



The Gathering Tank

Volume 17, Issue 1 January 2012

Robyn Pearl, Editor

A Newsletter of the New Hampshire Maple Producers Association, Inc.

Annual Meeting Scheduled

The Annual Meeting of the NHMPA will be held on Saturday, January 28, 2012 at the Lodge of the Elks, Lebanon, NH. The meeting will start at 10am and conclude around 3pm. Coffee and pastries will be offered prior to the meeting. A buffet lunch is available, and lunch selections must be reserved in advance. More information can be found on the membership application on the last page of this newsletter.

The keynote speaker for this year will be Dr. Timothy Perkins from the Proctor Maple Research Center at the University of Vermont.

A business meeting will be conducted to report on the status of the association, as well as the NH Maple Museum. A brief update of the progress of the proposed Maple Grading System will be given. The Carlisle competition will be held, so be sure to bring your entry if you had placed at a state fair competition. Vendors will also be present with equipment and supplies.

This is a great chance to catch up with other sugar makers to talk about the upcoming season. It will be upon us before we know it!



Regional Meetings Announced

The regional educational sessions have been scheduled for the following dates:

Tues, Feb 7-Intervale Farm Pancake House, Rte 114 & Flanders Rd, Henniker

Thurs, Feb 9-Stuart & John's Sugar House, Rtes 63 & 12, Westmoreland

Tues, Feb 14 -Mt Cube Farm, Gov Thomson Hwy, Orford

Thurs, Feb 16-Fish & Game Research Bldg, Rte 3
Lancaster

All meetings begin at 7pm. The discussion topics have yet to be finalized. Regional sessions are free and open to NHMPA members and non members alike. If you know someone that is starting into the industry and wants to learn more, please bring them along you.

Maple Weekend 2012



The 17th annual New Hampshire Maple Weekend will be held on March 24-25, 2012. The date has been scheduled with the hopes that it will be beneficial to everyone on the premise that most producers will have syrup made and ready to sell by this date. Last year, Maple Weekend was held on March 17-18, and although a record breaking year,

not all producers had syrup made by then. Participation for last year's weekend was at an all time high, and we hope for the same this year.

If you wish to participate, please fill out the form found on page 5. You receive free publicity through a listing on our website and lists of participating sugar houses will be sent to all NH media. We will again be advertising on Channel 9 WMUR. Non-maple related businesses are setting their events on this same weekend, so our event has enough public attention for others to want to piggy-back on the public interest. Take advantage of a great opportunity to get your operation seen and to promote New Hampshire maple.

Tree Tapping Ceremony



The Tree Tapping Ceremony with Governor Lynch will be held this year at Fadden's Sugar House in N Woodstock.

The date will be announced after it is confirmed with the Governor's office.

This ceremonial event is held every March to commemorate the start of the sugaring season and to bring to light the importance of the industry to the state. The maple industry provides New Hampshire's economy with approximately \$5 million dollars annually.

Join your fellow sugar makers in the fun of kicking off another season. Refreshments will be served and good conversation is always on hand.

President's Corner

Secretary's Notes



Happy New Year to all! As 2011 leaves and 2012 gets underway, let's hope that the New Year brings us all a bountiful crop of syrup.

The Annual Meeting is just four weeks away. We have some very good speakers lined up, and as always there will be time to swap stories and new ideas for our sugar houses.

If you aren't able to attend the meeting in January, the Regional Meetings held in mid- February are a great alternative. New ideas and great discussion are always the highlight of these meetings. Some of the most beneficial ideas for your sugar bush may come from your neighbor's experience.

Best wishes to all, and may 2012 be our best year yet!

-Peter Thomson

Container Prices Steady



The Board of Directors has set the Association container prices at the following:

	Case	Individual
Gallon	\$50.00	\$2.18
1/2 Gal	\$77.50	\$1.70
Quart	\$95.00	\$1.28
Pint	\$105.00	\$1.20
1/2 Pint	\$95.00	\$1.10
3.4oz	\$165.00	\$0.90

Conrad Chapple Sr.
537 Meridan Hill Rd.
Columbia, NH 03590
Ph. 603-922-3460

Bascom Maple Farm
56 Sugar House Rd.
Alstead, NH 03602
Ph. 603-835-6361

Bill Cheney
56 Broomstick Lane
Campton, NH 03223
Ph. 603-726-3829

Sunnyside Maples
1089 North Rt. 106
Gilmanton, NH 03237
Ph. 603-783-9961

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Bill Eva
107 Longview Rd.
Hancock, NH 03449
Ph. 603-525-3666

Fuller's Sugar House
267 Main Street
Lancaster, NH 03584
Ph. 603-788-2719

Tomapo Farm
110 Storrs Hill Rd.
Lebanon, NH 03766
Ph. 603-448-1145

Westwynde Farm
Rt. 171 317 Old Mtn Rd.
Moultonboro, NH 03254
Ph. 603-476-5907

As usual, I like to report on our membership and I am happy to say that we have 410 members, the most in recent years.

2012 Dues are now due. An application blank is at the back of this newsletter. Even if you aren't able to be at the Annual Meeting, you can still send in your dues with this application, just don't fill out the meal portion. Other info on the application is important to us. Please print your email address as legibly as you can so I won't make a mistake transposing it.

In spite of three bad weather days at Deerfield Fair, and one bad weather day at Hopkinton Fair, we actually did very well. All the volunteers and those who supplied product had a good time and a lot of maple promotion took place at these sugar houses.

The Vermont schools are scheduled for January 14 in Middlebury, January 21 in Hyde Park, and February 4 in Bellows Falls so this year you won't have to choose between our annual meeting and a school.

See you at the Annual Meeting on January 28th at the Lebanon Elks Hall.

-Don Lassonde

Can You Lend a Hand?

The Farm and Forest Expo will be held on February 3-4, 2012. Volunteers are needed to help at the NHMPA booth. This is an educational event that hosts approximately 3500 guests annually. The NHMPA booth serves maple syrup samples, sells maple milk (a perennial favorite), and educates the public on sugaring in New Hampshire.

Volunteers are needed to help set up the booth on Thursday, Feb 2, work at the booth both Friday and Saturday in 4-5 hour shifts, and take down the booth on Saturday after the event.

If you are able to work or need more info, please contact Hank Peterson 432-8427 and let him know when you will be there.



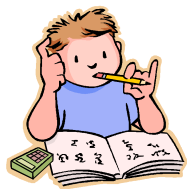
Felker Award Applications



Do you know a student who is interested in the maple industry? Did you know that they could win an award for that interest? Every year, the Walter A. Felker Award is given to a young man or woman with the intent to promote and encourage an interest in the production and marketing of high quality maple products.

The award is named in honor of Walter A Felker, a former director of the Bureau of Markets at the Department of Agriculture. Mr. Felker was instrumental in the formation of the NHMPA in 1943 and was the association's secretary until his death in 1946.

The recipient of the award receives an engraved plaque to recognize their achievement as well as a \$100.00 cash prize. Applications can be obtained from Don Lassonde 456-6052 or donlass@aol.com or Robyn Pearl 225-3757 or nhmpa@aol.com. Details about the project are outlined on the application.



This is a great way to involve young members of our community in our long standing traditions.



Publicity Report

We had a great turnout at Summer Meeting at Fadden's Sugar House in Woodstock. Bruce Gilliland from Leader provided a review of basic sugaring principles that was a good refresher for both beginner and veteran producers. A tour of the Hubbard Brook Research Foundation followed lunch.

We have been receiving phone calls about the scheduled date of Maple Weekend with the idea of other organizations piggybacking their events on the same dates. We also have been contacted by magazines wanting to publish our event. This is a true testament to the popularity of Maple Weekend and the positive image it provides for our association and our state.

Best wishes for another prosperous year, and as always, feel free to contact me if you have any thoughts or suggestions.

- Robyn Pearl

Meet a Maple Producer

Born and raised in northern Wisconsin, Hank Peterson grew up sugaring with his father and grandfather. After living in Denver for 15 years, he and his family settled in southern New Hampshire in 1979. He knew that the natural passion he had for sugaring was calling him back to the sugar bush. "It gets in your blood" he said.



He befriended a gentleman with a sugaring operation in Londonderry and became involved in it. His portion began with 35 buckets, but was encouraged yearly to add a few more. Eventually, Hank took over and now sets out 800 taps a year. He uses both buckets and tubing. His first evaporator, a 2x6 wood fired, was found to be inadequate after a record breaking season, so in 1981 he installed his "new" evaporator; a rescue from the woods near Newfound Lake. The arch was sound, and the pans had been housed in a shed. After replacing a few pieces, the wood fired 4x10 evaporator came back to life and is thriving every season.

Hank has given much time and service to the industry. He served as secretary of the NHMPA for 15 years, and continues to sit on the board as a director. He became a delegate to the North American Maple Syrup Council (NAMSC) in the mid 1980's and became the delegate to the International Maple Syrup Institute (IMSI) shortly after. He served in the NAMSC as Vice President for two years and then was elected to a two year term as President in 2000. Hank was inducted into the Maple Hall of Fame in 2006 recognizing his longevity, involvement and service to the maple industry. He also has served on the board of directors of NH Farm and Forest for the past 28 years as well as on the Farm Bureau board in Rockingham County.

During the season, Hank hosts school tours five days a week twice a day. That calculates out to over 1000 kindergarten and first graders!

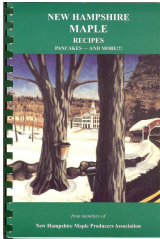
We want to thank you Hank for all you have done to promote maple sugaring and bring it forward into this century. Your countless hours spent educating the public and your fellow sugar makers have not gone unnoticed.



Check it out!!

Our website www.nhmapleproducers.com has a new look. Log on in February to see our new features. We have tried to make it more member friendly with news updates, container pricing, a want-ad section and more. Let us know what you think. If you have any suggestions, please let Robyn know at nhmpa@aol.com .

Stock Up on Books!!!



Do you sell books in your sugar house? Check your inventory before the season gets underway. If you are finding yourself short on the NHMPA Cookbook or Maple Sugaring in New Hampshire, get an ample supply to make it through this coming sugaring season.

Betty Messer has plenty of cookbooks on hand. Give her a call at 353-4883 or sundaymtmaple@myfairpoint.net to let her know what you need. She can bring them to the Annual Meeting for you. She also will have extras on hand if you want to look through it before buying. Cookbooks are \$7.00 each for members and \$12.00 for non-members. They are a great add-on for syrup sales when someone asks "what else can I do with syrup besides put it on my pancakes?"

Maple Sugaring in New Hampshire is a great resource for those who want to learn the history of how the industry has progressed through the last two centuries. Contact Barbara Lassonde to bulk up your supply of this book. She can be reached at 456-6052 or barbaralassonde@aol.com. This book is available for \$19.99 or 6/\$15.00 each.

Other books are available on the market which are great additions to your sales table. For your young visitors, coloring books are inexpensive and a fun lesson on how the whole process works from tree to table. Bodie Peters has a supply of these which he sells at cost of \$45.00/case. This is less than you would pay at the supply houses. Contact Bodie at info@bosugarshack.com to let him know what you will need.

A variety of story books can be found that also provide a picturesque description of syrup production. Copies can be found at maple supply houses or online. Consider added some to your retail operation. Books make a great take away with your other maple products, work nicely into gift baskets, and have great eye appeal.



Get Onboard!!

Are you interested in leading the NHMPA into the future? Consider being a member on the Board of Directors or run for an officer's position. Contact Don Lassonde, our Nominating Chairman, and he will be happy to explain to you what is involved and the time commitments. He can be reached at 456-6052 or donlass@aol.com. Get involved! The future starts now. Be a part of it.



IMSI/NAMSC Report

The Annual meeting was held in Frankenth, MI on October 23-26, 2011. The Directors' meetings for both associations were held on Sunday, the 26th. The meetings opened with a business meeting including roll call, committee reports, financial reports, etc.

The technical sessions were very interesting this year ranging from common sense ideas to technical concepts. The topics included: two taps vs. one, high vacuum without a pump, research reports from Proctor, Cornell and Centre Acer, off flavors in maple syrup and nutritional and health benefits of maple syrup.

The session on the maple grading was the most interesting. The grading standards were presented to both the US and Canadian governments this fall. Response time is unclear. Work between the NHMPA and our state regulators will continue. Operational market trials could begin as early as this spring. These trials will be done by select producers in the US and Canada. Raising awareness among producers and packers is ongoing. As an added note, the NAMSC directors voted 9 to 0 to support the grading changes. More on this is available in the Maple Syrup Digest.

Another subject discussed was the continuing feud with Pinnacle Foods marketing their Log Cabin All Natural Table Syrup in jugs similar to our maple jugs and positioned next to the pure maple syrup on the store shelves. Both the IMSI and the NAMSC have communicated with Pinnacle with mixed results. Our concern is with the strikingly similar jugs and the shelf placement. These factors create confusion for the consumer. Major retailers in the US and Canada have been made aware of our concerns.

The adulteration testing is showing results. One sample tested by Vermont showed that the syrup tested was 100% cane syrup although marketed as pure maple syrup. These findings have been turned over to the US FDA and is heading to federal court.

I want to thank all of the NH sugar makers who attended the meeting. It was a good turnout.



-Hank Peterson, Delegate



Parting comments...

A family of moles had been hibernating all winter. One beautiful spring morning, they woke up. The father mole stuck his head out of the hole and looked around. "Mother Mole!" He called back down the hole. "Come up here! I smell honey, fresh made honey!" The mother mole ran up and squeezed in next to him. "That's not honey, that's maple syrup! I smell maple syrup!" The baby mole, still down in the hole, was sulking. "I can't smell anything down here but molasses ..."



Maple Weekend Participation Form

If you plan to participate in NEW HAMPSHIRE MAPLE WEEKEND on MARCH 24-25, 2012 and would like **free** publicity, please complete this form and return it to Robyn Pearl **before** FEBRUARY 17, 2012. ALL PARTICIPANTS MUST HAVE PAID THEIR 2012 ASSOCIATION DUES. A list of participating sugar houses will be sent to the media, will be listed on our website and will be referred to when calls are received on the NH Maple Phone.

We had a record number of participants last year. Please try to get your information back in as close to the due date as possible. If you wait until last minute, no guarantee can be made that your listing will be posted to the website or be added to the list that is distributed.

Sugar House Name: _____

Maple Producer's Name: _____

Physical Address of SUGAR HOUSE: _____

Town: _____ ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ County: _____

Days and Hours you will be open: Sat _____ Sun _____

Please give a brief description of what you will be offering on NH Maple Weekend (i.e.; sugar on snow, sap gathering, tours, demonstrations, products you sell, doughnuts & coffee, etc.) Specify if there is a charge for any activities. Be specific and concise. All listings will be considered for editing.

Return this form to: Robyn Pearl, 409 Loudon Ridge Road, Loudon, NH 03307

Questions or need more information? Call Robyn @ 225-3757





New Hampshire Maple Producers Association, Inc.

Annual Meeting Agenda

When: January 28, 2012

Where: Lebanon Lodge of Elks

Heater Road, Lebanon, NH

Time: 9:00 – 10:00 am – Coffee and Pastries

10:00 – 11:30 am – Business Meeting

Officer's Reports

Committee Reports

Old Business

New Business

NH Maple Museum Annual Meeting

11:30 – 12pm – Update on Proposed Maple Grading System,

Hank Peterson, IMSI Delegate

12 noon - Buffet Lunch

1:00 pm – 1:30 pm – Carlisle Award presentation

1:30 pm – 2:30 pm - Dr. Tim Perkins, Proctor Maple Research Center,
University of Vermont

Impact of Microbial Contamination in Vacuum Tubing

On Sap Yields and Mitigating through Sanitation Practices

2:30pm— 3:00 pm—Door prizes and adjournment



DIRECTIONS TO ANNUAL MEETING: Take Exit 18 off I-89. Go north on Route 120 to the first traffic light. Turn right on to Heater Road. The Elks hall is on the left, a large red building. Our meeting is upstairs.



New Hampshire Maple Producers Association, Inc.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Date _____ New Member? _____ Current Member? _____
Avg. # of Gallons produced per year _____ Are you receiving the Maple Syrup Digest? Yes _____ No _____

ANNUAL DUES: \$20.00 (January 1st to December 31st)

Members are being asked to make a VOLUNTARY DONATION to the Promotion Committee Fund.

THIS IS IN ADDITION TO THE ANNUAL DUES. A suggested donation schedule is the following:

1 to 999 taps \$5 _____ 1000 to 2500 taps \$10 _____ 2501 taps to 4000 taps \$20 _____
4001 taps to 5500 taps \$30 _____ 5501+ taps \$40 _____

Please print or use a name & address label

Name _____

Sugar House Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Town _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____ E-mail _____

Make checks payable to: NH Maple Producers Association (NHMPA)

Return to: NH Maple Producers Association

Don Lassonde, Secretary
402 Route 103 East
Warner, NH 03278-4418

Telephone: (603) 456-6052
Email: donlass@aol.com

Lunch Buffet for the Annual Meeting:



Please choose from the following: Baked Stuffed Chicken # _____ or Roast Beef # _____

With salad, potatoes, mixed vegetables, dessert and beverages.

Cost: \$14.95 each. Please make lunch reservations by January 20th.

(Lunch reservations are not required if you wish to attend the meeting only.)

Amount Enclosed: Annual dues \$20.00, Donation \$ _____ Lunch \$ _____

Total: \$ _____

PLEASE ANSWER: the NHMPA will again have a booth at the Big E from Sept 14-30, 2012 and we need volunteers to man the booth. Can you help? Tell us your preferred dates _____

How do you think the NHMPA can better serve its members? _____

(continue on reverse side)

New Hampshire Maple Producers Assoc.

409 Loudon Ridge Road

Loudon, NH 03307

IMPORTANT: ANNUAL MEETING NOTICE ENCLOSED