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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 15, 2020

Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Donate Maple Syrup to Hospitals Statewide

WESTFORD, VT, June 15, 2020 –

Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association (VMSMA) members said "thank you" to essential workers in hospitals throughout Vermont with a tasty donation as part of their new Maple Essential Gratitude Program.

VMSMA's County Directors collected and delivered over 60 gallons of 2020 maple syrup from sugar makers statewide to hospitals in each corner of Vermont, including, but not limited to, Gifford Medical Center in Randolph; Grace Cottage Hospital in Townshend; Brattleboro Memorial Hospital in Brattleboro; Southwestern Medical Center in Bennington; Vermont Veterans' Home in Bennington; Bethel Health Center in Bethel; Copley Hospital in Morristown; and, Central Vermont Medical Center in Berlin.

Local food is an important way that Vermonters connect and show appreciation and Vermont maple syrup is as local as it gets! From our sugar making community to our local hospital communities, VMSMA started this program to share thanks and let folks know we're in this together. We chose hospital food service programs as a way to share Vermont maple syrup donations among the hospital staff – by using it in their recipes and as table syrup throughout the day. The maple syrup delivered to each of the hospital's food services at the end of May will be used to locally sweeten the meals that hospital workers consume as they continue their fight against COVID-19.

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The Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association (VMSMA), founded in 1893, is one of the oldest agricultural organizations in the United States and represents over 1,000 members. The VMSMA helps to promote and protect the branding of pure Vermont maple products and to serve as the official voice for Vermont sugar makers. Our members take great pride in maintaining a prosperous maple industry and a working landscape that future generations will enjoy. Vermont sugar makers produce over 2 million gallons of maple syrup (about one half of the production in the United States).



During these strange, uncertain and often stressful days, we wanted to share a short-term donation program that says “thank you” to those working to take care of Vermont.

Why Essential Maple Gratitude? Our local hospital staff have been working tirelessly, often at risk to themselves and their families, to ensure that we’re all taken care of during the pandemic. In order to show our gratitude, we’re starting a program to donate maple syrup to local hospitals through their food service programs.

Local food is an important way that Vermonters connect and show appreciation and Vermont maple syrup is as local as it gets! From our sugar making community to our local hospital communities, this is a great way to share thanks and let folks know we’re in this together. We chose hospital food service programs as a way to equitably share Vermont maple syrup donations among the hospital staff – by using it in their recipes and as table syrup throughout the day.

How? We’ve worked to connect with food service directors in Vermont’s hospitals to coordinate a delivery of Vermont maple syrup to use in their cafeterias. The goal is to have county directors work with their members to arrange donations and then help coordinate a delivery to interested local hospitals.

What are the logistics? County directors should reach out to their members to coordinate a centralized drop off point for donated gallons of syrup (of any grade) by April 30. Allison will share contact information for local hospitals that are interested in receiving donations and will help coordinate deliveries. If there is a concentration of interest in some counties, we’ll cross county lines and share donations to ensure that folks have what they need for donations.

We’re trying to make this easy for county directors to assist, easy for sugar makers to donate and easy for Vermont’s hospitals to say “yes” as we say “THANK YOU!”. We appreciate your participation in this short-term program to thank Vermont’s hospital staff!

Sincerely,

Dave Mance

Bennington County Director

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Find more information on Vermont Maple online at www.vermontmaple.org.