industry.

On Friday evening our institute kicked off with an open to the public vendor display of all of the maple items from large evaporators to tapping supplies. This was followed by a delicious sit down banquet meal.

When everyone finished eating, our President James Adamski gave announcements and a few other items that had to be handled, before

he introduced our 2012 Maple Queen, Megan Staats of Sturgeon Bay , WI . She presented a wonderful power point presentation of her year's reign as our Wisconsin Maple Queen. Thank you Megan, and we all hope that you enjoyed your year!

This was followed by Jim, presenting the Syrup Maker of the Year award to Ray and Pam Melander from Merrill. As many of you know, you give Ray the mike and get comfortable, as he will keep you entertained for as long as you will listen. Good Job Ray and Congratulations to both of you!

This was then followed by Fred Hedmark, Committee member for the Honorary Life Member Award. This committee has a pretty stringent guideline that they follow to receive this award. After Fred gave a review of what this couple did for the last forty-four years that they have been active members in the association, he announced that the award was given to Henry and Gretchen Grape of Holcombe.

The banquet then ended with many going into the vendor's display area and visiting with them and asking many questions.

During the morning, our guest speaker was Dr. Timothy Perkins, the Director of the Proctor Maple Research Center at the University of Vermont . His session included topics such as forest health and the relationships among tree health, growth, stress and nutrition. He specializes in many aspects of our maple trees from climate change to tapping and other projects aimed at improving maple sap and maple syrup production.

During the morning we also had a

women's craft session that was directed by Vicky Adamski, with the help of her daughter in law, Sarah. They all made beautiful maple leaf pictures in a frame. It was a very clever way to do this and I was so very lucky to have a beautiful one made for me by Sarah. Great Job and Thank You!!

After Dr. Perkins's session was over, a first time event was our maple auction. There were many large and small items donated to be auctioned off. After lunch the auction continued until all items were accounted for. It was deemed a huge success and we are all looking forward to it being held again next year. I would like to thank everyone who donated these items and all of you who bid on them.

The break out sessions then followed. There were five break outs. Only one for the beginners was held one time. That was conducted by Lloyd Franz, who has so willingly

done this for so very many years for the association. He then was able to participate in some of the other break outs.

The other sessions were held three times consecutively. They were Dr. Timothy Perkins on tree health; Scott Boyce from CDL on reverse osmosis; Andy deLivron from Lapierre USA on tubing and Bradley Gillilian from Leader Evaporator with a presentation on vacuum tubing setups and the economics of maple.

These sessions rotated every 45 minutes and I am sure that more time would have been appreciated by the attendees. Something to look at for next year.

While picking up and talking with many producers, it was deemed a very successful event and they can't wait until next year. So be sure to mark your calendars for the second weekend in January 2014

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COMING EVENTS

PENNSYLVANIA FALL MAPLE TOUR

September 19-21, 2013

Settlers Inn, Hawley, Pennsylvania

For further information: extension.psu.edu/wayne

or phone: 570-253-5970 x 4110

NAMSC/IMSI ANNUAL MEETING

October 23-25, 2013

Delta, Beauséjour, Moncton, N.B.

For further information, contact Yvon Poitras at yrp@nb.aibn.com

NAMSC/IMSI NEW BRUNSWICK TOUR SCHEDULED

The annual meeting for the NAMSC/IMSI is set for October 23rd thru October 25th with an optional tour of Hopewell Rocks and the Bay of Fundy on Saturday, October 26th.

This is the first time that a 3 day event is tried out. We will have an optional tour on day 4 for those that would wish to stay over.

There will be special events, like the Taste of New Brunswick, a very interesting Acadian Coastal tour as a companion tour and entertainment along with meetings, technical sessions and the Awards banquet on Friday, October 25th.

Full registration packages will be sent out on July 1st. If anyone wants to make their hotel reservations now at the Delta-Beausejour in Moncton, here is the information:

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IN MEMORIAM

FRANCES P. BLOCHER

Somerset County Maple Producers Association sadly notes the passing of Frances Blocher on November 27, 2012. Frances was born May 19, 1937 in Mt. Savage, MD, the daughter of the late James Henry and Elizabeth (Winner) Weimer. She received her Bachelor of Education degree from Frostburg State University, was a member of Delta Kappa Gamma, and taught for 29 years in the Salisbury-Elk Lick School District. She was also a member of St. Michael Catholic Church, West Salisbury.

Along with her teaching and household duties, she was highly involved with the family businesses, Blocher Farm Service and Milroy Farms. Milroy Farms was started by Mildred and Roy Blocher in 1942. The business then came to their son, Gary, who is Frances's husband. The name Milroy Farms is synonymous with superb Maple products in Somerset County and Frances worked year-round to fill Maple orders for their many customers.

The statistics of Frances's life pale in comparison to her influence on Maple in Somerset County. She was instrumental in planning and orchestrating the early state tours to Somerset County, was a strong supporter of the Pennsylvania Maple Festival in Meyersdale. Along with her husband, brought the title of Maple King to the Blocher Camp many times, mentored the princesses vying for the Maple Queen title each year and was a vital link for the reigning Queen and the Maple producers community, worked tirelessly at the annual Somerset Historical Craft Days, promoting Maple to thousands of visitors, and with her family, hosted many "Maple Tapping Day" events and educational camp tours.

Much of her Maple support was in the nuts and bolts of small details often overlooked by others. Along with that, she patiently, with great kindness, and always a smile, shared her knowledge and skills with anyone who wanted to learn the how-to of Maple. She was acknowledged and honored by the Somerset County Maple Producers Association at the 2012 annual meeting for these very special contributions.

She leaves behind her husband, Gary B. Blocher, a son, Jason A. Blocher, his fiancée, M. Melissa Friend, four sisters and their families, and a large cadre of friends and admirers in both the local and Maple communities.

BILL CHALMER

Bill Chalmer died at the age of 99 1/2 in McLean, Virginia, where he lived near his family.

Bill continued in business until his mid 90s, and he was vital and of great mind and intellect until a week before he died. He would exercise every morning and spent his days with his family and his fellow residents in his assisted care home. He traveled with his family frequently, was the "life" of any gathering and was devoted to his family and his customers.

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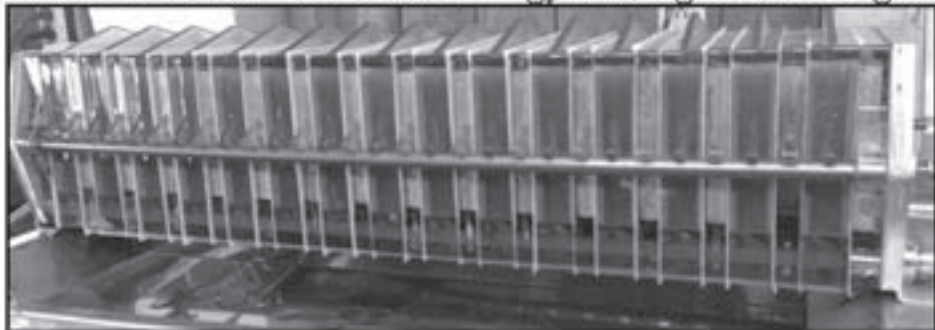


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