

Maple Syrup

June 13, 1996

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

SYRUP PRODUCTION UP 43 PERCENT NATIONWIDE

UNITED STATES: U.S. maple syrup production in the 10 major producing states totaled 1.6 million gallons for 1996, up 43 percent from last year. This is the highest production recorded since 1992. The preliminary crop value is \$37.2 million, up 30 percent from 1995.

U.S. maple producers generally experienced favorable weather and temperatures allowing for the best production run in recent memory. The season started a few days later than last year and also ended over a week later than last year, giving producers a few additional days for sap collection and boiling. Excessive snow cover hampered production in northern Wisconsin and Michigan but was more than made up for in southern areas of the two states. Colder temperatures in Northern Maine during March and April slowed sap flow in that area. Syrup color was slightly darker than last year in New England and Ohio; while the

rest of the producing region had mostly lighter syrup. Sugar content averaged higher than last year across the U.S. Vermont led U.S. production with 550,000 gallons of syrup. New York' production at 343,000 gallons was the second highest. The 167,000 gallons produced in the state of Maine makes them the third leading state. Increased syrup supplies are expected to be reflected by lower 1996 prices.

NEW ENGLAND (excluding Rhode Island): Maple syrup production in New England for 1996 totaled 865,000 gallons, up 38 percent from last year, but only a 22 percent increase from 1994. Vermont remained the largest producing state in New England and the nation, with 64 percent of the region's production and 35 percent of the total U.S. syrup.

Favorable weather conditions in 1996 led to increased production in all New England states. The percentage increase over 1995's production varied from only 3 percent in Maine to 69 percent in Massachusetts. New England's 1996 sugaring season lasted approximately 33 days, 2 days longer than 1995. The average opening dates were February 27 in Connecticut, March 4 in Massachusetts, March 6 in New Hampshire, March 9 in Vermont, and March 10 in Maine. Temperatures were reported to be 4 percent too warm, 84 percent favorable, and 12 percent too cold. The sugar content of this year's sap ran a little lower than usual, requiring 43 gallons of sap to produce 1 gallon of syrup. Syrup color this year was darker than normal, with only 13 percent of production reported to be light amber in color. The average closing dates were March 31 in Connecticut, April 7 in both Massachusetts and New Hampshire, April 8 in Maine, and April 13 in Vermont. In Northern Maine and Vermont several producers continued boiling into early May.

The preliminary value of New England's 1996 maple syrup crop, based on grower expectations, is \$19.7 million. This is a 17 percent increase from the 1995 total value of \$16.9 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 \$22.82 which is down \$4.15 from 1995's price of \$26.97.

1995 PRICES AND SALES: Average gallon equivalent prices for 1995 maple syrup across retail, wholesale, and bulk sales varied widely across the region. With a higher proportion of wholesale sales in 1995 than in 1994, Connecticut's all sales equivalent fell \$0.90 to \$40.20 in 1995. The average gallon equivalent price of all sales increased a combined average of \$3.65 for Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Vermont to \$18.30, \$38.10, \$37.70, and \$27.80 respectively. As expected,

Maine continues to have a low gallon equivalent price due to their large percentage of bulk sales. The 1995 gallon equivalent price of \$26.97 across all New England states reflects a 12 percent increase from the 1994 price of \$23.99.

MAPLE SYRUP: Production, Price and Value, 1994 - 1996

STATE	Production			Average Gallon Equivalent Price of All Sales ^{1/}			Value of Production		
	1994	1995	1996	1994	1995	1996 ^{2/}	1994	1995	1996 ^{2/}
	----- 1,000 Gallons -----			----- Dollars -----			----- 1,000 Dollars -----		
Connecticut	11	7	10	41.10	40.20	34.40	471	281	344
Maine	150	162	167	14.30	18.30	18.60	2,145	2,965	3,106
Massachusetts	40	29	49	37.80	38.10	28.90	1,456	1,105	1,416
New Hampshire	73	64	89	34.80	37.70	28.10	2,540	2,413	2,501
Vermont	435	365	550	23.90	27.80	22.50	10,397	10,147	12,375
NEW ENGLAND^{3/}	709	627	865	23.99	26.97	22.82	17,009	16,911	19,742
Michigan	85	55	88	29.30	26.90	25.90	2,491	1,480	2,279
New York	251	208	343	24.50	23.50	25.80	6,150	4,888	8,849
Ohio	90	65	90	26.00	28.80	23.70	2,340	1,872	2,133
Pennsylvania	59	43	71	25.90	25.10	24.00	1,528	1,079	1,704
Wisconsin	130	98	110	21.00	25.40	22.70	2,730	2,489	2,497
UNITED STATES	1,324	1,096	1,567	24.40	26.20	23.70	32,248	28,719	37,204

^{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/} 1996 price and value are preliminary and based on grower expectations during April and May 1996.

^{3/} New England includes CT, ME, MA, NH, VT



MAPLE SYRUP: Sales Percentages, New England, 1994 - 1995

TYPE OF SALE	Connecticut		Maine		Massachusetts		New Hampshire		Vermont	
	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995
	Percent									
Retail	75	70	5	5	70	70	60	55	35	40
Wholesale	15	20	3	3	20	15	25	30	15	20
Bulk	10	10	92	92	10	15	15	15	50	40

MAPLE SYRUP: Sales Percentages, Other States, 1994 - 1995

TYPE OF SALE	Michigan		New York		Ohio		Pennsylvania		Wisconsin	
	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995	1994	1995
	Percent									
Retail	54	50	44	48	70	75	52	51	24	53
Wholesale & Bulk	46	50	56	52	30	25	48	49	76	47

MAPLE SYRUP: Prices by Type of Sales and Size of Container, 1994 - 1995

STATE & YEAR	Retail					Wholesale					Bulk				All Sales gallon equivalent price ^{2/}
	Gal	1/2 Gal	Quart	Pint	1/2 Pint	Gal	1/2 Gal	Quart	Pint	1/2 Pint	Grade A			Grade B & C	
											light amber	med amber	dark amber		
----- Dollars Per Container -----											----- Dollars Per Pound ^{3/} -----				Dollars
Connecticut															
1994	33.90	19.60	10.80	6.55	4.10	1/2	17.20	9.40	5.50	3.20	-	-	1/2	1/2	41.10
1995	35.00	19.60	11.10	6.00	4.20	1/2	14.80	8.10	4.85	3.60	-	-	1/2	1/2	40.20
Maine															
1994	32.40	17.60	9.75	5.80	3.80	25.40	16.20	7.05	4.25	2.55	1.25	1.20	1.10	.90	14.30
1995	30.20	16.90	9.45	5.45	3.60	25.80	13.60	7.05	4.30	2.70	1.55	1.50	1.40	1.25	18.30
Massachusetts															
1994	32.50	18.30	10.70	6.35	3.95	25.60	15.10	8.40	4.60	2.80	1.55	1.30	1.40	.95	37.80
1995	30.10	17.80	10.50	6.40	4.15	23.50	14.70	8.15	4.75	2.75	1.85	1.55	1.25	1.10	38.10
New Hampshire															
1994	30.10	17.60	10.40	6.40	3.70	23.30	13.30	7.60	4.45	2.60	1.45	1.30	1.25	1.00	34.80
1995	31.20	17.80	10.40	6.25	3.70	25.50	14.70	7.75	4.55	2.75	1.80	1.50	1.40	1.15	37.70
Vermont															
1994	26.90	15.50	9.40	5.90	3.75	21.90	13.00	7.50	4.50	2.85	1.40	1.30	1.15	1.10	23.90
1995	<u>28.80</u>	16.90	10.40	6.45	4.20	24.00	13.60	7.95	4.65	3.10	1.75	<u>1.55</u>	1.40	<u>1.20</u>	27.80
											Bulk All Grades				
											----- Dollars Per Pound ^{3/} -----				
Michigan															
1994	28.70	16.20	8.92	5.48	3.29	24.90	14.10	7.05	3.96	2.72				1.65	29.30
1995	27.60	15.60	8.28	5.24	3.14	24.80	13.00	7.40	4.30	2.46				1.63	26.90
New York															
1994	30.00	15.90	9.00	5.60	3.30	21.50	13.40	7.80	4.40	2.70				1.25	24.50
1995	29.10	15.70	9.00	5.60	3.70	23.30	13.80	7.80	4.70	2.60				1.15	23.50
Ohio															

1994	26.10	15.10	8.40	5.40	3.40	20.50	12.00	6.40	3.80	2.60	1.40	26.00
1995	26.30	14.50	8.50	5.20	3.80	20.60	11.50	6.50	3.60	2.70	1.30	28.80
Pennsylvania												
1994	25.80	14.80	8.60	5.40	3.50	23.20	13.50	7.30	4.40	2.80	1.10	25.90
1995	27.90	15.20	8.50	5.10	3.40	23.50	14.00	7.40	4.70	2.90	1.10	25.10
Wisconsin												
1994	23.00	13.00	6.80	4.20	2.75	20.90	13.00	6.80	3.70	2.50	1.21	21.00
1995	23.40	12.40	7.30	4.00	2.90	26.60	13.90	7.50	4.00	2.40	1.29	24.40

^{1/} Data withheld to prevent disclosure of individual operations

^{2/} Average gallon equivalent price is a weighted average across retail, wholesale, and bulk sales.

^{3/} For dollars per gallon: multiply dollars per pound by 11.03 pounds per gallon

FREQUENT 1996 COMMENTS FROM MAPLE PRODUCERS, BY COUNTY

CONNECTICUT - **Fairfield**: Perfect conditions. Long season and large quantity. **Hartford**: Season started late due to cold. A small amount of sap was collected on February 28th. Due to cold and snow, sap flow didn't resume until March 11th. Most of our boiling was done in March. Trees budded out just after March 20th, making any later sap unusable. A good season - a lot of work, but fun and tastes good too! **Litchfield**: Long season. Started late and flowed so steadily that it was difficult to keep up. Latest beginning of flow on record since 1928. Excellent conditions. Great syrup weather if you didn't tap too early. **Middlesex**: Hard season! Ran an additional evaporator and just barely kept up. **New London**: Season was slow; too many warm nights. **New Haven**: Too cold, interspersed with a couple of heavy runs. As season warmed up, syrup darkened. **Tolland**: Very little frost resulted in a short season. We've never seen the sap flow so strong. **Windham**: Weather conditions and flavor were pretty good. Fire hazard due to bare ground. Second best syrup tap ratio in 24 years of keeping records. When the sap flowed it ran in heavy volumes.

MAINE - **Aroostook**: Cold periods with some slow days but it also extended the season. **Cumberland**: Unpredictable! January and February thaws hurt greatly. **Franklin**: Excellent weather but poor sugar content. Better this year than before. Weather here was better than average for sap flow. It took a lot of sap to make a gallon of syrup. **Hancock**: Season started late, but was still above average. **Kennebec**: Ran longer and in greater volume than most years. **Knox**: Steady sap flow; no real runs. **Oxford**: The color of the syrup was quite dark at the beginning of the season but lightened as the season went on. The weather was very favorable this year, being quite cool on average. The wind blew nearly every day. **Penobscot**: Awesome weather. Awesome production. **Piscataquis**: Extremely poor sugar content. Sap hydrometer showed 1.5% most of the time. **Somerset**: Weather was favorable for good sap runs. **York**: Season late starting. Temperature was excellent after it finally started. The sugar content dropped the last days of March. Flavor not as good as last year.

MASSACHUSETTS - **Berkshire**: Very late flow. Too warm. **Franklin**: After the first of March, the sap was almost pure water. Shortest season ever with quick, great flow. Sap not as sweet as usual. Never too cold or too warm. Excellent season. **Hampden**: Had some good cold nights and warm days but the wind did not stay in the west very long. It kept changing back and forth, so there were just a few good runs. **Hampshire**: There were no hot spells during sugaring. Cold. Conditions remained favorable for sap runs throughout this period. The sugar bush with a Northwest exposure did not run like the ones with a Southeast exposure. Low sugar content in sap but volume made up for it. Warm weather in February caused a dark year. Very muddy getting around. **Middlesex**: Nice sweet sap. Three weeks of no flow at mid- season. **Worcester**: Too warm first two weeks, too

cold the third and fourth weeks, and just right the fifth and sixth weeks.

NEW HAMPSHIRE - **Addison**: Low sugar content. **Belknap**: The warm spells we had were too warm (unseasonable), so it shortened the season. All light this year - nicest I've made in 10 years! **Carroll**: A number of strong runs, cool season, and good quality. **Cheshire**: Excellent year for volume. Lots of good medium and dark syrup. Flavor was okay. This was the best season we have had weather wise for a long time. No real warm days to spoil the sap. Lack of snow made for easier tapping and collecting. **Coos**: Less than ideal weather but the sap ran very hard anyway. **Grafton**: Weather was ideal! Short season, a little over two weeks long this year when it usually lasts a month. Every time it would warm up, the wind would blow too much. **Hillsborough**: Weather conditions were close to perfect with many good runs. Started season with dark syrup. Very little sugar sand to speak of. **Merrimack**: Good weather here. Excellent quality in color and taste. The snow cover contributed to this being a good year because it prevented the frost from going too deep into the ground. Weather was good, but no sugar in the sap.

Rockingham: Perfect conditions but sugar content was very low. Best season we've had in 15 years of sugaring. **Sullivan**: During the January thaw, bare ground emerged and confused the trees. Very enjoyable season overall.

VERMONT - **Addison**: Weather was, for the most part, cooperative. Although, sometimes sap ran when unexpected. Our second best season ever. **Bennington**: Had the second best year in 25 and only off by six gallons for an all time high. **Caledonia**: Lots of snow during tapping. Some damage to lines due to being buried by snow, torn down by moose, and chewed through by rodents. We could have made more but we ran out of wood. **Chittenden**: More moisture needed but good season overall. Sap was very fragile - did not store well. **Essex**: Pretty good year - a long season and sap ran steadily. Too cold during days. Excellent quality. **Franklin**: Weather conditions were almost ideal except for some days with a strong north wind that shut off flow to our parts of our woods. Easy year - not too much snow. Superb. **Lamoille**: Quality was good this year. **Orange**: Flavor was good, though a little dark. **Orleans**: Just a little dry - more snow and rain would have helped. Weather here was very favorable, just warm enough for the sap to flow. The relatively cool temperatures kept the trees from budding and kept the quality good overall. A very strange but good season. Too cool and cloudy. **Rutland**: If you were to order the perfect season, this would have to be about it! **Washington**: Perfect sugar weather! Good flavor but mainly dark. **Windham**: Great to see a freeze each night but difficult year to make light amber. Fortunate to be able to make light amber/fancy when others had trouble. Awesome runs of sap. Huge! Frequent. Weak sap but so plentiful. Very little Fancy, but exceptionally good flavor.

Windsor: Sap flow conditions were all wrong but sap flowed and flowed.

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