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he journey to genuine cooking starts by sharing some of our favorite ways to use pure NYS maple syrup in the kitchen! Check out the NYS Maple YouTube Channel, subscribe and share the many diverse recipes right on your Facebook page. This is how you do it:

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**1. Go to YouTube.com** Don't know how? It's simple. Open Google.com and in the search bar, type in: YouTube

# 2. In the YouTube search bar, type in: NYS Maple

**3. You should see the pure NY Maple logo** once your search is complete in NYS Maple. Click on the logo and that will take you to the NYS Maple YouTube channel. Click "subscribe" on the right-hand side of the page

#### 4. Get to cooking!

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- **1. Click on "About"** on your Facebook homepage, located on the left-hand side
- **2. Click on "Edit Other Accounts".** Find it by scrolling down to Contact Info (third title down)
- 3. Click on "Add Account"
- 4. Paste the YouTube URL:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/ UCjN515HiXfWXpKhtOL\_GIlw/videos and where it says, "Instagram", click and choose: YouTube



New York State Maple Producers Association, Inc.

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# A Message from our President



TONY VAN GLAD

hat a year so far! It seems like everyone in the world got stood on their heads with their feet in the air. Let's hope that life gets back to normal soon. It is tragic to humanity with folks becoming sick and some dying, with the COVID-19 virus. It's like the world's economics have had their brakes slammed on! As a maple producer, my markets have slowed. Hopefully things will pick up again.

This year the question was when to tap. Some producers tapped in late December, others in January, others (like myself) mid-to-late February. A lot of good maple syrup was made at any of these tapping dates. I think it had to do with the elevation of the maple woods. Here in the Catskill Mountains I was done on March 29th.

Our NYS Mid-Winter classic conference was another great success. Not quite a record crowd this year due to the warmer weather – sap was running and some people were tapped and boiling even though is was only January 4. There was a good window of weather for maple production well into January if you were ready. I would like to thank Keith and the state FFA crew for their organization of the event, and hosting during the day. Thanks to Steve and Aaron of the Cornell Maple program for setting up great workshops.

I participated in the lobby day efforts for NYSMPA this year in Albany. We met with many senators and assembly people on February 10. We asked for continuation of our promotion money at the same level (\$225,000) as well as for an additional \$35,000 to fund the Mobile Maple Experience (MME) trailer trips. We also supported funding Maple Research at Cornell at the \$150,000 level they requested. The association has had a lot of requests for the MME all over the state. Our legislators seemed vey supportive of our requests, and quite a few had already seen the MME visit schools in their district. As of the time of writing this (early April), due to the virus pandemic, I am not sure how funding will turn out. Early reports are that the budget will include some monies for all of the requests, but the amounts are not finalized. There is of course also the very real stipulation that the amount allocated may be changed (reduced) during the year depending on the impact of the pandemic on the NYS economy. Still, my thanks to Helen and the Farm Bureau for organizing our lobbying materials and appointments, and especially to the 8 other members and the 4 FFA students who were the lobby team this year.

My apologies go out to the Maple Weekend producers. A lot of time, money and thought goes into preparation for this March event. It wasn't an easy decision made by the Board of Directors to cancel the event. We had a very long discussion about this. I had even asked advice from Commissioner Ball. While he did not want to give a yes or no decision, we both agreed that the situation with the virus was already serious, and the governor had already closed NYS schools. Right now, Helen has been involved with the other maple producer associations to set up a North American October maple event. It could be a home run – I'm excited about it!

Now is a good time to explore other ways to sell delicious NYS maple syrup. Online ordering and shipping have become more important during these times. Be creative and your business will prosper! Keep healthy and love life! God bless everyone and God Bless America.

Tony Van Glad President NYSMPA

an Tu us

PS. Sell out!

### **HELP US KEEP YOU INFORMED!**

We send frequent emails to the entire membership to let you know of things happening in the maple world.

### IF YOU DID NOT GET THEM, do the following:

Send an email to office@nysmaple.com. This will tell us your current email address. It's possible that our records may need to be updated! Check your spam folder for emails from: office@nysmaple.com and info@nysmaple.com. We use these two email addresses to send you the latest news. If your spam filter has them blocked, you will not receive our communications.

## Continuing to prosper during these difficult times

By Jean Lamontagne, Executive Director, IMSI

ear maple producers and vendors, the coronavirus presents some serious challenges to our maple producers and their communities. The impact of measures like social distancing and the loss of employment in many sectors is likely to have lasting effects on consumer attitudes and lifestyles and buying behavior long after the crisis is over. Currently, as I write today, food service sales have moved to retail, this combined with folks stocking up has caused record sales in almost all food categories. Online buying and home delivery services are also booming and will continue to grow. Unfortunately, some maple sales activity has been curtailed, for example local sales normally occurring at maple festivals. This crisis is very disruptive and alarming, however it may be an opportunity for proactive maple producers and vendors to improve their business processes and adapt to a quickly changing world.

For smaller local producers and vendors, this may be a chance to develop your on-line business strategy. For example, you may wish to optimize your website for search engines and make it easier for your customers to navigate and for you to process orders and payments. It's a good time to review your on-line product mix and assortment

and make sure you have the right products and the best-selling

products are front and center. Make sure your pricing is optimized. As a manager in a global trade, I revised my pricing every quarter understanding that any price increase goes straight to the bottom line. A little pricing discipline will go a long way.

Review your messaging and the tone of your communication, especially given the current situation. Consider inbound marketing as well as your usual

outbound activities.

You probably do a lot of

outbound marketing like trade shows and direct e-mails, and those are important. But if you are large enough, you should consider doing some inbound marketing to grow sales, build your brand and increase traffic to your website.

On the retail side, you could consider un-manned farm stands, they really work! Make an attractive and visibly traffic-stopping road-side stand and advertise it. You can advertise on the web and/or post a letter-sized sales ads at local hardware and other country stores that will guide people to your stand or on-line store. Perhaps you can use social media to advertise your stand and website and get your friends and family to share through their Facebook network or other media. Consider partnering with a successful local blogger to get your call-to-action message out. I have experience using bloggers and I can tell you it can be very effective. Many bloggers are paid in-kind through the barter system; you have an excellent currency with maple syrup.

Many successful small businesses use a local food delivery service to distribute food products. If you choose your distributor carefully, a good one will expand your business beyond your own geographic limits and build your brand equity. Consider volume rebates if you are in a highly competitive retail environment; smart incentives will win you favor. You can also increase your local distribution by making the sales calls yourself. Go and talk to convenience, country markets and small chains regularly. Understand what they want and propose creative profit-making solutions to them. Your job is to help

them make money, that's how

you will get their support and

make money. Continue

to prospect, even in

difficult times.



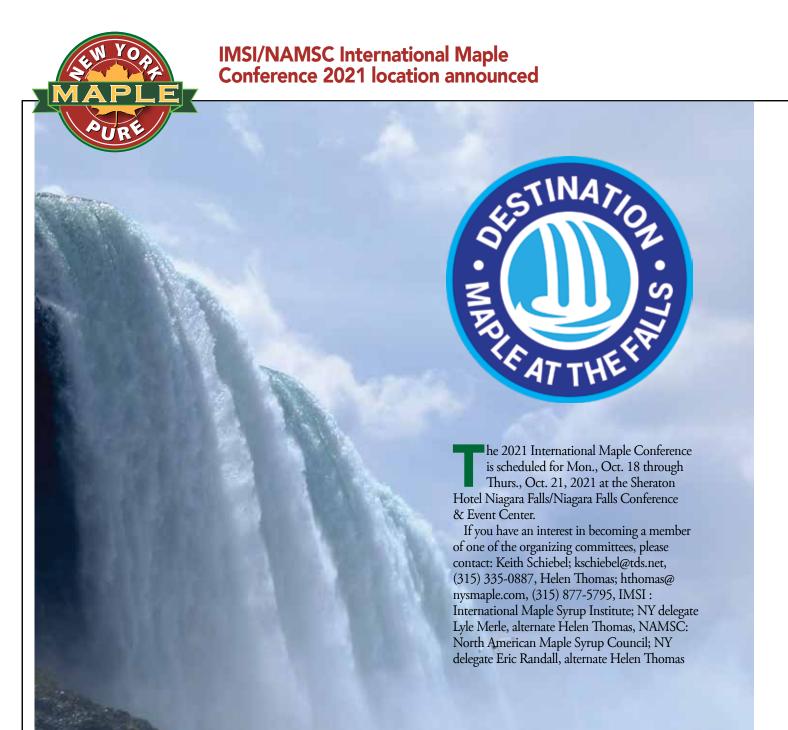
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### **Unlocking the Potential of Sugar**

Ailis Clyne, Aaron Wightman, Steve Childs

aple sugar has unrealized potential as a product with unlimited applications. Despite variability in the product, there is not much variation in what is offered for sale. Most producers use the same guidelines and methods for producing sugar – typically using low-invert syrups which result in light colored and weakly flavored sugar. We've been experimenting with strengthening this flavor using darker syrups.

The advantage of using low invert sugars and the traditional method is a sugar product with consistent crystal sizes, and acceptable flavor and moisture content. The drawback is relatively weak maple flavor that is easily overwhelmed by other ingredients. Many popular confections are made with strong flavor ingredients that mask the flavor of the sweetener. These include chocolates, licorice, jelly candies, and mint candies. When these products are made with maple sugar, the maple flavor does not come through as well as desired. This issue has limited maple sugar from accessing some confection industries. With new, alternative processing methods, however, a stronger flavored maple sugar can be achieved. Utilizing dark, high-invert syrup can create a sugar that stands out in the flavor profile of these types of confections.

Furthermore, maple sugar varies in crystal sizes, depending on several factors, but especially on the method chosen for stirring the hot syrup as it cools. Making sugar with dark syrup exacerbates this issue, yielding a wide range of crystal sizes and clumps of crystals that are difficult to break down into small granules with a screen.



We have been experimenting with a sieve shaker machine to separate the crystal sizes for diverse applications (Image 1). For example, to make cotton candy, you would avoid sugar that is too fine, but for something like a beverage, or smooth textured confection made with fats, the finer the crystal size, the better! The sieve shaker has revealed to us how various stirring methods affect the final product, resulting in different proportions of sugar crystal sizes in the final product. Using a Hobart mixer results in a much higher proportion of very fine crystals than stirring by hand. These results were shared during a sieve shaker demo at this year's Annual Maple Conference in Syracuse.

Image 1. Results after putting Very Dark granulated maple sugar through a sieve shaker Crystal isn't the only form that dry sugar can take. We have been experimenting with using high invert syrups to create a glass (Image 2). Pulverize this glass, and you have a new type of sugar with strong flavor and



unique properties. In a recent experiment, we produced glass by cooking a very dark syrup with an invert of 5.7% to 300° F. The glass was processed using a grain grinder resulting in fine crystals with intense flavor. Research is still in its nascent stages. We can't answer many questions about this technique just yet as we still have many questions ourselves.

Image 2. Shattered maple glass, made from Very Dark syrup Maple sugar has the potential to fill numerous applications that have yet been unexplored. We are working to bring new maple-based products from proof of concept straight to market. The future of maple sugar is prolific use in all your favorite products, available at a grocery store near you.



# Make the best, save the very best

ith the current maple sugaring season fresh, it is a good time to consider "saving" a sample of your very best for one of the many maple products judging competitions coming up later in the year. There is no shortage of opportunity to show off your best by entering your syrup, sugar, cream or other maple value added product in a county fair, a state or local association competition or by exhibiting at the New York State Fair in late summer. If you plan to do this, now is the time to select your best product in preparation for a competition. It is our hope that the summary guidelines which follow will serve to guide your selection and give you an idea of how your product will be judged.

With that said, it is important to note that while there are international guide-lines for judging maple products, judging is usually done by an array of "specialists", each with differing levels of training, expertise, experience and preferences. The NAMSC/IMSI guidelines for judging Maple Syrup are just that—guidelines. This article will reveal contest proceedings as they relate to most judging in New York or Pennsylvania. By entering products into competition, you are allowing comparison of your produce against a wide array of product produced by others where the "winners" are rewarded with ribbons and citations fit for posting at festivals, news outlets,

and enviably as a marketing advantage where everyone wants a blue ribbon syrup!

Large competitions are most generally judged by teams of judges for several reasons: 1) sheer volume of entries; 2) expertise with special products; 3) bias, (not everyone perceives taste the same way); 4) legal or compliance qualification, (weights and measures, grade, Brix, labelling, etc); and 5) final determinations are made by a team rather than one individual. Lastly, all competitions are judged blind. Depending on contest rules, usually the judges will first observe the entire field of entries first to determine "Market readiness". Most of our County Fairs and the Pennsylvania Farm Show use this technique, New York State Fair does not. Where it is used, containers will be evaluated for legal labelling, cleanliness, cloudiness of product, visible debris in product, evidence of

safety seal, evidence of hot pack /shrink and correct class designation. Notes are usually made by the judge on either the score sheet or on the entry tag to be consulted prior to final score tabulation. Following this initial observation, someone other than a judge, will prepare uniquely numbered syrup samples from the entries. These will be in similar sized jars bearing no producer information. All samples of the class being judged are arranged on a directional white light table for color testing, observed for streaking, foreign objects, cloudiness, crystals, etc. Most competitions now employ instrumentation to accurately determine light transmittance (Tc) or use color comparitors to evaluate color. At the NYS Fair, this task is completed by two person teams and scores are awarded according to jurisdictional (State or Federal) guidelines and notations are made for each entry.

Next the sample is opened for density and final clarity testing. While flavor carries the most weight in most judging competitions, density commands the second highest point category. It is also one of the grade conditions over which the producer has the most control, but one that most judges find wide variation and often a source for early disqualification. Most states, including New York, require syrup densities in the range of 66.0-68.9 degrees Brix. Syrup that falls below or rises above that range is automatically disqualified and no further judging occurs for that entry. Density determin-

ations that fall close to either the low or high limit are evaluated by several tests. Most competitions use research grade digital refractometers or temperature compensating instrumentation frequently calibrated for determining density.

It should not have to be said, but if the sample shows debris like insect parts, human hair, crystals, mold, diatomaceous earth, dust or even unmentionable animal detritus (yes, we have seen this), flecks of charcoal and the like; the entry will be disqualified.

For fluid syrup, the final and most important metric is TASTE! It is also the most difficult point to quantify or judge. There is no scientific instrument that accurately determines taste as well as the human tongue, and everyone of us has a different set of taste receptors. Taste is seldom completed by just one judge. During the 2019 State Fair judging final taste determinations were completed by no fewer than five panelists.





Maple Syrup for the NY State Fair

Before you select your "best" syrup sample, you might consider having someone else taste your selection and rate your product. When tasting your palate must be clear (believe it or not, our taste buds change with age) free of medicinals, caffeine, nicotine, alcohol or spices. Off-flavors abound in syrup and good judges are often able to detect excess or rancid defoamer, detergents, lubricants and oils, sour sap or syrup, late season bud, metallic, metabolic flavors, sanitizers, etc. All off-flavors not only degrade your syrup but impact

the score your entry deserves. In competition, points (usually 40/100) are affixed to the flavor category. If there is a tie in the final competition tabulation, the flavor ranking will break the tie and if there is a tie in the flavor category of the final tabulation, it will be broken by the entire panel of judges. Great importance rides on the judging of fluid maple syrup as it usually is the basis for the accolades brought by titles like Grand Champion, reserve Grand, Best of Show —and everyor wants to hang one of those pennants in the sales room or sugarhouse.

Now, back to the beginning and how does one prepare to enter your best in the Fair?

1) Select your best TASTING syrup and save some of it, either in the final consumer pack (jug, tin or glass) packaged at 185° F and store it in a cool preferably dark place. It is suggested that producers keep competition syrup in glass, in a freezer until just before the contest. It will darken a bit when it is reheated (don't over heat as more sugar sand might precipitate or the Brix will increase too high). 2) Ensure that the syrup is proper density. Aim for midrange of 66.8-67.1 degrees

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		Slightly turbid Turbid/Sediment/Floating Object			
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	100	Rezi	30-26		
		2nd best	25-21		A
		3rd best	20-16		A
		4th best	15-10		1
		5th best	9-5		ACC
		6th best	DISQUALIFY		11000
		6th best Objectionable Odor/Off Flavor			A STATE OF
			(15) points	A	
	(	COLORHighest Score Grade A golden color/delicate taste 75%	Tc or more	- A	100
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		Grade A amber color, its 25%Tc -	49.9%IC		
		Grade A amber color/rich taste 50%(C*) Grade A dark color/robust taste 25%Tc - Grade A very dark/strong taste Less tha	n 25%Tc		
		Grade A very dark/strong taste Less the		_	_
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Brix to be safe and in the highest point category. 3) Color must be within proper Transmittance and must be appropriately labelled either Golden, Amber, Dark or Very Dark as well as carrying the flavor descriptors. 4) we have all ready talked about clarity, cloudiness and nasty things floating in the syrup that ought not to be there, and 5) Even though it seems

simple, make sure that your container is free of smudges like sticky fingerprints, dust, bad labels and the like.

Now, make, grade and pack your best, save a bit of it to display for all to see at your county fair, a local competition of the State Fair and hopefully you too will reap the benefit of knowing that your products rank among the best. Attend one of the NYSMPA summer tours, the MidWinter Maple Conference in Syracuse or any of a number of programs offered by Cooperative Extension to learn more about blue ribbon syrup.







# **Bulk Tank Donation vital to Cornell Maple Program**

# **Schoolyard Sugaring Maple Contest**



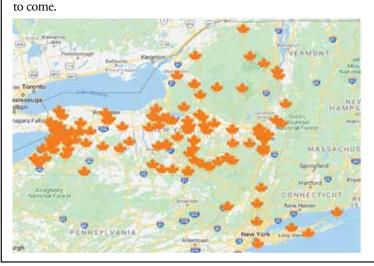
ew York Agriculture in the Classroom, the New York State Maple Foundation, and the New York State Maple Association are excited to partner in the fourth annual Schoolyard Sugaring Maple Syrup Contest. This contest promotes learning by giving teachers and students applied experiences through turning sap into syrup by participating in every step of the maple syrup production process from tapping

the trees to bottling the syrup.

This year's contest saw a record-breaking number of registrations with 132 schools across the state of New York from the tip of Long Island, to Western New York, and to the top of the North Country. Classrooms will get the opportunity to learn about basic maple knowledge and the science behind syrup production through experienced maple producers and lessons plans provided by New York Agriculture in the Classroom.

The Schoolyard Sugaring contest is open to Pre-K through 12th grade classes, broken into Elementary, Middle School, and High School divisions. Each classroom has received a maple starter kit and an empty pint jug to fill with their syrup and return for judging. The maple starter kit is designed for schools that may not have the necessary resources to access maple sugaring supplies. Included in this kit

sugaring supplies. Included in this kit are bags for collecting sap, galvanized aluminum sap bag holders, aluminum spouts, a tapping bit, a hydrometer, and a hydrometer test cup. This kit is a \$120 value and will provide all the essential items students will need to tap trees and collect sap this year, and many years





upport from the New York State Maple Producers' Association and its regional chapters is vital to the research and extension efforts of the Cornell Maple Program.

The Upper Hudson MPA recently donated a high capacity air compressor and the 1,500 gallon refrigerated bulk tank pictured to the left.

The compressor has already been used extensively in studying the impact of dissolved oxygen levels on syrup flavor. The refrigerated tank will be installed in the Arnot Forest Maple Lab which is scheduled for construction this summer. It will be used in research looking at the quality implications of the long-term storage of concentrated sap and developing guidelines for storing concentrate to improve boiling efficiency in the sugarhouse. The Cornell Maple Program is grateful for the efforts and generosity of all its supporters and project collaborators.

For more information visit www.cornellmaple.com.

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### Highlights of the IMSI Board meeting

MSI president Pam Green opened a wellattended IMSI board meeting in Colchester, VT on February 5th, 2020 where David Lalanne of CDL was appointed to the board.

The meeting was highlighted by presentations from IPSOS, a global market research firm and ACNielsen, a provider of scan data analysis. The presentations provided information about market research and scan data that could be helpful to the industry and its associations as well as to individual members in formulating effective marketing communication strategy, steering product and packaging innovation and understanding opportunities and threats in the sweetener category such as competitive and substitute products.

IPSOS's Vice president Simone Wilson explained how consumer research identifies and analyzes consumer usage & attitudes in specific locations and groups them into comprehensible clusters (segmentation) to derive actionable marketing-communication strategies. Cedric Belanger of AC Nielsen explained how they collect grocery store sales data and provide critical information to food manufacturers identifying the size and growth of grocery segments and the products that make up those segments. IMSI members expressed an interest in pursuing funding options to enable market research and a marketing campaign of national scope.

The IMSI reiterated its recommendation that maple syrup nutritional facts panels on packages conform to the 2019 FDA guidance with the footnote option as per the FDA guidance issued July 18, 2019. The footnote avoids leaving the reader with no information about that DV%; it helps the consumer understand the %DV, otherwise it is

'orphaned'/not explained. It's also important that maple syrup packages comply uniformly and consistently in the market place. Note that the deadline for compliance is July 2021.

The timeline chart for lead elimination in equipment was distributed. Notably, October 2020 is the year that the compliance finishes with all small size producers using only lead free equipment.

A standards of Identity/CODEX committee was formed to draft an ideal Standard of Identity (SOI) following a careful revision of the current SOIs in various federal, state and provincial legislatures. The IMSI intends to amend the current definitions so they are as consistent as possible with each other and then go forward with a CODEX application. The IMSI and the maple industry's overarching goal is to protect the 'pure' nature of maple syrup from the problem of economic adulteration on a global scale. In the context world-wide maple exports, achieving the CODEX standard is especially relevant.

The Normandy Group's John Goldberg and Bailey Richterman discussed regulatory trends and issues and FDA guidance as well as foreseeable regulatory issues facing the maple industry. Many topics were discussed such as the FDA strategy to reduce dietary links to obesity heart disease & diabetes. Members engaged in an interesting discussion on the expected dietary guidance and media attention to added sugars. Baily Richterman presented some marketing slides, the most salient of which illustrated the power of social media presence and SM campaigns and the fact that sugar and calories are the top two items consumers are checking on the label. This is an increasing trend as consumers

become more health and calorie conscious.

The closing discussions led to a general acknowledgment that it would be desirable for the industry to know more about the maple consumer and the sales dynamics of the sweetener category in order to formulate both proactive and defensive marketing, public relations and regulatory strategies in the market place.

### MEMBERS -

### Does your Member Plaque look like this?

All full members can request a new plaque for their stickers. If you are missing a year, those are available, too. Just email hthomas @nysmaple.com or call the office at 315-877-5795.





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### Reusable shopping bags now available



# New York State Maple Queen and King crowned at Mid-Winter Maple Classic



Kyle Hale, 17, of Canastota stands next to Rebecca Coombe, 16, of Grahamsville after being crowned New York State Maple King and Queen for 2020.

he New York State Maple Queen and King for 2020 were crowned during an annual competition held Saturday (January 4th) during the Mid-Winter Maple Classic held at the New York State Fairgrounds in Syracuse. Rebecca Coombe, 16, of Grahamsville was crowned New York State Maple Queen and Kyle Hale, 17, of Canastota was named New York State Maple King. Both winners were selected by a panel of judges based on private interview, a speech about maple and their answering of spontaneous, on-stage questions during the event. Coombes and Hale are both high school seniors involved with their respective school FFA programs and are enthusiastic about promoting maple.



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Member price is \$1.25 each. Shipping is extra. When you purchase a box of 15, shipping is \$27.



# **Lead reduction measures required from October 2015 - October 2020**

By maple producer supplying syrup to (insert JDG member name)

	By OCT 1, 2015	By OCT 1, 2016	By OCT 1, 2017	By OCT 1, 2018	By AUG 1, 2019	By OCT 1, 2019	By OCT 1, 2020
Large	Start: Processing areas free of lead based paint & all syrup fil- tered @ 180°F	⇒ Complete	Start: Eliminate lead containing items from	⇒ Complete	2013	2023	2020
Producers (over 20,000	Start: Eliminate lead items from Exhibit A	⇒ Complete	Exhibit C				
taps)		Start: Eliminate lead containing items from Exhibit B	⇒ Complete				
Medium		Start: Processing areas free of lead based paint & all syrup fil- tered @ 180°F	⇒ Complete	Start: Eliminate lead containing items from Exhibit C		⇒ Complete	
Producers (10,000 – 20,000		Start: Eliminate lead items from Exhibit A	⇒ Complete				
taps)			Start: Eliminate lead containing items from Exhibit B	⇒ Complete			
Small			Start: Processing areas free of lead based paint & all syrup fil- tered @ 180°F	⇒ Complete			
Producers (less than 10,000 taps)			Start: Eliminate lead items from Exhibit A	⇒ Complete		Start: Elimi- nate lead items from Exhibit C	⇒ Complete
				Start: Eliminate lead items from Exhibit B		⇒ Complete	
All Producers and All Buyers - Drums of Syrup	20% of syrup volume is pur- chased and stored in lead free containers	40% of syrup volume is pur- chased and stored in lead free containers	60% of syrup volume is pur- chased and stored in lead free containers	80% of syrup volume is pur- chased and stored in lead free containers	100% of syr- up volume is purchased and stored in lead free containers		

### **Categories of Lead Containing Equipment:**

Exhibit A Equipment: Spiles, Buckets and Pails, Sap Storage Tanks, Collection Tubing

Exhibit B Equipment: Valves, Connectors, Joints and Level Controls, Pre-heaters, Piggy Backs, and Steam-Away, Syrup Pumps, Evaporator Pans (Sap and Syrup), Finishing Stoves & Tanks

Exhibit C Equipment: Sap Pumps, Filling Units, Filter Tanks, Filter Units

Syracuse, New York 13219 301 Myron Road





A new NYSMPA membership runs from January 1 through December 31.

### Rates are:

1 YEAR: \$65. 3 YEAR: \$180. ASSOCIATES: \$25.

(Must be a colleague of a full member)

RETIRED (No longer making syrup): \$25.

STUDENT: \$10.

(Must present proof of school registration)

### **Contact:**

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