

The Gathering Tank

Volume 18, Issue 2 June 2013



Robyn Pearl, Editor

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

Summer Meeting

This year's summer meeting will be held at Bascom Maple Farm in Acworth on Saturday, July 20th. A coffee hour will be held from 9:00-10:00 am with refreshments available. The meeting will begin at 10:00 am with a greeting from our hosts, Bruce and Liz Bascom. It will be followed by a business meeting of the NHMPA. Qualifying entries for the Carlisle Award will be announced.

The keynote speaker will be Bruce Bascom. He will be discussing the importance and impact of New Hampshire on the maple industry. We have invited the four members of the New Hampshire delegation to Washington to join us as well as various members of our state congress. We are hoping that it will help them to get a better understanding of what sugar makers contribute to our economy both in revenue and employment.

A picnic lunch will be held at noon. Please refer to the schedule posted on the Summer Meeting agenda on page 6 of this newsletter to know what to bring.

After lunch, take a tour of New Hampshire's largest maple producer's operation. You will be invited to see the newest construction with the most modern equipment including the canning and packing area, the storage facility and the sales room. Due to the potential number of members attending the meeting, there may be two groups created to ease the navigation of the tour. The meeting will be adjourned at 3:00 pm.

Come to the meeting and catch up with your fellow sugar makers. Learn about the latest happenings in the NHMPA. Discuss what your operation's impact has in the maple industry. Enjoy a meal with friends and take a tour of the most modern maple facility in our state.



See you in July!!

NH Syrup Production

Greatly Improved in 2013



Reports from the USDA show that New Hampshire maple producers had an excellent maple syrup crop, especially in comparison to results from 2012.

The National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) stated that New Hampshire sugar makers produced 124,000 gallons of syrup in 2013 as compared to 76,000 gallons in 2012 and 120,000 gallons in 2011. However, the number of taps that have been set out has increased as well, from 420,000 in 2011 to 460,000 in 2013. The average yield per tap is down from .286 gallons in 2011 to .270 gallons in 2013, indicating that the increase in total gallons made was due to the increase in the number of taps.

Overall, New Hampshire ranked 8th out of the 10 states surveyed for total gallons produced in the United States. The US maple syrup crop in 2013 totaled at 3,253,000 gallons, up by almost 500,000 gallons from the 2011 season. The number of taps in the US increased from 9,580,000 in 2011 to 10,571,000 taps in 2013.

Please remember the importance of reporting your season's results to the NHMPA. The crop summary above was compiled from a report issued from the USDA, not from information shared by Association members as per request. Seasonal data is requested by media and industry outlets to be used to create an accurate reflection to the public on production for the industry. A fair representation of our state's production is important and an accurate summary cannot be gained without response from our members. You will notice in the June 2013 issue of Maple Digest that there is no report from New Hampshire on our season's production. Requests for information were sent to over 300 of our members, only 5 responded. Your help in compiling this information will be appreciated in the future.

President's Corner

Sugar houses are sitting idle, or are they? Renovations for next year are being done. Upgrades in the orchards are already happening. Although we are not boiling, the work is never over. We even got a Memorial Day Snow Storm to remind us that Mother Nature can always shake it up a little for us.

It has been said that we need to serve our present members in a fashion that gives us new members. Now that is not always easily done with a board of our size. This is not an association of board members but an association of NH Sugar Makers who strive to make the best syrup possible.

The Promotions Committee has been reinstated to help all members by planning events to entice the public to gain interest in the maple industry in our state. The intent of any promotion is not to cause hardship on a member but provide aid in furthering their venture. Let's show the world what New Hampshire has to offer. Get involved with your association and give it a chance to show the world a new perspective on marketing maple.

- Bodie Peters

Publicity Report



We once again had great interest in our sugaring season from the press. We gave interviews on local radio stations, The Weather Channel, statewide newspapers, and had great coverage on Maple Weekend with news pieces shot at several locations across the state and aired on WMUR. One sugar maker was filmed and aired on the Vermont TV station!

I sent out an e-dition of the Gathering Tank in April. I hope that you found it helpful and enjoyable. I will continue to contact you as timely as possible when important information is needed to get to you.

If you have any questions or needs, suggestions or concerns, please feel free to contact me. If I don't have the answer, I will put you in touch with someone who does. I can be reached at nhmpa@aol.com or (603)225-3757.

See you at the Summer Meeting,

- Robyn Pearl

Secretary's Notes



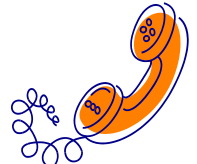
Our membership as of June 1 is 387 members, almost identical to last year at this time. Please remember that a current membership is necessary for use of association jugs as well as other membership benefits such as your subscription to the Maple Digest and participation in upcoming association events. The Promotion committee has a lot of good ideas regarding "Maple Sugaring Month" in the spring and also "Maple Adventure Month" in the fall.

I'm sure that many producers are looking forward to our 2nd annual Maple School to be held in October. This was well attended this past year. I have had a few producers question what the topics would be this year. Please send any of your ideas on this to the Publicist or me, and we will see that they get to the organizers of this event.

Barbara and I will be looking forward to seeing you at the summer meeting at Bascom's on July 20. More details on this are in this publication.

- Don Lassonde

NHMPA CONTACTS



President: Bodie Peters, Sugar Hill, 823-7708

Vice Pres: Tim Robinson, Chocorua, 323-9320

Secretary: Don Lassonde, Warner, 456-6052

Treasurer: Howard Pearl, Loudon, 435-6587

Directors: Bill Eva, Hancock, 525-3566

Ben Fiske, Temple, 562-6595

Hank Kenney, Marlborough, 876-3838

Paul Messer, Sr., Orford, 353-4883

Mike Moore, Canterbury, 783-0321

Hank Peterson, Londonderry, 432-8427

Dave Scanlan, Bow, 228-4449

Peter Thomson, Orford, 353-4111

Container Chairman: Bill Cheney, 726-3829

Big E Manager: Dee Linn, 359-1270

Promotions Chairman: Brad Presby, 616-2463



Details for the 2nd Annual Maple School are still being finalized. The format will be the same as last year, with multiple classes being offered throughout the day and a lunch break around noon. More information on the school and registration will be posted on the website when it becomes available. The location of the school, date and meal availability will be posted as well.

How will you use the information you learned? Vendors will be on site to help you decide what will work best in your operation. Perhaps you are considering upgrading your equipment or want to get a head start on repairs before you get busy. Come prepared with a list of needs so you can get them in to action before the weather turns and next year's maple season is upon you.

Thank you to the University of New Hampshire Extension Service, the NH Timber Owner's Association and the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development for their support of this program again.

If you have particular topics you want to see covered during the School, please sent an email to Eric Johnson at tuckermtn@hotmail.com or Steve Roberge at Steven.Roberge@unh.edu. Hope to see you there!



Sugar House Tour Guide

It's time to sign up for the publication of the 2014 Sugar House Tour Guide, an annual brochure that allows members to advertise their business and what they offer on a year round basis. There is a \$30.00 participation fee.

The guide is distributed to the rest areas across the state by volunteer aid of the Division of Agricultural Development, part of the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets and food. It also is available to the public at the fairs, educational forums and by request.

The application will be available on our website, www.nhmapleproducers.com or will be mailed on request by calling (603) 225-3757.



IMSI REPORT

At the Director's Meeting in Ontario in May, the crop report indicated an average or perhaps slightly above average yield in most regions. The quality was good in most areas. Much light amber was made. Dark to B grade may be in short supply. The above average yield will allow the reserve to be built up after the low production in 2012.

The main ongoing program is the Standardized Grading System. We are waiting for word from the Federal Governments of both the United States and Canada. Many states are waiting for word in order to rewrite their rules, New Hampshire included. Vermont, New York and Maine have begun rewriting their rules. New grading kits are being developed in Canada and the United States.

The nutritional rack cards have been well accepted as a way to inform the public of the health benefits of maple syrup. These cards are available from the NHMPA.

A discussion was held on food safety concerns. All sugar makers are encouraged to implement food safety practices as a part of their regular production regimen. It is important to adhere to the standards set to avoid any issues upon potential inspection.

The next Directors' Meeting will be held in August in Orono, ME. The annual meeting will be held in Moncton, New Brunswick from October 24th.

- Hank Peterson, Delegate



IMSI/NAMSC Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the International Maple Syrup Institute (IMSI) and North American Maple Syrup Council (NAMSC) will be held in Moncton, New Brunswick from October 23-25th at the Delta Beausejour Hotel.

This annual gathering is held in one of the member states or provinces of the IMSI/NAMSC. The multi-day event includes meetings, discussions of maple industry news, developments and concerns, and award ceremonies. Tours of the local attractions are also offered. Details and registration information will be posted on our website when they becomes available.

New Hampshire will be hosting the event in 2018.



No BPA in NHMPA Syrup Containers

A few sugar makers questioned recently if the product called BPA (bisphenol A) is present in our association syrup containers. Our syrup jugs are made with HDPE (high density polyethylene), a form of plastic. BPA is present in some plastics, but not in our containers. Producers are asking because BPA has been linked to some carcinogens (cancer causing agents). Our containers are supplied to Bacon by Hillside Plastics. Hillside has provided the Association with the following information about the plastics they use in making the containers:

“Hillside Plastics uses 100% prime FDA approved resins. We mold primarily HDPE, but we have experience in molding other common blow-mold grades resins, such as polypropylene, and low density polyethylene. Our products are totally reclaimable and recyclable. There is no bisphenol A (BPA) added to or used as an additive or raw material in the manufacture of any materials used to manufacture HDPE containers from Hillside”.

-Bill Cheney, Container Chairman

Odds & Ends

- ◆ NHMPA cookbooks for resale and IMSI nutritional rack cards are available. Please contact Robyn if you are in need of either of these valuable resources for your customers.
- ◆ Attend a Board meeting! They are always open to the membership. Join in the discussion that helps to shape the direction of the association. Meeting dates are posted on the calendar found on our website.
- ◆ Interested in becoming a member of the board? Contact Don Lassonde, our Nominating Chairman for more details on what each position involves.
- ◆ If you have any changes to your contact information, please forward them to be sure you are being kept up to date with the latest happenings in the NHMPA.
- ◆ We are always happy to get photos!! Email your best shots to nhmpa@aol.com. Photos are often requested by the media. They may be used for promotional material for the NHMPA or sent to other media outlets.

NHMPA Website to get a new look



Striving to keep as current as possible, the Promotions Committee has decided it is necessary to update the Association’s website. The redesign will recognize the desire for instant information access and ease for users to get a better understanding of what the association offers to members, the public, and to potential new members.

The most recent website changes were implemented two years ago. Although successful, more improvements are needed to keep current. We have had great response to some of the updates such as online membership and event participation applications and PayPal. Plans are being made to continue with these types of improvements to better serve the membership and make our website the hub for information for members.

The redesign is planned to launch in January.



HEADING TO THE FAIR?

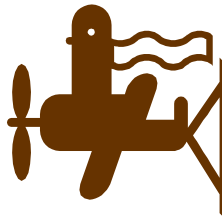
Are you planning to visit the Eastern States Exposition, Hopkinton or Deerfield Fair? The NHMPA has booths each year at the Hopkinton and Deerfield Fairs and the Eastern States Exposition (the Big E) in West Springfield, MA. Help is needed at all of these fairs for success.

Hopkinton Fair will be held from Aug 29th - Sept 2nd and Deerfield Fair will be held from Sept 26 - 29th. Contact Don Lassonde at 456-6052 or donlass@aol.com if you are able to help.

The Big E runs from Sept 13 - 29th this year. Any time you can give to help is much appreciated. A daily stipend is paid and lodging is provided. Contact Dee Linn at 359-1270 or rockytopphoto@yahoo.com to let her know when you’ll be there. It’s always a fun time and a great experience.

The NHMPA has a long history of involvement with the fairs. They are important outlets of education for the public. Talking to sugar makers directly is the most effective way to relay accurate information about how the process works.





Upcoming Events

The Promotions Committee announces the following events to help move the NH maple industry into the spotlight, capitalizing on the increased tourism during which the events are scheduled. Much consideration has been given to each of these ideas and we are very hopeful that you will find great success by participating. As these events are new to all of us, they will continue to be developed and tailored to the needs of the Association as warranted. Please keep in mind that all events are held at the involvement level desired by each participant. Members can sign up for as many or few dates as they wish and at a scale that works for their operation. No event is intended to be a burden on the business. This committee has been and will continue to pursue the most efficient ways to use the funds that have been given to us. We are actively researching grants and will inform you of all what we are able to accomplish. Below you will find the events that we have organized beginning with this fall and continuing into next sugaring season. Please contact us at nhmpa@aol.com or (603)225-3757 if you have any questions, comments or concerns.

-Brad Presby, Chairman, Promotions Committee

Maple Adventure Month



From September 28- October 20, the NHMPA will be promoting Maple Adventure Month, with the theme of "Make it with Maple!". We will be promoting visits to sugar houses throughout the state during the foliage season.

Footage for new TV advertising has been shot and a list of participants will be supplied to chambers of commerce, lodging facilities, as well as other popular destinations throughout the state to steer visitors to sugar houses. The intent is to promote the fantastic flavor of maple and demonstrate how versatile it is as a natural sweetener. This is a great opportunity to introduce maple products, showcase added value products and boost sales going into the holiday season.

As an incentive for tourists to visit you, we have created a contest that asks visitors to take photos of their adventure at a sugar house and post them on our Facebook page. A winner will be chosen after the entire event is over and a prize of NHMPA goodies will be awarded to the winning photographer.

A sign up sheet can be found on page 7 of this newsletter and on our website, with more detail as to how to plan your event. Let's make this adventure month a big success for your sugar house and for the maple industry in our state.



Sign up today!!

Maple Sugaring Month



In response to the many years of varying success due to weather related issues on Maple Weekend, the NHMPA will be hosting Maple Sugaring Month from March 15-April 6. The highlight of the event will be Maple Weekend on March 22-23. This event will also bring awareness to the sugaring season and hope to dispel the idea that maple syrup is made on one weekend only.

Visitors to our state have been requesting additional opportunities to visit sugar houses, so why not let the NHMPA help bring business to your door? The theme of this event will be "Live Free and Savor", partly chosen to receive advertising aid from state agencies. A new TV ad will be aired and we will continue to stretch our advertising dollars as far as they will go. One of the new features on our website will be to a mapping option for users which will allow them to create a "Tap Line", or route to follow on their travels from sugar house to sugar house.

As with Maple Adventure Month in the fall, the option is yours as to what amount of time you wish to dedicate to the event. A sign up sheet will be available in the December Gathering Tank as well as on our website. We hope this will give an opportunity for visitors to see everyone's operation boiling.

Start planning now for a great spring season!



Summer Meeting Agenda

WHEN: Saturday, July 20, 2012

WHERE: Bascom Maple Farms, Alstead, NH

TIME: 9:00-10 a.m. - Coffee & Pastries

10:00 – Welcome by Bruce and Liz Bascom

10:15 – 11:00 - Business Meeting

Officers' and Chairmen's Reports

Old and New Business

Presentation of the Qualifying Carlisle Award entries

Steve Roberge, UNH Extension, 2nd Annual Maple School

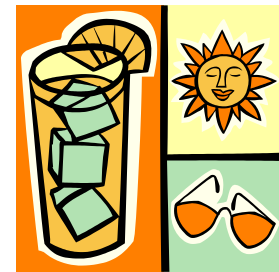
11:00 - Key note speaker - Bruce Bascom, Discussion on the Importance and Impact of New Hampshire Sugar Makers on the Maple Industry

Comments from our invited guests

12 noon – Pot Luck Alphabet Picnic (see note below)

1:00 – Tour of Bascom Maple Farms facilities

3:00 - Adjournment



-
Lunch Note: Whichever letter your last name begins with, please bring that item:



AB - Dessert: cake, cookies, brownies, etc.

CDEFG - Sandwich filling: Luncheon meat, sliced cheese, etc.

HIJK - Bread, rolls

LMN - Vegetable salad, potato chips, pretzels, etc.

OPQRST – Potato salad, casserole, baked beans, etc.

UVWXYZ – Fruit salad, fruit

Directions to Bascom Maple Farms: Most of you are likely to have been or are familiar with where Bascom's is. If not, a map has been printed on the back page of this newsletter for reference.

Maple Adventure Month

Participation Form



In choosing to participate, the level of what you want to offer is entirely up to you. If you wish to offer something similar to what you do on Maple Weekend, please do so. If that is more than you want or are able to do, please create your event at a level that is manageable for your operation. The same is true of when to sign up for. If certain weekends work better for you, only register for those. The dates are set to follow the foliage season, beginning from peak color in the north and heading south. Again, if you are past foliage and the visitors have left your area or you don't feel that tourism is strong in your area, then register for the time(s) when you feel you will most benefit. If you are unsure of peak tourism in your area, check with your local lodging centers and they will tell you when they are booked most heavily.

To help tourists better understand our state, we will be getting away from identifying location by county but instead by geographic region. The state will be divided into 7 regions: Great North Woods, White Mountains, Lakes Region, Monadnocks, Merrimack Valley, Seacoast and Dartmouth - Lake Sunapee. A list of towns per region and a map will be available on our website or call 225-3757 to inquire which region you are in.

Please note: All contact information on this form is for public use. List the means by which you wish visitors to contact you.

Sugar House Name: _____

Maple Producer's Name: _____

Physical Address of SUGAR HOUSE: _____

Town: _____ ZIP: _____ Region: _____

Phone: _____ Email/Website: _____

Sept 28-29: open hours on Sat _____ Sun _____ **Oct 5-6:** open hours on Sat _____ Sun _____

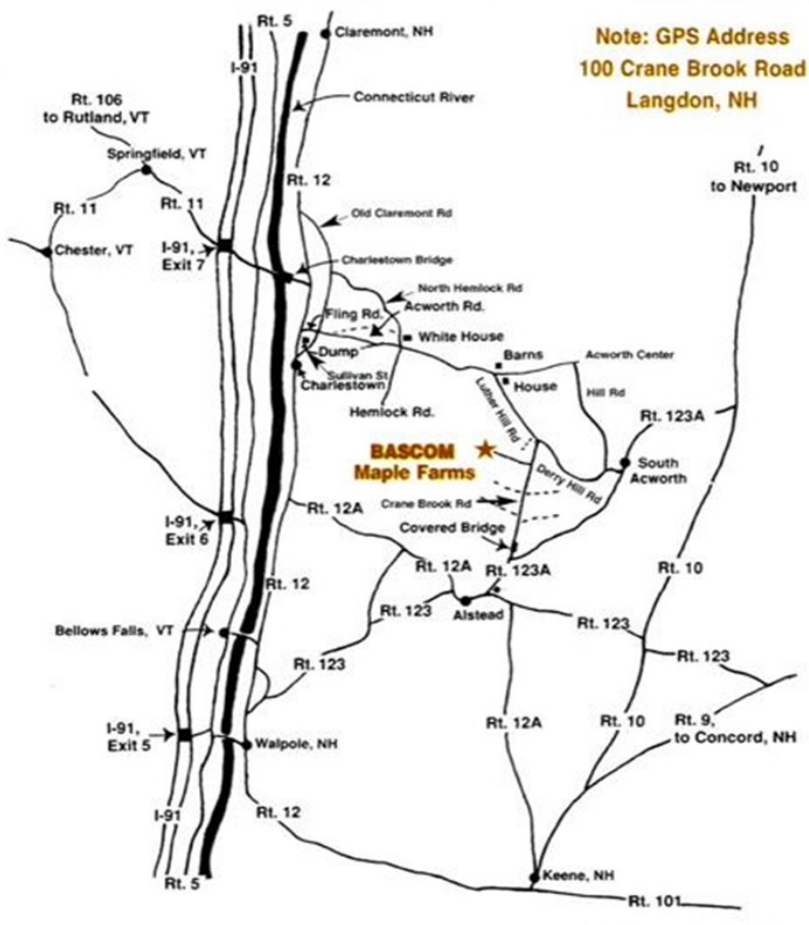
Oct 12-13: open hours on Sat _____ Sun _____ **Oct 19-20:** open hours on Sat _____ Sun _____

Please give a brief description of what you will be offering during Maple Adventure Month (demonstrations, tours, products you sell, samples, doughnuts & coffee, etc.) If you have an event special to one weekend, please note. Specify if there is a charge for any activities. Please be specific and concise.



Return this form by August 31st to: Robyn Pearl, 409 Loudon Ridge Road, Loudon, NH 03307

Questions or need more information? Email Robyn at nhmpa@aol.com or call 225-3757.



Map to Bascom Maple Farms Alstead, NH

Please refer to the map to the left for directions to the Summer Meeting.

If you use GPS, please use the following address: 100 Crane Brook Road, Langdon, NH.

