

# Northwest Pennsylvania Maple Syrup Producers Association

## Membership Application

Name (s): \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number (s): \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Website address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please check the products that you offer for sale:

- Retail Syrup
- Wholesale Syrup
- Bulk Syrup
- Maple Candy
- Maple Cream
- Maple Sugar
- Maple Coated Nuts
- Maple Gift Baskets
- Other Maple Products

Annual Dues per farm - \$20.00

Make checks payable to:  
Northwest PA Maple Producers Association

Mail payment and completed application to:  
Jacob Zimmerman  
20320 Skelton Road  
Cambridge Springs, PA 16403

## Five Fast Maple Facts

- ◆ In a good year, an average tree with two taps will yield approximately 25 gallons of sap, and that will produce 2 quarts of syrup.
- ◆ The actual “sugar run” takes place for only about 15 days during six week long maple season, but the preparation for the harvest requires intense work and close cooperation among members of the sugaring team.
- ◆ Maple coated nuts—peanuts, cashews, walnuts—are delicious treats experiencing a rapid growth in popularity.
- ◆ In Pennsylvania, maple production is primarily a home-based business with the knowledge, skills, and trees passed down from generation to generation.
- ◆ The only other tree species capable of producing sweet syrup is the birch, but over twice as many gallons of birch sap are required to make a syrup with equivalent sweetness. And there is no maple taste!



## Northwest Pennsylvania Maple Syrup Producers Association

*The Northwest Pennsylvania Maple Syrup Producers Association is dedicated to helping its members meet a commitment to produce the best quality maple syrup while promoting the industry and the product that nature has generously bestowed upon us.*



# Maple Syrup Production

Maple syrup production has certainly come a long way since Native Americans gathered the sap in birch bark buckets and then slowly boiled it down by dropping heated stones into vats made of hollowed out logs. The hand-operated augers and huge



iron kettles over open fires that were familiar features on settlers' farms for over two hundred years have now disappeared. Efficient contemporary methods of sap collection and evaporation have streamlined the maple sugaring process. However, the age-old pattern of families working in harmony with nature remains at the heart of each sugaring season.

A modern sugar operation usually follows this process for making maple syrup:

- Drill one to four 5/16-inch tap holes in each maple tree with a gasoline-powered drill.
- Insert a plastic tap and attach flexible plastic tubing.
- Run tubing into progressively larger plastic lines and attach a

vacuum pump.

- Operate the pump when warm days and freezing nights prompt the trees to produce a significant flow of sap.
- Collect the sap in a centrally located "sugar house."
- Concentrate the maple sap using a reverse osmosis filtration system.
- Boil sap in an evaporator pan fueled by wood, oil, or natural gas.
- Monitor the density of the boiling syrup with a floating hydrometer or a light-bending refractometer.
- Concentrate the sap to 66.7 percent sugar content.
- Filter the finished syrup to remove the naturally occurring precipitants known as "sugar sand."
- Grade the syrup by comparing its color to government-defined



standards—light amber, medium amber (rich flavored and preferred by many experts), dark amber, Grade B (primarily for cooking), or commercial (an inferior grade used for flavoring tobacco).

- Seal the syrup in sterile, food-grade containers.

Many maple-sugaring operations use a portion of their

## Northwest Pennsylvania Maple Syrup Producers Association Benefits of Membership

- ◆ Free subscription to the Maple Digest
- ◆ One free meal @ the annual meeting (additional meals @ nominal cost)
- ◆ One free "PA Maple" hat for first time members
- ◆ Free PA Maple Council membership
- ◆ Free Listing on the Association Website ([www.pamaple.org](http://www.pamaple.org))
- ◆ Sugarhill syrup containers at discounted association prices
- ◆ PA Maple Grade Labels at discounted association prices
- ◆ Maple Cream Shrink Sleeves at discounted association prices
- ◆ Assistance with maple production questions and problems
- ◆ Notification of various maple workshops, demos and tours
- ◆ Opportunity to participate in the Maple Taste & Tour Weekend

syrup to make additional maple products. Traditional leaf-shaped maple candy is now the most familiar, but maple crumb sugar has also enjoyed enduring popularity. In fact, prior to the Civil War it was the most familiar form of sugar used in rural households. Maple cream is a spread that serves as a delectable topping for toast, crackers and fruit. Children are always tempted by maple taffy, lollipops, and maple on snow. And everyone will enjoy maple-coated nuts.

Late each winter when sunny days signal maple trees to release the sweet energy stored in their roots, the cycle of harvesting nature's purest sugar begins again. Every time we satisfy our hunger with a stack of syrup-sweetened pancakes, we can silently salute the efforts of the families who continue the tradition of bringing

nature's bounty to our tables.



The association strives to assist its members through the various educational activities that it sponsors every year. Collectively, our members have hundreds of years of maple sugaring experience to draw upon and are willing to help each other solve problems and improve our overall operations. Promoting the maple syrup industry through our annual Maple Weekend helps educate the public in a positive way. Please consider joining us.

## Statistically Speaking . . .

- 501 Pennsylvania farms currently make and market maple products.
- 60 percent of these producers use 499 or fewer taps (about 200 trees).
- 54 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties have active maple sugaring operations, and most of the non-producing counties are urban areas.
- 100 % pure and organic maple syrup, which appeals to today's health-conscious consumers, is available in a wide variety of markets—from farms and health food stores to gift shops and supermarkets.
- The value of the PA syrup produced in 2005 was nearly \$2,000,000—a welcome economic boost for family farms.
- A steady annual increase in the number of trees tapped promises a sunny future for this small but important cottage industry.