2018 VERMONT MAPLE CONFERENCES

Event will feature 20 different classes

BY BARBARA MILLS LASSONDE
The Maple News

In October, 2018, the New Hampshire Maple Producers Association will be hosting the North American Maple Syrup Council and International Maple Syrup Institute annual meetings. At this convention, you’re invited to attend the business meetings, which will bring you up to date on maple research and other advancements in the maple world. At the technical educational sessions, conducted by world experts, you’ll learn new techniques to improve your operation and increase productivity.

There will also be maple syrup, cream and sugar competitions. Could yours be the world’s best? If you enjoy photography, there will be a contest for fine art photos, and something unique to bring home. Here, you’ll see clear, babbling brooks winding their way through the trees they are tapping today were tapped when the ancestors of the “Live Free or Die” state, you’re in for a pleasant surprise. You’ll not only find friendly folks at every turn, but in only a couple of hours, you can drive from the historic seaport of Portsmouth to the foot of Mt. Washington, the highest peak in the Northeastern U.S. Here, you’ll be surrounded by towering peaks in the heart of the White Mountains, once called “The Switzerland of America.” Breathing views and spectacul- ar autumn foliage will delight you along the way. You’ll see clear, babbling brooks winding their way past granite boulders, only to plunge over cliffs, creating magnificent waterfalls.

New Hampshire is steeped in history; as one of the 13 original colonies, and the ninth state to ratify the Constitution. Learn about the state’s history at the Constitution. Learn about the state’s history at the School for International Training on December 19-20, 2018.

Big plans for annual meetings

The 2018 Vermont Maple Conferences are right around the corner. The conferences are part of Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association and UVM Extension and are designed to address the needs of maple operations of all sizes.

This year’s conferences will be held in Brattleboro at the School for International Training on December 19-20, and after a year’s hiatus, in Hyde Park at Lamotte Union High School on January 27th. The conferences will feature a similar format with over twenty different classes spread across four class periods. This year’s program will be roughly divided into “subject tracks.” These tracks are designed to allow attendees the choice to focus on a particular subject throughout the day or mix and match classes from different tracks. The tracks include: Maple Production, Marketing/Business Management, Sustainable Tapping Guidelines, and Maple Regulations. Some of the topics covered will include: Sustainable tapping guidelines, two classes on generating digital content and using social media (money and Ashwell), online marketing, maple business planning, issues related to current and potential threats to sugar maple as well as an update of completed and ongoing research at the UVM Doctor of Maple Research Center from Drs. Tim Perkins and Abby van den Berg.

A sampling of conference speakers includes: David Hall, one of 13 Quebec Federation Regional Directors, will be providing a sampling of the federations efforts at marketing the syrup made by its 13,500 producers in addition to the market outlook. Ryan Vasquez, the Program Director for Asian Longhorned Beetle (ALB) Cooperative Eradication Program based out of Worcester Massachusetts will present on the current status of ALB in the northeast and be available to answer questions related to the coordinated response to this threat. Also on the topic of threats to sugar maple, Jolsh Halman Forest Health Specialist with VT Department of Forest Parks and Recreation, will be providing an update on the current forest tent caterpillar outbreak in Vermont and resources available to producers.

There will be presentions on a project mapping the risk to the future of sugar maple, Kathy Hopkins, UMaine Extension will discuss what the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA) means for producers and Julie Fullenheier, VT Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Wetlands Ecologist will cover how Vermont wetlands regulations can impact maple operations. Below is a list of the specific classes:

- Maple Business Planning
- Federation Marketing
- What’s up at PMRC?
- Sugar maple Risk Mapping
- Introduction to Digital Media
- Maple Industry Panel
- Biological/Environmental Controls of Sap flow
- FTC-Defoilation and results of spraying
- Sustainable tapping guidelines
- Sugarhouse Discharge
- 8% vs High Brix
- Thinning in the sugarbush
- Welcoming the public
- Food safety plans
- Sustainable tapping guidelines
- Asian Longhorned Beetle
- Marketing online
- Sugaring operations and wetlands

• Bulk syrup issues
• SSA and maple syrup production
• Running a producer coop

The schedule for the timing of classes and a complete list of class summaries will be available in the December issue of the Maple Mainline. Check the UVM Extension Maple Program webpage soon for a digital copy. In the meantime, you can see selected talks from the 2017 Vermont Maple Conference (Cultural Responses to Economic Change in the Maple Industry, Beginning Sugarmaking, Managing for a Healthy Sugarbush in a Changing Climate, Growth and Tree Rings: Responses of Northern Forest to Drought, Maple Industry Panel and What’s a Sugarbush Worth? by going to https://www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture/maple_conference/ Online registration will be handled by the VNMSA at www.vermontmaple.org/maple-conferences/

NORTH AMERICAN MAPLE SYRUP COUNCIL and INTERNATIONAL MAPLE SYRUP INSTITUTE

BIG PLANS FOR ANNUAL MEETINGS

Where: Comfort Inn Mt. Pleasant, MI
January 19-20, 2018

Friday
5:30 Syrup must be turned in for judging
6:00-8:00pm Registration
6:00-9:30pm Vendor Area Open
6:30pm Syrup Judging Begins
7:30-9:30pm Hors d’oeuvres
8:00-8:45pm Round Table Sharing and Discussion: All things Maple
8:50-9:30pm What’s new on the Market–Equipment Manufacturers/Dealers
Saturday
7:30-10:00am Registration–West (Main) Entrance to conference center
9:00 Welcome–Rooms A,B,C,D– Kirk Hedding, VMSSA President
9:10-10:00am USDA/APHIS David Chapeskie
10:10-11:00pm Shepherd Maple Festival—Ron Rhynard and Annie Hammel

PLANNING TO GO: 2017 Kentucky-Virginia Maple Syrup School Where: December 9, 2017
When: December 9 Extension Office
478 Extension Drive, Whitesburg, KY 41858
Registration fee: $15.00
Agenda:
7:00 Doors Open
7:30 Registration and Pancake Breakfast
9:00 Welcome
9:15 AM Breakout Sessions
Small Backyard Operations
Beyond the Bucket: Maple
Line Options
10:00 Break
10:15 Basic Regulatory Guidelines
10:45 Value Added Maple Products
11:35 Vendor Visits

PLANNING TO GO: VMSSA Annual Meeting Program Where: Comfort Inn Mt. Pleasant, MI
January 19-20, 2018

Friday
5:30 Syrup must be turned in for judging
6:00-8:00pm Registration
6:00-9:30pm Vendor Area Open
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North American Maple Syrup Council and International Maple Syrup Institute

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ARMAND BOLDUC stands next to a 300-year-old maple being measured for size. His nation’s oldest country store in Moultonborough. Here, you’ll find something unique to bring home. New Hampshire is also home to the longest con- tinually-run maple operation in the country. Since 1779, residents of what is now the Bolduc Farm in Gilford, have been making maple syrup and sugar every year and have the records to prove it. Some of the trees they are tapping today were tapped when George Washington was President—and they are enormous! One tree measures 16 ft. 8 in. in circum- ference and some of the trunks stretch slightly over 70 feet and spread out approximately 90 feet. Not all of these locations will be included in the tour, but you will be able to see them on your own. So, mark your calendar for October 26-29, and plan to join your maple friends in Concord, New Hampshire. It’s the place to be seen in 2018! More information about this convention will soon be available at nhmapleproducers.com. We’ll be look- ing forward to seeing you there!