Maple career event was another success

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The 2022 Vermont Maple Career Development Event (CDE) was held on the campus of Vermont Technical College in Randolph Center, Vermont on May 19th. The CDE is the product of a partnership between University of Vermont Extension and Shelburne Farms. The Vermont Chapter of Future Farmers of America also provided support for this event.

Most of the participants are enrolled in one of the Vermont’s regional career and technical education centers. Some schools have fully integrated maple programs that include hands-on experience with everything from sugaring management, sap collection, syrup production and even marketing of maple products. Other schools may have a maple unit as part of their diversified agriculture and forestry curriculums. This will be the third CDE to focus solely on issues related to maple production. The inaugural CDE held in 2019 at Shelburne Farms included more than fifty students from eight schools. That event was a result of graduate student Lynn Wolfe’s master’s project. Lynn developed the teaching manual and structure for the first CDE. The “mini manual” formed the backbone of the teaching materials and included the most up-to-date, research based knowledge. The COVID pandemic prevented in-person events in 2020 and the CDE was modified in 2021 to allow for remote competition.

The maple CDE tests student knowledge of maple syrup production from tree identification to syrup grading. The purpose of the Maple CDE is to show the wide range of research based knowledge and skills required to achieve high yields of sap and to produce high quality syrup. The maple industry in Vermont has grown more than threefold in the last twenty years. The earnings from their annual golf tournament. The winners were split between the top three schools ($2,000 for first place, $1,000 for second place and $500 for third place). Lapierre USA donated several pallets worth of maple fittings and supplies to Tech Centers with maple programs that would have been sold as clearance. This significant gift will allow students to improve their production and learn about tubing installation. CIDL USA in St. Albans donated funds and Leader Evaporator donated supplies and gifts for the participants. The Orange County Sugar Makers Association contributed funds for prizes.

First place (241 points) went to Cold Hollow Career Center Team #3, Enosburg Falls. Second place (239 points) went to the Hannaford Career Center, Middlebury. Third place (234 points) went to Green Mountain Technology and Career Center, Hyde Park.

The organizers hope that the concept of a maple specific competition for high school aged students will expand to other maple producing states. One step in that process came when Lynn Wolfe and Mark Isselhardt presented to the New England Agriculture Teachers Annual Conference in hopes that other New England states will take up the maple CDE model for growing the next generation of maple math.

High School Agriculture Teachers from around New England try their hand at grading maple syrup during a workshop describing the Vermont Maple Career Development Event (CDE). Organizers Mark Isselhardt (UVM Extension) and Lynn Wolfe (Shelburne Farms) hope that more states will consider adopting the Maple CDE to help spread current, research based, technical education about maple production.
Sugarbush Management Basics Video Series

Techniques designed to promote long-term maple sap production by optimizing tap count while minimizing potential losses from disease, forest pests, severe weather and recruiting the next generation of crop trees.


https://go.uvm.edu/sugarbushmgt

This series includes thirteen videos introducing a specific topic related to managing sugarbushes for long-term, sustainable sap production.

Each video features Dr. Tony D’Amato, Director of University of Vermont Forestry Program and Director of Research Forests.

Each video is about two minutes long and is intended for sugar makers, landowners, foresters and others who are interested in the forestry side of maple production.

Scan code for full playlist

Crop tree release

Video titles:
- Crop tree release
- Culverts
- Even-aged management
- Invasive earthworms
- Invasive plants
- Regeneration
- Rotation age
- Stem quality
- Structural diversity and biodiversity
- Sugarbush silviculture
- Uneven-aged management
- Water bars
- When to release regeneration

Sugarmaker videos are available

By MARK ISSELHARDT
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The University of Vermont (UVM) Extension Maple Program has recently published the “Sugarbush Management Basics” series of videos.

The series includes thirteen videos, each of which introduces a specific topic related to managing sugarbushes for long-term, sustainable sap production. Each video runs approximately two minutes and is intended for sugar makers, landowners, foresters and others who are interested in the forestry side of maple production.

Dr. Anthony (Tony) D’Amato, Chair of UVM Forestry Program and Director of UVM Research Forests is a nationally recognized forestry expert and is featured in the video series. Specific topics covered in the videos include: Crop tree release, Culverts, Even-aged management, Invasive earthworms, Invasive plants, Regeneration, Rotation age, Stem quality, Structural diversity and biodiversity, Sugarbush silviculture, Uneven-aged management, Water bars and When to release regeneration.

These videos were shot and edited by UVM Extension Maple Specialist, Mark Isselhardt.

All thirteen videos can be found in the “Sugarbush Management” playlist on the Proctor Maple Research Center youtube channel: www.youtube.com/c/UVM-ProctorMapleResearchCenter. This QR code will link you directly to the video playlist.