



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Federal Funding to Benefit Vermont's Maple Producers

VMSMA Receives \$637k Federal Appropriation to Support Certification Program

WESTFORD, VT – The Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association is proud to announce that they have secured \$637,000 in federal funding to support their [Sugarhouse Certification Program](#).

The Vermont maple industry is a vital economic engine that circulates hundreds of millions of dollars locally and promotes tourism on a broad scale. Last summer, the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers' Association launched its Sugarhouse Certification Program to invest in technical education and expertise for Vermont's maple producers. Creation of the Program was also supported by a Specialty Crop Block Grant through Vermont's Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets. This new Program collaborates with Vermont's maple producers to ensure that the entire industry continues to make consistently high-quality products that comply with state and federal food safety regulations.

Vermont's Senator Leahy announced the return of congressionally-directed spending items last spring. At that time, VMSMA applied for federal funding to enable its Sugarhouse Certification Program to become self-sustaining and benefit small and large sugar makers statewide. We are pleased to announce that the [Federal FY22 Omnibus Appropriations Bill](#) included the requested funding.

VMSMA is extremely grateful to Senator Leahy and his staff, and Vermont's entire Congressional delegation, who worked on a tight timeline last year to ensure they understood our project and had the information they needed to help Senator Leahy prioritize hundreds of funding requests. As Senator Leahy notes, "The complexity of maple sugar making has increased considerably in recent years, with Vermonters always leading the way toward higher yields and improved energy efficiency. I am pleased to direct funding to this program that will provide necessary technical and financial assistance to help all Vermont sugar makers keep up with the highest industry standards for food safety and product quality, and to continuously improve their practices and knowledge."

This federal funding will ensure a path to success and sustainability for VMSMA's Sugarhouse Certification Program. Federal funding will make a tangible, long-term contribution to how the Certification Program most directly benefits Vermont's maple producers. Among other benefits, this funding will allow for the creation of a matching grant program for maple producers to upgrade equipment based on the results of onsite Certification work. Vermont's maple producers provide immense value to our working landscape and our economy. This federal funding will help ensure the long-term viability of Vermont being the nation's leader in the production of high-quality pure maple syrup.

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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.