



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Vermont Maple Conferences Go Virtual
Annual Maple Conference Spans a Full Week Online

WESTFORD, VT, November 12, 2020 –

The 2020 Vermont Maple Conference Week, December 6-11, will feature sixteen free informative online sessions led by maple industry experts and maple producers.

University of Vermont Extension and the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association (VMSMA) will host the virtual conference, which is free to attend. Daily sessions will be of interest not only to sugar makers but also to foresters who work with maple producers and forest landowners looking to lease to a producer.

To register, go to www.vermontmaple.org/maple-conferences. Attendees must register for each session they wish to attend. Registration for each session closes 24 hours before its scheduled start time. To request a disability-related accommodation to participate, contact Cory Ayotte at (802) 786-9437 by November 20, 2020.

The conference kicks off on Dec. 6 at 5 p.m. with a panel of industry experts moderated by University of Vermont Extension Maple Specialist, Mark Isselhardt. Research Associate Professor Abby van den Berg of the University of Vermont, Proctor Maple Research Center, Jean Lamontagne, Executive Director of International Maple Syrup Institute and Ed Fox, CEO of Butternut Mountain Farm will discuss current and emerging issues in the maple industry. Three interactive hour-long sessions will be offered daily from Dec. 7-11 at 9 a.m., noon and 5 p.m. These will focus on maple business management, maple industry regulations, sugarbush health, marketing and media and maple production and innovation.

All sessions will be recorded for future viewing. Topics include:



- Dec. 7: early tapping and tapping longevity strategies research, Vermont maple regulations and common issues found during product inspections, thinning the sugarbush for sap and tree health
- Dec. 8: designing and installing a maple tubing system, forestry and sugarbush management, online advertising tools
- Dec. 9: the Vermont sugarhouse certification program, adapting to change during the pandemic, Proctor Maple Research Center update
- Dec. 10: keys to high yield, sugarbush water quality and acceptable management practices, leasing taps to enhance viability
- Dec. 11: using photography and social media for marketing, maple tele-medicine, syrup production techniques to influence flavor

For the maple tele-medicine session on December 11th, participants may submit a 2 oz. sample of their off-flavor syrup for a panel of experts to taste and diagnose. To ensure anonymity, each sample will receive a code number, known only to the individual submitting the sample. Sugar makers should send their sample, along with their name and contact information, to VMSMA, P.O. Box 83, Westford, VT 05494 by Nov. 23.

Questions about the conference? Contact Cory Ayotte at cory@vermontmaple.org or (802) 786-9437 or Allison Hope at allison@vermontmaple.org or (802) 777-2667.

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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 annually (about one half of the production in the United States). More information at www.VermontMaple.org.