



MINUTES - International Maple Syrup Institute (IMSI) Board of Directors Meeting June 6th, 2023

PREAMBLE

AWARDS - The June 6th, 2023, meeting in Magog was preceded by a reception and dinner where the annual IMSI awards were presented.

The awards recognize people and organizations that contribute substantially and over the long term to the maple industry.

The *Lynn Reynolds Memorial Leadership Award* was presented to **Pamela Green** in recognition of outstanding leadership and dedication to the maple industry as a member and president of the IMSI and the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association.

The *Golden Maple Leaf Award* was presented to **Mylène Denicolai and the Quebec Maple Syrup Producers** for their outstanding success in developing overseas markets in Europe and Asia for maple syrup.

Presidents Awards were presented to **Mark Isselhardt** and **Mark Cannella** for their outstanding contribution specific to IMSI projects.

These four people are great, long-time contributors to our industry - the IMSI is very grateful to them and pleased to recognize their achievements.

IMSI ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

PRESENT Fred Ahrens, *Ohio Maple Producers & Richards Maple Products*, **Steve Andersen** – *Andersen's Maple Syrup*, **Brian Bainborough** - *Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association*, **Keith Bardwell**, *Massachusetts Maple Producers Association*, **Bruce Bascom** - *Bascom Maple Farms*, **Nicholas Bell** – *Lantic*, **Maryse Bernier** - *CDL*, **Ray Bonenberg** - *IMSI Past President and Ontario Maple Syrup Producers Association*, **Jacques Boucher** – *Club Acéricole du Québec*, **Nadine Beloin** - *Market and Industry Services, Agriculture Canada*, **Philippe Breton** – *Lapierre Equipment*, **B.W. (Bev) Campbell** - *Maple Consulting & Services*, **David Campbell** - *IMSI Treasurer*, **Mark Cannella** – *University of Vermont Extension*, **Peter Christopher** – *Maple Grove/B&G Foods*, **Geneviève Clermont** – *Centre Acer – Québec*, **Jacques Couture** - *Couture's Maple Shop*, **Mylène Denicolai** - *Producteurs et productrices acéricoles du Québec*, **Martin Désilets** - *Dominion & Grimm*, **Simon Doré-Ouellet** - *Producteurs et productrices acéricoles du Québec*, **Kyle Dewees** – *Pennsylvania Maple Syrup Producers Association & Whiskey Maple Hollow*, **Brigitte Dumont** – *Centre Acer*, **Luc Goulet** - *Producteurs et productrices acéricoles du Québec*, **John Goldberg** – *The Normandy Group*, **Pamela Green** – *IMSI*, **David Hall** - *Producteurs et productrices acéricoles du Québec*, **Mark Harran** - *IMSI & Connecticut Maple Syrup Producers*, **Kevin Hart**, *Indiana Maple Syrup*



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Association, Allison Hope - Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association, Mark Isselhardt - University of Vermont, David Kemp – New Hampshire Maple Syrup Association, Jean Lamontagne - IMSI, Jason Lilly – University of Maine Extension, Isabelle Lapointe - Producteurs et productrices acéricoles du Québec, Jean-Marc Lavoie - Conseil de l'industrie de l'érable, Luc Lagacé – Centre Acer, Owen Manahan - Dominion & Grimm, Sean Manahan - Dominion & Grimm, David Marino - Producteurs et productrices acéricoles du Québec, David Marvin, Butternut Mountain Farm – Vermont, Emma Marvin, Butternut Mountain Farm, Lyle Merle - New York State MSPA, Richard Norman - Norman's Sugar House, Mary-Jeanne Packer – IMSI, Ellie Palmer – Runamok Maple, Andréanne Ouellet – Club Acéricole du Québec, Stu Peterson – Minnesota Maple Syrup Producers Association, Louise Poitras - Association acéricole du Nouveau-Brunswick - New Brunswick Maple Syrup Association, Peter Roth CDL Wisconsin & Roth Sugarbush,– Quebec, Andrew Schmidt - Windsor Hill Sugar House, Tyge Rugenstein - Crown Maple, LLC Greg Spina – Lantic, François Sylvestre – Citadelle coopérative de producteurs de sirop d'érable, Helen Thomas – New York State Maple Producers, Abby van den Berg - University of Vermont, Sara Wise - Market and Industry Services, Agriculture Canada - Adam Wild - Cornell University, Luc Goulet - President of Québec Maple Syrup Producers (QMSP), David Marino - Producteurs et productrices acéricoles du Québec

REGRETS: *Daryl Sheets -Pennsylvania Maple Producers Council, Mathew Wilkinson - Connecticut Maple Syrup Producers. Andrew Schmidt - Windsor Hill Sugar House, Tom Zaffis – Turkey Hill Sugarbush. Mike Farrell – The Forest Farmers*

48th IMSI Annual General Meeting

Welcome and Call to Order – Former IMSI President Pam Green opened the Annual General Meeting on June 6th, 2023, at 0830hrs.

Acceptance of 2022 AGM Minutes Burlington June 9th, 2022 – A motion to approve minutes of the previous IMSI Board Meeting was carried. Pam Green seconded the motion by Ray Bonenberg.

Financial Update - IMSI Treasurer David Campbell provided a printed Profit & Loss Statement for January 1st to June 4th. Total income from membership fees was \$73,879.2 USD and reported a checking account balance of \$126,271.31 as of June 4th.

Appoint Audit Committee – We discussed that our bylaws state that the financial year is from Jan 1st to Dec 31st. We will continue to audit either late in 2023 or early 2024 to



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report at our first meeting of the year in February. The last audit was on Friday November 11th, 2022, Jacques Couture, Richard Green and Chris Truso met at the treasurers' business, audited the IMSI books and found no discrepancies or issues to resolve.

2023 Appointment of Audit Committee - A motion to approve the appointment of Jacques Couture, Richard Green, and Chris Truso as IMSI auditors was carried. Philippe Breton seconded the motion by Ray Bonenberg.

Updated Bylaws - The bylaws committee (Pam Green, Martin Désilets, Stu Petersen, Jean Lamontagne) finalized an updated version of the bylaws. The bylaws were sent to board members on May 17th in preparation for a vote on June 6th. A motion to approve the bylaws was carried¹.

Pam Green explained that the amendments include 1) a revised Article I, describes in more detail and describes a broader scope of activity for the IMSI in sections `` purpose, objectives, and the values of the institute. 2) Article II (Membership) and Article III (Board of Directors, Officers and Management and Operations) have updates and clearer sections on voting, quorum, and classes of membership. Clearer definitions of the responsibilities and annual operational dates are changed to reflect the current practice and a reference to sustainability in the institutions' values section.

Election of IMSI Directors for 2023 – After naming the directors, a motion to approve the nominated directors was carried.

IMSI DIRECTORS 2023-2024	
1	Fred Ahrens – Richards Maple Syrup Products - Ohio
2	Steve Andersen – Anderson's Maple Syrup, Inc. – Wisconsin
3	Bruce Bascom – Bascom Maple Farms - New Hampshire
4	Keith Bardwell – Massachusetts Maple Syrup Producers Association
5	Nicolas Bell – LB Treats/Lantic Sugar - Quebec
6	Ray Bonenberg - Mapleside Sugar Bush
7	Peter Christopher – Maple Grove/B&G Foods – Vermont

¹ Stu Petersen noted after the meeting that the format had changed and did not numerate the items, this will be corrected however, the content will not change.



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8	Geneviève Clermont – Centre Acer – Quebec
9	Philippe Breton – Lapierre Equipment - Les Équipements Lapierre
10	David Campbell – Mapleland Farms – New York
11	Jacques Couture – Coutures Maple Shop – Vermont
12	Martin Désilets – Dominion & Grimm - Quebec
13	Mike Farrell – New Leaf Tree Syrups – New York
14	Pam Green – Greens’ Sugar House – Vermont Maple Sugar Maker’s Association
15	Mark Harran – Brookside Farm - Maple Syrup Producer’s Association of Connecticut
16	Dale Forrester – Michigan Maple Syrup Association
17	David Kemp – New Hampshire Maple Syrup Association
18	Jean-Marc Lavoie – Conseil de l’industrie de l’érable – Maple Industry Council
19	Isabelle Lapointe - Producteurs et productrices acéricoles du Québec (PPAQ) - Quebec
20	David/Emma Marvin – Butternut Mountain Farm - Vermont
21	Lyle Merrifield – Merrifield Farm - Maine Maple Producers
22	Richard Norman – Norman’s Sugar House - Connecticut
23	Stu Peterson – Minnesota Maple Syrup Producers Association
24	Louise Poitras - Association acéricole du Nouveau-Brunswick - New Brunswick Maple Syrup Association
25	Pete Roth - CDL Corp - Wisconsin
26	François Sylvestre – Citadelle coopérative de producteurs de sirop d’érable
27	Helen Thomas – New York State Maple Producers Association (NYSMPA) - New York
28	Tom Zaffis – Turkey Hill Sugarbush – Quebec
29	Rock Gaulin – H2O - Quebec

New Member with Board Seat - The IMSI welcomed *H2O Innovation* to the organization and the board. Rock Gaulin, VP Manufacturing and Maple Division of will represent H2O on the board. Guillaume Claret, Chief Operating Officer, was also present at the meeting.

H2O Innovation recently purchased *Leader Equipment* of Vermont. *H2O Innovation* is a business with global reach in the water treatment sector and is made up of five highly specialized business lines and one franchise, providing a full suite of services and products. <https://www.h2oinnovation.com/about-us/businesses/>

Annual General Meeting Adjourned - Pam Green closed the AGM at 0925hrs.

Board of Directors Meeting

Call to Order of IMSI 2023 Directors – Pam Green called the Board of Directors meeting to order.



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Appointment of Normandy Group – Helen Thomas moved and was seconded to continue retaining the services of the Normandy Group. Motion carried unanimously.

It was mentioned that many IMSI achievements were enabled by our consultant Dr. Goldberg of the Normandy Group in Washington. Notably improvements to the NASS survey, the ongoing work with the CFIA and the FDA to modernize the Maple Syrup Standard of Identity and the attempt to initiate, through this year’s US Farm Bill, of a formal process to provide some insights and guidance about maple research priorities to the USDA ACER planners each year.

Election of IMSI Executive Committee for 2023 – After naming the directors, a motion to approve the nominated directors was carried unanimously.

IMSI Executive Committee	
President	Martin Désilets – D & G – Quebec
1st Vice-President	Mike Farrell – <i>New Leaf Tree Syrups</i> – New York
Treasurer	David Campbell – <i>Mapleland Farms</i> – New York
2nd Vice President	Geneviève Clermont – Centre Acer - Saint-Hyacinthe, Que.
Past President	Pam Green – <i>Greens Sugarhouse & VMSMA</i> - Vermont
Senior Advisor & Past President	Ray Bonenberg - <i>Mapleside Sugar Bush & OMSPA</i> - Ontario
Senior Advisor & Chairperson, IMSI Maple Alliance, U.S.	Helen Thomas – New York State NYMSMA

Geneviève Clermont, General Manager of *Centre Acer*, was nominated to the executive committee. *Centre Acer* is at the forefront of maple research and conducts applied research and develops practical knowledge and expertise, and technology transfer to the maple industry in Quebec. *Centre Acer’s* vision is “to be the national and international reference for sharing the best scientific and technological knowledge in maple syrup production and processing”. *Centre Acer’s* team, including highly specialized maple scientists and technicians are very strategic contributors to the industry’s success and key contributors in many IMSI initiatives on behalf of the maple industry.

Recognition of IMSI Courtesy Members & Consultants for 2023 – The following members were recognized as key contributors and resources to the IMSI.

IMSI Courtesy Members



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Cannella, Mark	Extension Associate Professor University of Vermont
Denicolai, Mylène	Producteurs et productrices acéricoles du Québec (PPAQ)
Isselhardt, Mark	University of Vermont Extension
Simon Forest	PPAQ
Kathy Hopkins	Maple Business & Education – Maine
Jones, Jones	Butternut Mountain Farms – Labels & Nutritional
Luc Lagacé	Centre Acer
Jason Lilly	University of Maine
Tim Rademacher	Centre Acer
Geoff Lewis	Research Specialist Lead Center for Sustainable Systems School for Environment and Sustainability University of Michigan University
Tim Rademacher	Centre Acer
Paul Renaud	Ontario Maple Syrup Producer, Chairs of the Ontario Maple Syrup Producer's Association's Climate Change Committee.
Navindra Seeram	Professor – University of Rhode Island, USA
Abby Van den Berg	UVM Proctor Maple Research Centre
Adam Wild	Cornell University

IMSI Consultants	
John Goldberg	The Normandy Group
Mike Lannen	Eternity Marketing - Vermont



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Presentation, Syrup Consumer Insights – Helen Thomas, Executive Director of the New York State Maple Syrup Producers presented Proposed Designs and Strategy for Pure Maple "Mark", the concluding part of an ACER grant supported US syrup consumer research study to determine consumer-based strategies for the development and promotion of maple syrup in the United States. Please see <https://sugarmakers.nysmaple.com/acermarketresearchresults/> . A marketing tool kit will be coming out with tips on how to use new materials.

Of particular interest is the research that demonstrates two challenges to increasing maple syrup sales with new users, namely, the low awareness of real or pure maple syrup as opposed to other syrups such as corn syrup and the low knowledge of its uses. For more information please see <https://sugarmakers.nysmaple.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/NYS-Maple-Syrup-Research-Findings.pdf>. We are grateful to Helen Thomas, John Goldberg, NYSMSPA, Golin, and the ACER Research Grants for this insightful syrup consumer study.

Breakthrough Study Shows Maple Syrup Provides Functional Food Benefits for Cardiometabolic Health, When Replacing Refined Sugars

Julie Barbeau and Mylene Denicolai presented the results and data from a new clinical nutrition study² demonstrating that maple syrup, used as a substitute for refined sweeteners, provides cardiometabolic benefits and meets the recognized criteria of a functional food. The analysis found that replacing refined sugar with maple syrup reduced certain cardiometabolic risk factors, specifically by decreasing abdominal fat and systolic blood pressure, and improving glycemic response. The research outcome supports proceeding with further study and proof of concept that will eventually lead to regulatory approval allowing for specific functional food claims. To read more about this please see the press release <https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/major-breakthrough-in-maple-syrup-research-806487140.html> by the Quebec Maple Syrup Producers and on the website at <https://ppaq.ca/en/health/> .

² The research "Substituting refined sugars by maple syrup decreases key cardiometabolic risk factors in individuals with mild metabolic alterations: a randomized, double-blind, controlled crossover trial" was conducted by a Université Laval team led by Dr. André Marette, PhD, at the Centre de recherche de l'Institut universitaire de cardiologie et de pneumologie de Québec and Dr. Marie-Claude Vohl, PhD, at the Institute of Nutrition and Functional Foods.



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IMSI Overview of 2022-2023 Activities & Accomplishments

In the span of a year, the IMSI held 4 board meetings and one special meeting. The IMSI hosted 4 guest speakers with information on the syrup consumer, sustainable production methods and Canadian label changes. The IMSI and its committees interacted with various regulatory agencies including the CFIA, FDA, USDA, and bipartisan members of both the House of Representatives and US Senate.

IMSI Executive Director, Jean Lamontagne, reminded the audience that the IMSI is relevant and effective because it represents almost the entirety of the maple business community in Canada and the United States and thanked the Directors for their contribution and generous work for the industry. In the recent past, the IMSI has contributed to many crucial positive outcomes for the industry and for consumers such as the effective response to the threat posed by California Proposition 65, the simplification and harmonization of the maple grades nomenclature on labels. The IMSI successfully collaborated with the FDA so that the maple syrup nutrition facts label is exempted from declaring the number of grams of added sugars in a serving of the product. The compromise is that the label includes the percent Daily Value for added sugars to ensure that consumers have information about how a serving contributes to the total diet based on 2000 calories.

A lot of work is in progress now, done through volunteer committees that make use of our members' specific expertise and experience. Thirteen (13) functional and special-order committees were active and met over 100 times on Zoom in the past 12 months. The IMSI's Standing Committees assisted in managing the IMSI including the executive committee, budget committee, nominations committee, regulatory committee and audit committee. The board also summoned members and industry participants to form committees by **special order** (*Special Order Committees*), to study matters related to specific, discrete topics and current circumstances.

Special Order Committees - Accomplishments

The Standard of Identity Committee has a mandate to modernize the Canadian and U.S. SOIs and register maple syrup with CODEX. This year, the committee achieved full compliance with all the FDA's requests for information to substantiate the petition to



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modernize the standard. *A significant achievement resulting from a lot of assiduous work.* The process now is in the hands of the FDA for final review and approval.

The committee is currently working actively with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency (CFIA) to push the Canadian petition forward. Committee is working collaboratively with the CFIA and has met with them 4 times to advance the petition.

The Industry Statistics Committee successfully completed its two-year long work with United States Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) to simplify the USDA Maple Statistics Annual survey and obtain more accurate production data. The new survey was rolled out this March 2023. *The IMSI and its members are very grateful for the work of Mark Isselhart, the chairman of the IMSI Statistics Committee and members Mark Canella, David Folino, John Goldberg, Pam Green, Jean Lamontagne, Les Ober, Adam Wild.* The Annual Maple Survey is now easier, faster, and more convenient to fill out by U.S. maple producers. It will provide a more accurate overall picture of the scale of production and growth of our industry, better enabling financing and investment, obtaining grants for research, influencing policy and planning longer term production.

Isopropyl Alcohol Task Force is actively working to get Isopropyl Alcohol approved for use to sanitize tubing as it is used in Canada. The implications are higher quality syrup yields, time saving and prolonged use of the tubing producing less waste.

US Maple Market Development Committee – The committee is investigating concepts for an industry funded promotion program framework in U.S. The committee studied and evaluated current commodities covered by the USDA Agricultural Marketing Service marketing orders as well as other forms of financing and management/governance. A survey of maple stakeholders is currently being conducted to evaluate the feasibility and support and possible structure that could execute an ongoing maple marketing effort in the US.

One of the premises of this initiative is that the American market represents an excellent opportunity. The U.S. is the richest and largest unified food market in the world, and maple syrup is underdeveloped there. There are two strategic advantages: market size and favorable conversion factor (% of segment likely to convert) of target segment and existing familiarity with maple.



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Environment & Sustainable Development Committee studies maple production in relation to the environment. The committee includes members and institutions who are initiating research projects to ascertain the environmental performance of maple syrup production.

Conservation of forests for maple syrup production contributes to mitigate climate change in the most fundamental way : by sequestering and storing carbon. Additionally, sugarbushes make for a bio-diverse environment that provides natural habitats for many species of birds, animals, and insects and acts as a natural biological control. But maple production also involves carbon emissions. The industry will need to understand its net contribution and environmental performance which can only come from measuring both capture and emissions.

The committee concerns itself with the achievement of measurable, science-based environmental performance goals and results and with this knowledge, the ability to coherently express and claim maple syrup's favorable positioning as a sustainable forest product to consumers, buyers, the public and policy makers on both sides of the border.

At the conference, participants expressed their heart-felt commitment to a healthy and sustainable global environment now and for future generations.

Maple Quality and Education Committee supports the work of the University of Vermont and University of Maine to dispense courses to maple producers designed to educate and improve the quality and consistency of the product. The IMSI subsidizes the program financially. Led by Jason Lilly and Mark Isselhardt, the program will now be dispensed online with support of kits sent to the participants. The objective is to leverage the convenience of live online learning seminars and give the course to over 100 participants per year.



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IMSI/US ALLIANCE Grants Committee - The Acer Access and Development Program (Acer) is a competitive grant program that promotes the domestic maple syrup industry through activities associated with research and education related to maple syrup production, natural resource sustainability in the maple syrup industry, and the marketing of maple syrup and maple-sap products.

Although, historically, the grants have served the industry strategically, we have noted, over the years, that some of the grant allocations are misaligned with the industry's needs - being of tertiary order and often redundant. The grants are allocated by a group that does not comprise members of the maple industry. We suggest that the maple industry gains some ability to guide and influence the selection of grants for a more strategic allocation and better alignment with industry needs. Improving the strategic relevance of the research and education funded by the grants will make the industry more competitive and successful.

Every five years, Congress passes legislation that sets national agriculture, nutrition, conservation, and forestry policy, commonly referred to as the "Farm Bill". The Committee formally kicked off its process for the 2023 Farm Bill with field hearings and invited ideas and proposals for the 2023 Farm Bill, as well as feedback about the 2018 Farm Bill.

Given this once in five-year opportunity, the US Maple Alliance met with US maple stakeholders to propose an amendment to the farm bill. Helen Thomas and John Goldberg led this initiative by involving many state associations and thus obtained the support of bipartisan members of both the House of Representatives and US Senate to propose language that would mandate input from maple syrup industry stakeholders regarding research and education priorities that are most impactful for the maple syrup industry and that the input received from stakeholders will be utilized, to the maximum extent practicable in determining grant awards. IMSI remains optimistic that the proposed language will be included in the bill, and we will update you on the outcome of this initiative.

Website Committee is nearing completion of a modernized website presenting a more professional image and better representing the role it plays in the industry, namely the "voice of the maple industry". The website will have a member-only section with historical documents and minutes dating back 4 years.



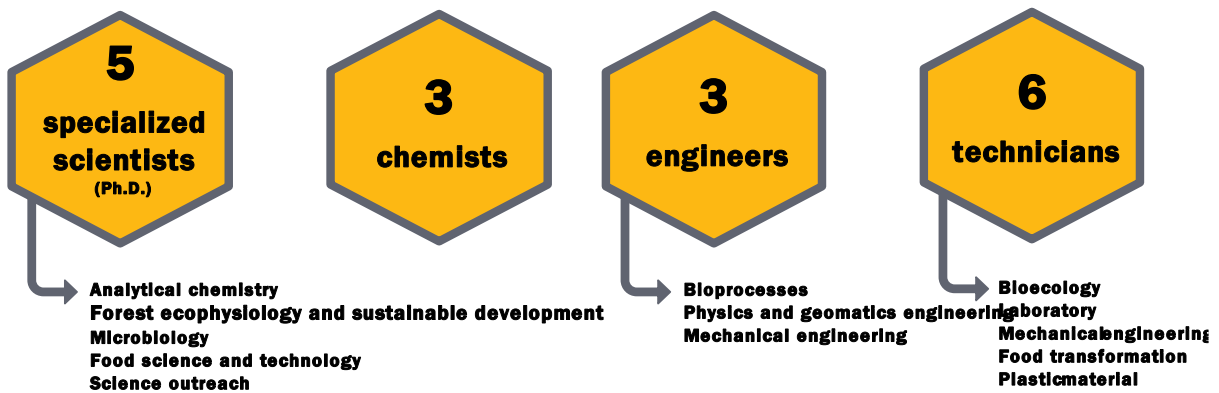
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Bylaws Committee has revised bylaws to reflect changes in the IMSI functioning. The bylaws were sent to board members on May 17th in preparation for a vote on June 6th. A motion to approve the bylaws was carried.

Science, Research and Technology Updates

Centre Acer Update – Geneviève Clermont presented a clear portrait of the Acer organization. Centre Acer is a centre of excellence for maple research as well as education and technology transfer and an impressive repository of specialized knowledge.

A multidisciplinary team



The team is divided into two divisions, R&D, Technology Transfer (education) current projects include:

- Exploratory study of the chemical composition and physico-chemical and sensory properties of syrups made from different tree species.
- Measurement of the physico-chemical and thermodynamic properties of maple sap concentrates.
- Long-term stability of maple syrup with different sensory characteristics.



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- Study of the interaction between microbial growth in the sap and the appearance of bud taste and other chemical and sensory characteristics of end-of-season maple syrup.
- Evaluation of the effect of taping below the lateral line on the productivity and quality of maple sap.
- Simulation of sustainable tapping considering growth and common tapping patterns.
- Authentication of the origin of maple syrups: a tool based on the isotopic analysis of Strontium.

The Acer lab offers a variety of services available to the industry in both countries.

<p>Adulteration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sugar profiles • Isotopic analyzes - EA-IRMS <p>Organoleptic evaluation</p>	<p>Physico-chemical</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brix • pH • Transmittance • Electrical conductivity • Turbidity <p>Mineral profile</p> <p>Lead</p>	<p>Chemical analyses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organic acids • Antioxidant capacity (ORAC) • Chlorates et perchlorates • Phenolic compounds • Volatile compounds (ex. : pyrazines and DMDS) • Totals phenols (colorimetry) • Phytohormones (AAB and AIA) • Profile of free amino acids • Profile of sugars
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Ms. Clermont also explained that ACER Division Inspection (ADI) is the subsidiary of Centre Acer. It is the entity that performs the classification and verification of Quebec maple syrup quality (large containers) that is destined for Quebec and international markets. The division has 80 employees, in 2022 it graded 178million lbs of maple syrup.

Finally, it was mentioned that Centre Acer serves the industry beyond Quebec and is open to new members outside Quebec for whom 10% discount is applicable for training, research projects, products and research projects.

University of Vermont - Mark Isselhart, Maple Specialist & Maple Program Leader at the University of Vermont Extension took the audience through details of the changes in the NASS maple survey and Jason Lilly (U Maine) took the audience through the new IMSI Maple Quality and Education Training course. There are already 6 courses lined up for the rest of 2023 and more in planning in 2024. The new format is that it is locally hosted, but remotely instructed courses saving money and time and allowing the program to train more Sugarmakers. A local organizer gets detailed instructions and materials and



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live lectures are delivered remotely to groups of about 20 students by content experts via video conference.

Mark also explained the extent of the UVM Extension Website. An outstanding resource for sugar makers with short podcast videos, production statistics and regulations, grading videos. Mark also explained the maple business resource containing sugarbush lease guide, legal templates for maple producers, etc. online calculators (yield forecast, sap pricing, tap lease rate) and webinar series.

www.vermontmaplebulletin.wordpress.com/

www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture/maple

www.mapleresearch.org

<https://www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture/business/maple/resources>

<https://www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture/maple-business>

For more information contact Mark Isselhart at Mark.Isselhardt@uvm.edu.

Cornell University - Adam Wild, Director of the Uihlein Maple Research Forest, outlined new projects such as the Buddy Syrup Notebook that characterizes Buddy syrup flavors and the newly updated Confections Notebook to help make quality value-added maple products available online at www.cornellmaple.com. They are also working on a Maple Water Notebook and have a research project tapping beech trees. For more information contact Adam Wild at adw94@cornell.edu.

Farm Credit East - Chris Truso presented the financing capabilities for maple producers, namely long-term real estate loans, maple equipment, tubing, inventory, lines of credit and services to support sugar makers such as records, taxes, payroll. Farm credit has 24 office locations.

Maple Industry Sustainability Indicators Study (2023 – 2026) - University of Vermont - Mark Cannella discussed a new multi-year monitoring of *sustainability indicators* that will capture a wholistic picture of the maple industry. The topline indicators are Environmental Measures, Production, Human & Social Factors, Economics.



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Round Table - Directors and science contributors - moderated by Ray Bonenberg.

Crop Report and Forest Management Observations – Members shared crop reports from their state, provinces, and businesses perspectives. Many commented on the early season, short season, and reduced yield. The Quebec harvest was 124 million pounds at a yield per tap (YPT) of 2.34, while the average in the last 9 years was 147 million pounds and a big contrast to last year's record of 211 million pounds YPT 4.26. The story was much the same in other regions with Vermont³, the largest US producer at 22.5 million pounds down 20% from historic production. See 2023 crop report at https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/New_England_includes/Publications/Current_News_Release/2023/Northeast-2023-Maple-Syrup-Report.pdf

Maple Industry Sustainability and Connected Activities

Directors shared their view on climate change, maple forest management and the general environmental performance of the industry.

There was general agreement that the impacts of climate change are a threat to the maple industry. For example, extreme weather events, droughts and floods, maple tree habitat shifting northward, annual tree loss of about 3 percent, etc. For further reading please reference <https://www.fs.usda.gov/ccrc/topics/maple-syrup>.

An opening comment by David Marvin set the tone for the discussion by mentioning our moral responsibility to preserve and enhance the ability of future generations to meet their own needs in a safe and environmentally healthy world.

Jean Lamontagne mentioned that we have a great industry and a great story to tell that can help our maple brand be resilient and favorably positioned in the face of foreseeably much higher environmental scrutiny of agribusiness and forestry sectors.

Paul Renaud mentioned that the industry could become exemplary leaders in sustainability.

³ NASS US Crop report came out on June 9th, after the meeting, the writer incorporated references to the report for accuracy and convenience.



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Many comments followed such as:

“It’s our job is to be the steward of the forest, and as such, we should be all we can to maintain healthy forests.”

“We have to be part of the solution, simply by consuming less than what we submit.”

“We have to protect biodiversity, and maple syrup production can contribute to that”.

The group arrived at consensus on these general points:

The maple industry to develop a clear and consistent point-of-view (position paper, strategy) that deals with climate change and the long-term viability/sustainability of the maple industry.

The need for unified and comprehensive talking points to coherently express and claim maple syrup’s favorable positioning to consumers, buyers, the public and policy makers. *Note that some retailers are asking us for this information as their own marketing and public relations strategy requires it.*

The need for measurable, science-based environmental performance metrics that support a fact-based environmental policy.

Need agreement on a system, and a certifying body, for measuring and certifying emissions and sequestration at the farm level.

Need to be more pro-active on energy efficiency (even though good progress has been made already) research and innovation adoption.

Need to make current impact data available to industry and policy makers; and fast track funding, coordination, and distribution of findings of new research that identifies ways of counteracting the impacts.



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Other ideas include implementing government funded crop insurance, training for producers on sustainable forest management practices and forest health and reducing plastics in packaging.

Adjournment - Motion to adjourn at 3:29 by Philippe Breton was carried.
