Maple Syrup

June 11, 1999

A special "THANK YOU" goes to New England producers and buyers who have helped us by completing the annual Maple Syrup survey during April and May.

SYRUP PRODUCTION UP 2 PERCENT NATIONWIDE

UNITED STATES: The 1999 U.S. maple syrup production totaled 1.18 million gallons, up 2 percent from last year and 9 percent below 1997. The forecast value of production is $32.3 million, an increase of less than one percent from 1998 and a decrease of 8 percent from 1997. The U.S. estimate consists of the ten major producing states.

Vermont led the U.S. in production with 370,000 gallons of syrup, an increase of 3 percent from last season. New York's production, at 195,000 gallons, decreased 16 percent from 1998. Maine was the third leading state with production of 187,000 gallons, up 10 percent from last year.

The 1999 maple season was less than favorable for all New England states except Connecticut and Maine. Temperatures ranged from too warm to too cold for good sap flow in Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont, but were favorable in Connecticut and Maine. New York also experienced less than ideal temperatures, ranging from too warm in February to too cold in March. Syrup quality in New York was reported good and grade was above average. Temperatures in Michigan and Wisconsin were too warm in March, reducing adequate flow. Temperatures in Ohio and Pennsylvania were mostly favorable.

Yield per tap varied among states, with five states averaging above a year ago and the remaining states averaging below last year. The 1999 tapping season started 3 days later than last year but lasted only 1 day less than a year ago. Syrup color was primarily medium to light amber in all states. The sap's sugar content was about average for most states.

NEW ENGLAND (excluding Rhode Island)**:** Maple syrup production in New England for 1999 totaled 675,000 gallons, up 3 percent from last year. Vermont remained the largest producing state in New England and the nation, with 55 percent of the region's production and 31 percent of the total U.S. syrup.

Despite poor weather conditions in 1999, production increased in three of the five New England states, largely due to an increase in total taps. New England's 1999 sugaring season lasted approximately 29 days, 2 days shorter than 1998. The average opening dates were February 12 in Connecticut, February 24 in Massachusetts, March 2 in New Hampshire, March 5 in Maine, and March 9 in Vermont. Temperatures were reported to be 38 percent too warm, 37 percent favorable, and 25 percent too cold. The sugar content of this year's sap ran about average, requiring 41 gallons of sap to produce 1 gallon of syrup. Syrup color this year was lighter than normal, with only 13 percent of production reported to be dark amber in color. The average closing dates were March 22 in Connecticut, March 29 in Massachusetts, April 2 in New Hampshire, April 3 in Maine, and April 5 in Vermont.

The preliminary value of New England's 1999 maple syrup crop, based on grower expectations, is $19.1 million. This is a 3 percent increase from the 1998 total value of $18.4 million for the five New England states surveyed. The preliminary average gallon equivalent price for New England syrup across the retail, wholesale, and bulk markets is $28.24 which is the same as 1998's final price.

1998 PRICES AND SALES: Average gallon equivalent prices for 1998 maple syrup across retail, wholesale, and bulk sales varied widely across the region. Connecticut's all sales equivalent decreased $0.10 to $41.00 in 1999. Maine's all sales equivalent increased $0.90 to $21.50. Massachusetts' all sales equivalent decreased $0.20 to $36.00. New Hampshire's all sales equivalent decreased $0.20 to $36.00. Vermont's all sales

equivalent was unchanged at $29.00. As expected, Maine continues to have a low gallon equivalent price due to their large percentage of bulk sales. The 1998 gallon equivalent price of $28.24 across all New England states reflects a 2 percent increase from the 1997 price of $27.69.

This report is taken from the June issue of the national ***Crop Production*** *report published by USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service at 8:30 am on June 11, 1999.*

This annual report includes prices received for the previous year's crop and production & expected prices for this year's crop.

All national reports and state-level newsletters, such as this, are available on the Internet. **National Reports can be ordered by calling 1-800-999-6779.**

How can you get these reports electronically?

* All national reports and state newsletters are available on the Internet.
* For free national e-mail reports, send a message to: **usda-reports@usda.mannlib.cornell.edu** *and in the body, type:* **lists**

** For free state newsletters, such as this, send a message to:* **nass-state-releases@news.usda.gov** *and in the body, type:*

subscribe new-eng-all-reports *OR* **lists** *for other states.*

MAPLE SYRUP: Production, Price and Value, 1997 - 1999

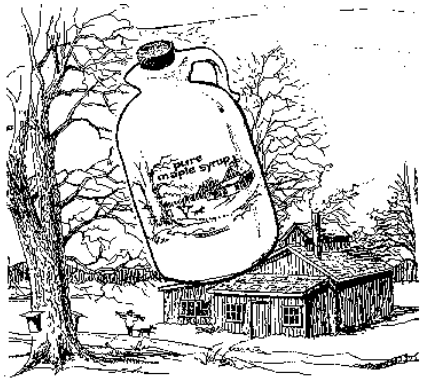
STATE	Production			Average Gallon Equivalent Price of All Sales [1/]			Value of Production		
	1997	1998	1999	1997	1998	1999 [2/]	1997	1998	1999 [2/]
	1,000 Gallons			Dollars			1,000 Dollars		
Connecticut	9	9	13	41.70	41.10	41.00	375	370	533
Maine	185	170	187	19.80	20.60	21.50	3,663	3,502	4,021
Massachusetts	44	47	44	37.20	36.20	36.00	1,637	1,701	1,584
New Hampshire	76	67	61	40.20	36.20	36.00	3,055	2,425	2,196
Vermont	395	360	370	27.60	29.00	29.00	10,902	10,440	10,730
NEW ENGLAND [3/]	**709**	**653**	**675**	**27.69**	**28.24**	**28.24**	**19,632**	**18,438**	**19,064**
Michigan	75	55	73	31.50	32.00	29.70	2,363	1,760	2,168
New York	269	231	195	25.10	26.85	25.70	6,752	6,202	5,012
Ohio	95	78	95	30.80	29.80	28.40	2,926	2,324	2,698
Pennsylvania	63	72	67	26.00	26.00	23.40	1,638	1,872	1,568
Wisconsin	87	70	75	21.90	23.10	23.70	1,905	1,617	1,778
UNITED STATES	**1,298**	**1,159**	**1,180**	**27.10**	**27.80**	**27.40**	**35,216**	**32,213**	**32,288**

1/ Average gallon equivalent price is a weighted average across retail, wholesale, and bulk sales. This price is lower for states, such as Maine, with more wholesale and bulk sales. The average gallon equivalent price is not the average retail price paid for a gallon of syrup -- see page 3 for retail gallon average prices.

2/ 1999 price and value are preliminary and based on grower expectations during April and May 1999.

3/ New England includes CT, ME, MA, NH, VT

SOURCE: ***Crop Production***, 8:30 am, June 11, 1999, National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.



MAPLE SYRUP: Sales Percentages, New England, 1997 - 1998

TYPE OF SALE	Connecticut		Maine		Massachusetts		New Hampshire		Vermont	
	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998
	Percent									
Retail	75	70	10	10	70	60	65	60	40	40
Wholesale	10	15	10	5	15	20	25	20	15	15
Bulk	15	15	80	85	15	20	10	20	45	45

SOURCE: *Crop Production*, 8:30 am, June 11, 1999, National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

MAPLE SYRUP: Sales Percentages, Other States, 1997 - 1998

TYPE OF SALE	Michigan		New York		Ohio		Pennsylvania		Wisconsin	
	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998	1997	1998
	Percent									
Retail	48	58	48	43	71	63	49	41	27	35
Wholesale & Bulk	52	42	52	57	29	37	51	59	73	65

SOURCE: *Crop Production*, 8:30 am, June 11, 1999, National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

MAPLE SYRUP: Prices by Type of Sales and Size of Container, 1997 - 1998

STATE & YEAR	Retail					Wholesale					Bulk					All Sales gallon equivalent price 1/
											Grade A					
	Gal	½ Gal	Quart	Pint	½ Pint	Gal	½ Gal	Quart	Pint	½ Pint	light amber	med amber	dark amber	Grade B & C	All Grades	
	Dollars Per Container										Dollars Per Pound 2/					Dollars
Connecticut																
1997	34.40	19.90	11.80	6.90	4.20	34.30	17.40	8.90	5.10	3.15	1.60	1.50	1.72	1.25	1.31	41.70
1998	34.30	19.60	11.40	7.10	4.65	33.90	18.20	10.10	5.60	3.65	1.60	1.83	1.60	1.38	1.70	41.10
Maine																
1997	31.80	16.70	9.25	5.35	3.85	27.80	14.50	8.30	5.00	3.15	1.50	1.40	1.30	1.30	1.40	19.80
1998	33.30	17.70	10.00	5.85	4.15	26.10	15.90	8.55	4.90	3.60	1.59	1.54	1.49	1.41	1.55	20.60
Massachusetts																
1997	31.60	18.50	10.70	6.55	4.35	25.20	16.20	8.80	5.30	3.20	1.61	1.68	1.50	1.23	1.48	37.20
1998	31.90	18.60	11.20	6.30	5.05	26.40	15.40	8.30	5.05	3.05	2.25	1.83	2.20	1.24	2.10	36.20
New Hampshire																
1997	33.10	19.10	10.90	6.45	3.70	25.60	15.50	8.55	5.40	2.90	1.72	1.57	1.40	1.28	1.40	40.20
1998	30.90	17.70	10.80	6.50	3.85	27.60	15.60	8.20	4.95	3.10	3.66	1.81	1.46	1.38	2.45	36.20
Vermont																
1997	28.30	17.00	10.00	6.25	4.05	24.70	14.50	8.20	4.55	3.10	1.76	1.62	1.48	1.39	1.58	27.60
1998	29.80	17.60	10.30	6.35	4.45	26.80	15.50	8.60	5.00	3.05	1.91	1.80	1.67	1.55	1.80	29.00
Michigan																
1997	29.00	16.50	9.41	5.69	4.18	26.60	16.10	7.68	4.36	2.99	--	--	--	--	1.76	31.50
1998	29.50	16.10	9.30	5.30	3.20	29.30	14.90	7.70	4.30	2.20	--	--	--	--	1.90	32.00
New York																
1997	27.20	16.45	9.65	5.95	3.70	22.90	14.15	8.05	5.00	3.15	--	--	--	--	1.45	25.10
1998	30.35	17.10	10.00	6.25	4.10	29.80	16.40	8.10	4.85	2.95	--	--	--	--	1.60	26.85
Ohio																
1997	28.40	16.30	9.50	5.80	4.50	21.40	14.90	8.20	4.70	3.30	--	--	--	--	1.60	30.80
1998	29.70	16.80	9.45	6.20	4.25	24.40	13.40	8.55	5.25	3.60	--	--	--	--	1.70	29.80
Pennsylvania																
1997	27.70	16.00	9.00	5.60	3.50	26.10	14.30	7.80	4.80	3.10	--	--	--	--	1.40	26.00
1998	28.50	16.50	9.46	5.59	3.44	25.00	14.40	8.24	4.75	2.96	--	--	--	--	1.54	26.00
Wisconsin																
1997	26.40	13.90	7.10	4.40	3.00	26.60	12.90	8.10	4.90	2.70	--	--	--	--	1.50	21.90
1998	26.20	14.30	7.50	4.30	2.70	25.60	13.60	7.20	3.90	2.40	–	–	–	–	1.50	23.10

1/ *Average gallon equivalent price is a weighted average across retail, wholesale, and bulk sales.*

2/ *For dollars per gallon: multiply dollars per pound by 11.03 pounds per gallon*

3/ *Data withheld to prevent disclosure of individual operations*

SOURCE: **Crop Production**, 8:30 am, June 11, 1999, National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

Frequent 1999 Comments From Maple Producers, By County

CONNECTICUT- Fairfield: Season too cold. **Hartford:** We had the best sugar'in season in recent years. The weather was very favorable. Everything was ready and we started making maple syrup on the 10th of February. Again, the weather was perfect. After last year's poor weather caused by El Nino, we needed a good year. Syrup mostly light to medium, turning darker only at end of the season. Ideal weather conditions. Good fluctuations between day and night temperatures and the cool weather kept trees from budding too soon. Excellent season -- it was my best in 26 seasons. Nights were not cool enough. No snow pack to speak of, dry season; too many non-freezing nights. **Litchfield:** A cold March delayed bud development in a season which started very early. Good weather for us in Colebrook. Season would have been better if it wasn't for the north wind this year; it slowed the sap flow on several days. Season good. We had the best sugaring season in recent years. The weather was very favorable, everything was ready, and we started making maple syrup on the 10th of February. Best flow ever. **Middlesex:** Excellent quality. Best overall syrup year I remember in 20 years of syruping. Perfect balance of warm and cool weather; pretty continuous flow with very few breaks. **Tolland:** Best conditions ever, best syrup ever. Sap had very little sugar but very heavy flow. It was a fair season; I made almost 1½ qt. per tap. High content of sugar sand early in the season. Weather was excellent here, large amount of light amber; the sap ran steady and I ran out of wood twice! **Windham:** Weird year! Much heavy, slimy sugar sand required frequent cleaning.

MAINE - Aroostook: Windy and cool, sugar content good. **Cumberland:** Funky weather and damaged trees made for watery sap. **Franklin:** What Mother Nature gives us, we take. Season started two weeks late and ended two weeks early, with only two days of good sap flow. Sugar content was very low; entire crop was Grade B. Better than last year. Best quality, it looked like honey. **Oxford:** Warm winter. **Penobscot:** Too warm: 45-50 degrees by 8:30 am. **Piscataquis:** Lousy-again. **Kennebec:** Good while it lasted. **Somerset:** Strange! Flavor excellent, quality good. Season too cold. **Waldo:** Ice storm damage of January 1998 took 90% of tops and branches. Didn't have time or money to clear roads and could not get to undamaged trees. This year the season seemed to warm for a run. **York:** A lot of sap medium to dark color, good flavor. Not good in southern Maine -- little frost so trees thawed quickly.

MASSACHUSETTS - Berkshire: Short season due to the colder temperatures at the beginning of the season. Very cold early on, but generally too warm. Temperatures did not warm up enough each day to enable the sap to run. **Franklin:** No decent runs. Sugar content down this year. The temperature was ideal between the 17th and the 28th; too cold prior to and too warm after those dates. **Worcester:** Sap quality extremely high early on; 50 degree daytime temperatures midway really advanced season. Lots of nitre filtration was critical. A very good year -- tapped early and got a good run.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - Belknap: Did not catch February sap run. Excellent run in the middle of March, then shutdown -- color good. Weird -- lots of cold nights and warm days that didn't result in sap running. A very poor year. Lousy season started too cold and ended too warm. Ice storm in 1998 messed things

up. **Carroll:** Did not have enough cold nights and warm days linked together for a good run or runs. **Cheshire:** The season started early. We had a prolonged cold spell in early/mid-March with no sap. Cold spell in the middle of the season hurt overall production. Sugar content average, quality good, weather too cold and then too warm. The last two weeks of March were perfect for us. Overall sugar content was down. **Coos:** The wind created cooler conditions on bright, sunny days often this season. The ice storm in the winter of 1997/1998 wiped out all production for 1998/1999. Temperature was ideal for good sap runs, but it was too dry. No rain or snow. 1998 left us with no season, previously we had tapped 800 trees; but the ice storm damaged most all of them. The few we tapped missed the short season. **Grafton:** Sugar content average, quality good, weather too cold, then too warm. Excellent quality syrup. Bad year. We feel the trees were showing a lack of water with no fall rains, very little snow. There was no wet "sugar snow" during the season, and no rain during sugaring. Conditions at end of February into March were fair for sap flow. Towards the end of March the sap flowed steadily for about a week, then a short warm-up into the first of April. A couple of days of runs which produced dark syrup, then temperatures stayed too warm ending the season April 7th. Too much wind, which made for low wind chill -- good flavor! Too cold early -- 70 degree days in late March killed the season. Too much wind. Never got a real good sap run, it was drizzle, drizzle, drizzle. **Merrimack:** End of season was terrible-too warm. Missed the very early run-shut down because of the cold; ended early because of late March warmth. **Sullivan:** Not a good year–too warm. Too warm for too long in early winter. Trees were close to bud stage early. We tapped early, but only ran sap until February 15 -- then three weeks of too cold. When the weather broke in the 2nd week of March things were good until warmer weather at the end of the month shut the trees down.

VERMONT - Orange: Excellent sap run during the 3rd and 4th week of March. **Windham:** Too windy even on favorable days. **Addison:** Still recovering from ice damage; didn't tap. **Chittenden:** Short season. **Windham:** Too warm at first, then too cold, then too warm. Disaster of a season. **Windham:** Good runs – short boils – almost every day! **Berkshire:** Hard to know when to tap with no real winters anymore. **Caledonia:** Cold wind all through season. Weather conditions good, but cold wind prevented the run of sap. Lots of light syrup, quality very good. Perfect weather but no moisture. Sap didn't run. Bad year, only six boils, lots of wind. Super quality, season too short. Warm weather ended the season about a week too soon. Good quality and flavor for syrup. Almost perfect–boiled for 13 days straight! **Chittenden:** Excellent flavor in dark grades -- exceptional, actually. Season just too short! Seemed to start late and end early; also very windy. Short season. Did not do sugaring in 1998 or 1999 because of the 1998 ice storm. Too cool and too windy. Squirrel damage and a late start along with a low sap yield; left us with 60% crop. Stayed warm and windy. When temperatures were right, wind was too strong. **Franklin:** Too dry. Very low sugar content this year. Too much wind. Lack of hard freezes at night resulted in small runs for buckets; very dry conditions may have lowered sap volumes as well. Weather was too cold for first part, then too warm for sap to run. I think the season may have been longer if we would have had a good snow storm, or even some rain in the beginning of April. We were getting plenty of freezing nights, but it just dried out. Needed frost at night and more stormy weather. Sugar content lower than normal, quality was great. **Lamoille:** Disappointing -- we

made a lot less than last year. **Orange:** Excellent. Worst season in 10 years. Climate is changing -- sugar season is earlier and shorter. If we don't get some different conditions, the sugar season will be in trouble. Too windy. Got an early start, but the weather turned cold around March 1st and didn't warm up until near the end of the month; at which time we got an excellent run of high quality Dark Amber -- our customer's favorite! The same as last year: the nights were too warm during our main sap run period -– two days after our trees stopped running there was a week of perfect sugaring weather. Good quality but too dry in the higher elevations. **Orleans:** It seemed like the wind blew out of the Northwest the whole season and a really warm day didn't follow a freeze. Trees from 1700 ft. sea level up just never got the right weather to run, which is a tenth of our taps. We didn't have a real run during the whole season; but ran the best on March 27th. Weather o'k in March, too warm in April. Short season. Excellent quality of sap and syrup. **Rutland:** Seasons getting earlier and earlier -- starting earlier and ending earlier. Weather conditions never right; poorest season I have ever had in 20 or 25 years. Early March was much too cold, but the last two weeks were very good for sap flow; we couldn't keep up with it. Mostly fancy grade, but some medium and dark amber; no B. **Suffolk:** Too warm at first, then too cold, then too warm –- disaster of a season! Too windy even on favorable days. Too much ice around trees to run. **Washington:** Best quality flow in years! Short season. Excellent quality of sap and syrup. **Windham:** Considerable wind, mostly out of the East. Too cold with a circular wind kept the sap from running hard, most days it ran half-speed. The last week of March it warmed up and the nights didn't freeze; ending our season. Low sugar content, trees attacked by pear thrips last summer; season was very short with worst yield per tap ever (.154 gallons/tap). Started out great but warmed too much for too many days without freezing nights after March 27. Tapped out early expecting early runs, but weather was too cold. When it did run 2½ weeks later; the tap holes had healed over somewhat and weren't yielding as well as freshly drilled ones would have. We made more light syrup than usual. **Windsor:** Didn't stay cold at night long enough. Too much ice around the trees from all the ice and rainstorms that we had this winter. Weather conditions were good for flow, but trees were still frozen. All and all, a very difficult time with Mother Nature. Only five boilings, only one good day, not cold enough at night.

COMMENTS CORRECTED 6/16/99

AUBREY R. DAVIS, *Director* *MARC TOSIANO*, *Deputy Director*

AGRICULTURAL STATISTICIAN: Angela Coate, Sharon Slayton

This page left blank intentionally

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
POST OFFICE BOX 1444
CONCORD NH 03302-1444

PRESORTED
FIRST CLASS
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
USDA
PERMIT NO. G-38

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
Penalty for Private Use $300

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED