



2022

VERMONT MAPLE CONFERENCE WEEK



THE UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT
EXTENSION

VERMONT *Maple* SUGAR
MAKERS' ASSOCIATION

Welcome to Vermont's Maple Conference Week
Wednesday, December 7 - Saturday, December 10

University of Vermont Extension and Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association are pleased to host the 2022 Vermont Maple Conference! Based on your input, we design our conference sessions for anyone who wants to learn about maple production - whether you are an existing sugar maker, looking to become one, a forester who works with maple producers or a forest landowner looking to lease to a producer.

Last year, we had every intention of offering a hybrid event with both online and in-person sessions. This year, we're moving forward with that plan! This year, we're offering three online conference days (Wednesday – Friday) and one in-person day (Saturday) at Vermont Technical College (VTC) in Randolph. This one-day event combines conferences held in Hyde Park and Brattleboro in one central location. In addition to the standard format of technical sessions, we are excited to partner with Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAF) to offer free syrup hydrometer testing and a tour of the State metrology lab that tests thousands of sap and syrup hydrometers every year.

Over the initial three days of the conference, we're offering interactive online sessions – 3 on Wednesday, 3 on Thursday and 2 on Friday. We plan to offer our usual in-person welcome messages and the popular Industry Panel in-person on Saturday at VTC, along with a limited tradeshow. The online and in-person sessions will be recorded, so that after the conference you can watch them on your own time. Sessions will be focused on our usual tracks: Maple Business Management, Regulations and Maple, Sugarbush Health, Marketing and Media, and Maple Production and Innovation.

There are three fee levels for the conference this year – 1) the entire conference (the online sessions, the in-person Saturday sessions and Saturday lunch), 2) the in-person conference (including lunch), and 3) the online sessions (including access to the recordings for each session). We created these fees to be affordable for attendees, but also help us cover the cost of offering Maple Conference Week this year. We're also thankful for the Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Market's sponsorship of this year's conference to help offset costs.

We're looking forward to engaging online and in-person discussions with you in December. After the conference, we'll also look forward to your feedback about what you'd like to see more of and what could use improvement.

Registration is available online through the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association website: www.vermontmaple.org/maple-conferences. If you need assistance along the way, please reach out to VMSMA staff.

"See you" at the conference, online and in-person!

Allison Hope
Executive Director
Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association

Mark Isselhardt
Maple Specialist
University of Vermont Extension



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HOW TO REGISTER

Our 2022 Conference offers three great ways to participate: online-only sessions; an all-day, in-person conference; or a hybrid of both!

Access to our online sessions is also easier than ever this year. Registration includes full access to all content and sessions. When you register, we'll send you links to all of the online sessions. After that, we will email you reminders the day before each session to make sure the link is readily accessible. Be sure to review the conference schedule and save the times in your calendar!

If you select the in-person conference sessions on Saturday, you'll be able to choose sessions on the day of the event. The only option that requires separate registration for Saturday is the tour of the State metrology lab, due to limited space.

Questions? Reach out to Heather or Allison for assistance.

Ready to join us? Please register for one of the three options at the link below.

REGISTER HERE

Visit the conference registration link on the VMSMA website:
www.vermontmaple.org/maple-conferences

CONFERENCE DATES

ONLINE: Wednesday, December 7 – Friday, December 9

IN-PERSON: Saturday, December 10 at Vermont Technical College, Randolph VT

REGISTRATION DEADLINE

Monday, December 5

COST

ONLINE: \$20 for all sessions (*and recordings available online*)

IN-PERSON: \$35 for all in-person sessions and lunch

ALL ACCESS VIP REGISTRATION: \$40, includes all online sessions (*and recordings available online*), all in-person sessions and lunch on Saturday

QUESTIONS?

Heather Winner
VMSMA Membership Manager
heather@vermontmaple.org
(802) 917-2032

Allison Hope
VMSMA Executive Director
allison@vermontmaple.org
(802) 777-2667

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7

ONLINE

9:00-10:00AM

Updating the USDA/NASS Maple Crop Survey

Lance Honig, National Agricultural Statistics Services Director

Every year thousands of maple producers fill out the USDA/NASS survey and report their maple crop. The data collected is the only publicly available information of how many gallons were produced, taps installed and yield/tap; however, concerns have been raised that the survey significantly underestimates the crop size. Accurate data is critical for a healthy industry. This presentation will cover the work by an International Maple Syrup Institute (IMSI) working group working with USDA/NASS to streamline the survey and boost participation.

12:00-1:00PM

Small Scale Sugaring: Fundamentals 1

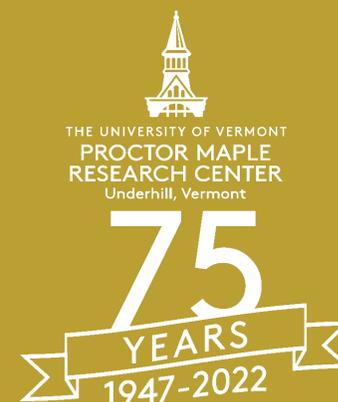
Mark Isselhardt, Maple Specialist, University of Vermont Extension

From tree ID, basic sugarbush management concepts, sap collection systems (gravity and vacuum), tapping guidelines, sap storage and sanitation, this session introduces all the elements needed to grow healthy trees and produce sustainable yields of sap for first time producers or small operators.

5:00-6:00PM

Intro to Maple Management

Join us for an overview of maple business resources available on the Maple Manager website and how they can help you plan for this next maple season. The MapleManager.org site was designed by the University of Vermont Extension Farm/Forest Business and Maple Programs and includes a variety of educational resources for current maple producers, prospective maple producers, and forest land managers. Resources include over fifteen hours of webinar recordings, eight maple business planning modules, maple investment startup profiles, sugarbush lease templates and more. We'll talk about common questions and how these resources can benefit your business planning.



Early plastic tubing research at Proctor Maple Research Farm (now Center) in 1955. Starting second from left, Fred Laing (UVM), Dr. James Marvin (Co-founder PMRF), Nelson Griggs (early plastic tubing inventor), Glen Goss, Carl & Floyd McClellan (ran sugaring at PMRF sugarhouse). Second co-founder of PMRF (Dr. Fred Taylor not pictured).

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8

ONLINE

9:00-10:00AM

Total Yields and Syrup Flavor from Red Maple Trees

Dr. Abby van den Berg, Research Professor/Assistant Director,
University of Vermont Proctor Maple Research Center

Red maple trees are sometimes ignored as crop trees for maple production due to several persistent beliefs, including that they produce lower yields than sugar maple trees and syrup with inferior flavor properties. Experiments were conducted to test these beliefs empirically, by quantifying the total annual yields from red maple trees and assessing the flavor of syrup produced from pure red and sugar maple sap.

12:00-1:00PM

Employment Law Basics for Maple Producers

As a business owner, you manage risk with insurance coverage, hiring and training good staff and making sure you have the right equipment. Have you brushed up on what is required when you have employees, even just one or two? Understanding some employment law basics is just another form of risk management for your business. What are the requirements for pay stubs, overtime, sick leave? Do these change based on the number of employees you have? Have you posted all the required signs informing employees of their rights under state and federal law? This session will offer an overview of these requirements in an easily digestible format that offers plenty of time for questions and answers.

5:00-6:00PM

The Doctors are IN

Dr. Tim Perkins, Director, University of Vermont Proctor Maple Research Center

Dr. Abby van den Berg, Research Professor/Assistant Director,
University of Vermont Proctor Maple Research Center

Do you have a vexing problem in your operation? Are you looking to invest in some area but don't know which will provide the best gains? Are you curious about the latest research in maple production? Bring your questions for University of Vermont researchers Dr. Tim Perkins and Dr. Abby van den Berg for an hour of Q&A on a range of topics.

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FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9

ONLINE

9:00-10:00AM

Small Scale Sugaring: Fundamentals 2

Mark Isselhardt, Maple Specialist, University of Vermont Extension

From small reverse osmosis units, sap storage, boiling sap on single pans or small evaporators to properly grading and bottling syrup, this session is for first time producers or small operators and introduces the core elements needed to convert sap into high quality pure maple syrup.

12:00-1:00PM

Maple Industry Development and Current Issues

Mark Cannella, UVM Extension Associate Professor, Farm Business Management Specialist

This session will explore current issues being addressed within the maple industry and how research, service and maple producer participation is posed to impact the next phase of industry development. Topics will include improvements to USDA maple statistics, market development initiatives, and a summary of important themes from October's International Maple Syrup Conference in Wisconsin.



UVM EXTENSION + VERMONT MAPLE SUGAR MAKERS ASSOCIATION

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10

IN-PERSON

Vendor Tradeshow

This year, we'll offer a limited vendor tradeshow with ample opportunity to visit with folks throughout the day and talk shop.

Hydrometer Testing

It's time to have your hydrometers tested! Bring your hydrometers to the in-person conference at Vermont Technical College. Drop them off in the morning and they'll be ready by the end of lunch.

Industry Panel Discussion

The 2022 maple crop was the largest in 100 years. What does that mean for syrup prices paid to producers? Was the exceptional consumer demand for maple over the last few years a COVID-induced blip or have markets expanded? Join industry experts as we discuss these topics and answer your questions.

Tour of State Hydrometer Testing Lab

Marc Paquette, Weights & Measures Section Chief & Metrologist, VAAFM

We'll take advantage of the fact that our in-person sessions are being held at the same location as the state's hydrometer testing lab. **Pre-register** and join us as Marc offers a tour behind the scenes to share the lab and how he tests hydrometers for Vermont's sugar makers.

Consumer Attitudes About Pure Maple Syrup

Helen Maxon Thomas, Executive Director New York State Maple Producers' Association & Co-Owner of Maxon Estate Farms

The New York State Maple Producers' Association, in cooperation with the NYS Department of Ag & Markets, has been conducting an ACER research project. The goal is to survey US consumer attitudes and knowledge about pure maple syrup; to test marketing strategies that can effectively reach those consumers to change their buying habit towards pure maple, and to deliver tested marketing tools that industry stakeholders in the US can begin using. The project is about 2/3 complete. This presentation will cover what the surveys of US customers have revealed, and the marketing messages that appear to be the most effective.

Maintenance of the Tubing System to Maintain Vacuum

Joël Boutin, Maple Consultant and Teacher at the CFA of St-Anselme, QC

This presentation will cover the essential elements to keep a tubing system performing year after year including leak checking, replacement strategies and more.

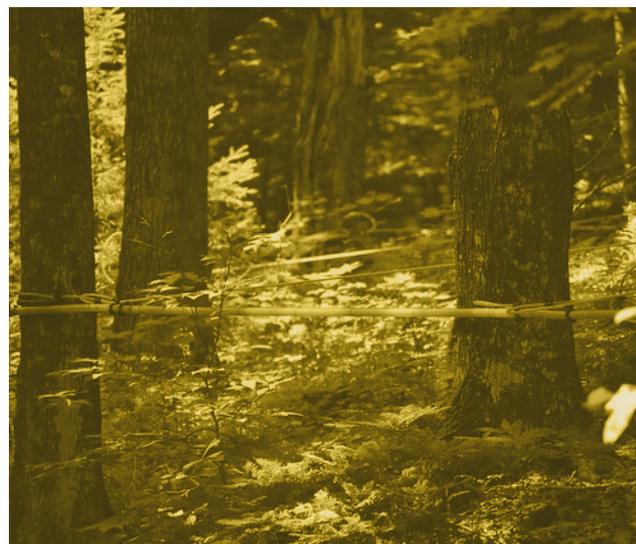
Maple Candy Conversation & Demo

Every year, we get requests from participants for hands on learning and opportunities for Q&A on maple confections. What is the gold standard for making maple candy, what should you expect for shelf life, are there tips and tricks to take your candy-making to the next level? Join us for a demo and conversation among peers of maple candy making.

Maple Health and Practical Sugarbush Management

Dr. Ali Kosiba, University of Vermont Extension Forester

What is the state of maple health in Vermont? How do you regenerate maples? When is it the right decision to cut a maple in your sugarbush? This presentation will provide an general update on the threats to maple health statewide and give practical recommendations for sugar makers looking to encourage tree growth and foster the next generation of crop trees.



Maple Inspection Highlights from 2022 and State Hydrometer Testing Program

Tucker Diego, Agricultural Products Manager, Consumer Protection Section, VAAFM
 Marc Paquette, Weights & Measures Section Chief & Metrologist, VAAFM

Tucker Diego shares highlights from this year's maple product retail inspections, reviews common issues, and answers your burning questions about maple regulations. Marc Paquette will briefly share updates on the sap and syrup hydrometer testing program at the VAAFM State Metrology Lab.

Organization and Planning of the Tubing System

Joël Boutin, Maple Consultant and Teacher at the CFA of St-Anselme, QC

This presentation will cover the key elements to setting up a high-quality tubing system from layout and installation.

Proctor Maple Research Update

Dr. Tim Perkins, Director, University of Vermont Proctor Maple Research Center

Dr. Perkins will share results and progress from various research projects on maximizing yields and sustainability at the UVM Proctor Maple Research Center.

Sugarhouse Certification: Get Your Documents Ready

Jason Gagne & Arnie Piper, VMSMA Board Members & Education Committee Members

Join us in this “hands on” session to get rolling with Certification documentation! Perhaps you have a perfectly neat binder with all your SOPs, safety data sheets, sugarbush maps, and logs ready for Certification. But what if you don't? Getting started might feel overwhelming. We're here to make it easier and we have sample written documentation for almost everything! We'll have printed copies of the Sugarhouse Certification Checklist and all associated templates to get you started. Bring your existing documentation (or just what's in your head) and we'll have experienced sugar makers on hand to help get you ready to add new items, update current items or start from scratch!

		Room 1	Room 2	Room 3
Judd Hall	8:00am-4:15pm	Tradeshow		
	9:00-9:30am	Welcome: Mark Isselhardt, UVM Extension and Allison Hope, VMSMA		
	9:30-10:30am	Industry Panel Discussion (Moderated by Mark Isselhardt)		
	10:30-11:15am	Guest Speaker: Joël Boutin (Maple Consultant and Teacher at the CFA of St-Anselme, QC)		
	11:45am-12:30pm	Lunch		
I	12:45-1:45pm	Proctor Maple Research Center Update	Sugarhouse Certification: Get Your Documents Ready	Maple Health & Practical Sugarbush Management
II	2:00-3:00pm	Consumer Attitudes About Pure Maple Syrup	Organization and Planning of Tubing	Maintenance of Tubing
III	3:15-4:15pm	Maple Inspection Highlights & Hydrometer Testing	Maintenance of Tubing	Maple Candy Conversation & Demo
Tour	3:15-4:15pm	Tour of State Metrology Lab on VTC Campus		



Vermont Maple Sugar
Makers' Association
PO Box 854
Richford VT 05476



2022 VERMONT MAPLE CONFERENCE WEEK



UVM Extension helps individuals and communities put research-based knowledge to work. Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, as of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the United States Department of Agriculture. University of Vermont Extension, Burlington, Vermont University of Vermont Extension, and U.S. Department of Agriculture, cooperating, offer education and employment to everyone without regard to race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, and marital or familial status. Individuals requesting a disability-related accommodation to participate in this program should contact Heather Winner at 802-917-2032 by November 30, 2022.