

The official voice of Vermont sugar makers

# VERMONT *Maple* SUGAR MAKERS' ASSOCIATION

Committed to the promotion and protection of the branding of Vermont maple products since 1893.

Certification  
Program Update

Page 2

County Highlight:  
Bennington

Page 5

Meet a  
Sugarmaker

Page 6

Invasive Species  
in the Sugarbush

Page 9

## 2020 SUGARING SEASON WRAP-UP

BY MARK ISSELHARDT, MAPLE SPECIALIST, UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT EXTENSION

Reports of above average syrup production have been common across Vermont in 2020 although isolated reports of below average production have been received. Producers who failed to meet their expected season long total were not widespread and may be related to local weather conditions, timing of tapping or equipment issues. Sugar makers from around Vermont contributed weekly production information as part of the Vermont Maple Bulletin.

The lowest 2020 crop was 84% of the expected total and the highest was 149%. In general, March was slightly above average for temperature and April was below average. Depending on a given operations location, aspect, tapping schedule and collection process these departures from the average could have a large or relatively small impact on total yield. At the University of Vermont, Proctor Maple Research Center, sap sweetness over the past 15 years has been just over 2% (2.04 Brix to be precise). The sap collected in 2020 was approximately 12% below average (1.81 Brix). Coming on the heels of 2019 where sap sweetness was about 5% above the long term average (2.14 Brix) made the differences more obvious.

Respondents to the Vermont Maple Bulletin were split on how the 2020 sap compares to long-term averages. 60% reported "Average or Above Average" and 40% reported "Below Average or "Significantly Below Average". No producer reported sap being "Significantly Above Average" in terms of sap sweetness. Producers who reported below average sap sweetness and those that saw average sweetness reported good syrup production. Likely contributing to this was above average temperatures in March that allowed for good sap runs. A significant run was reported across the state during the last week of March. In general, cool weather of April 2020 benefited operations with sugarbushes at higher elevations that hadn't experienced quite the high temperatures in March that lower sugarbushes did. Production followed a fairly common progression with the last operations to end

the season being in Essex county and similar colder locations. At least one operation was boiling as late as April 28th.

Syrup quality appears to have been very good in 2020. There have been some reports of typical late season "mother-nature" off-flavors such as Buddy and Sour but these reports are far from universal. Many producers ended the season due to lack of sufficient sap flow, running out of wood or another self-imposed limit. The official USDA NASS production totals will be published in early June. Until then, more details about how the 2020 maple season went can be found at [www.vermontmaplebulletin.wordpress.com](http://www.vermontmaplebulletin.wordpress.com).



# SUGARHOUSE CERTIFICATION PROGRAM UPDATE

BY DAVID TREMBLAY, VMSMA QUALITY DIRECTOR

Since I joined the Association in January, I've been making steady progress on updating and finalizing VMSMA's Sugarhouse Certification Program with the assistance of Board members and sugar makers around the state.

## SUGARHOUSE VISITS AND INSPECTIONS

I have visited four sugarhouses in order to test and inform the certification checklist and operational manual. The operational manual has gone through several iterations – the latest contains ten sugar making inspection areas; five policy templates; ten standard operating procedures; and twelve lists, logs and records. Input from sugar makers and sugarhouse visits have been very helpful. The flow, practicality, and thoroughness of the manual remains the final challenge.

This winter and spring, I received two calls from sugar makers who needed market access inspections. Both had passed inspections from the previous checklist. With the use of a recent draft of our checklist, several food safety issues were revealed that would not meet current FDA law. While both sugarhouses would have passed using the previous point system, these critical food safety issues needed to be addressed to meet the new standard. Additionally, written policies were needed to document adherence to food safety practices and worker training. Also, necessary to meet the FDA law were standard operating procedures to explain how the raw sap was handled and processed. These were all straightforward practices that the sugar makers were already following; however, the task of writing them all down in an organized manner can sometimes appear daunting.



## CERTIFICATION CHECKLIST AND OPERATIONAL MANUAL

In May, I met (over Zoom) with the Education & Research Committee to review all areas of the checklist and gather input. I'll work on updating that information and getting another draft back to the committee in time for our next meeting in June. I'm working with committee members and others to gather SOPs and additional items to create sample policies and procedures for the manual.

I completed a two-day online class on current good management practices (cGMP) from Paster Training. Once we have the cGMP in place, we can tackle HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point). Note that any sugar maker who is creating any food besides maple syrup, maple cream, or maple sugar, must have a Preventative Controls Qualified Individual (PCQI) and a complete food safety plan.

## PROCESS AND TIMELINE

The checklist section of the operational manual will continue to be reviewed by multiple people to identify gaps and recommend changes to the flow, if needed. Sugar makers should share their current practices to bolster the information in the policy and SOP manual. If you have written practices to share, please send me a note at [david@vermontmaple.org](mailto:david@vermontmaple.org).

It is apparent the flow chart currently in use to determine FDA facility registration needs to be combined with a flow chart that determines a sugar maker's sugaring Low Risk Activity FDA exemption. There are different qualifications for each and even more differences if the farm also sells produce or dairy. Those without this exemption must follow HACCP. I will spend a few more weeks collating and editing this material. Before release of the final copy, I would like to have the manual peer reviewed by a process authority approved by the Association of Food and Drug Officials.

# GOVERNOR'S TREE TAPPING EVENT

BY CORY AYOTTE, VMSMA COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

On March 9th, the Annual Governor's Tree Tapping Ceremony was held at Gagne Maple in Highgate Springs, with folks handing out maple cream frosted donuts and commemorative bottles of maple syrup at the door. This annual event was held right as "social distancing" was coming into play. Any later in the month and we would have had to get a bit more creative with this annual tradition! A number of State Representatives and local news crews were on hand to capture the ceremony and a busload of school kids pulled up just as we headed to the woods. Under brilliant sunny skies and surprisingly warm temperatures, the steam was billowing out of the sugarhouse. Governor Phil Scott, Secretary Anson Tebbetts and Secretary Lindsay Kurrle, along with Vermont's Maple Ambassadors Austin Turco and Meriah Disorda and kindergarten students from Highgate Elementary School, tapped a large maple tree with a golden tap that Jason Gagne made during his college years. Many thanks to the Gagne family for hosting the traditional tree tapping this year!



Vermont Maple Ambassadors Austin Turco and Meriah Disorda with the Gagne Family.





# REFLECTION OF OUR CURRENT CLIMATE

BY EMMA MARVIN, VMSMA CHAIR

Resilience and adaptation, two words I've been thinking a lot about. I'm used to talking and thinking about them in the context of ecosystems. What makes a forest resilient after a storm event? How do flora and fauna adapt to their environments? Now though, I'm thinking about these words in the context of the world in which we live. How can we be resilient? How can we adapt?

Uncertainty asks us to take a prudent path. Yet, choosing which path is prudent is difficult. There are so many unknowns. So, instead I focus on systems. What systems can I put in place, or do I have in place, that will be more resilient? What can I choose to do that allows a greater likelihood of withstanding the variety of pressures that may come from the unpredictability?

Over the course of the last ten weeks we've all demonstrated resilience and adaptability. We've looked for ways to make our families, our businesses, and our communities safer. We've adjusted what we do and how we do it. For many of us we found comfort in the familiar habits of our sugarhouses and the sugarwoods. For that and the good season mother nature provided in 2020, we are grateful.

As you look ahead... know that VMSMA, Allison, Cory, David and the Board are working hard – and know that we're here to offer support to you as look to adapt.

**NEW DATE**

**2020 VMSMA  
ANNUAL  
MEETING**

**JULY 22, 6 PM - 8 PM**



**Please mark your calendar for July 22 for this year's VMSMA Annual Meeting. This year's meeting will be held virtually via Zoom. We will send out an agenda and link to the meeting in the coming weeks.**

## COUNTY HIGHLIGHTS

# BENNINGTON COUNTY: DAVE MANCE

**Each newsletter, we're highlighting one of Vermont's County Associations to connect sugar makers around the state. For our first highlight, we're starting with Bennington County and Dave Mance has shared some highlights with us.**

Bennington County sugar makers embrace the traditions of our industry while remaining committed to technological advancement. If you could stereotype our members, they would fall primarily in the category of "sugaring as a secondary source of income and primary source of enjoyment". While Crown Maple runs a 130k+ tap sap and concentration operation in Sandgate, the scale of other operations range from a few hundred taps, to several in the 10-15k tap range. About a third are in the 1,000 to 4,000 tap category. Rupert and Sandgate represent the largest maple towns, but our members are distributed among all of Bennington County's seventeen towns.

Many operations are now in their second and third generation and the vast majority market their products retail and wholesale, using bulk sales as a means of moving unsold syrup. The limestone bedrock found in the Taconic Range provides sweet soil and good tasting syrup, ensuring a ready market for bulk syrup.

Bennington County organized and ran the first two Maple Open House Weekends – calling it "Maple Sunday" until VMSMA picked up on the idea and developed it into a state-wide event. We continue to support local promotion and marketing, maintaining an unfortunately underutilized



*Dave Mance's Sugarhouse*



*Shaftsbury, VT Circa 1947. Pictured Norman Rockwell and Colonel Henry Fairfax Ayres (sugarhouse owner and inventor of the hydrotherm).*

web presence and sharing events over members' Facebook pages. Our members donated and distributed 23 gallons of syrup for the recent Maple Gratitude program, supplying Bennington's Southwest VT Medical Center and Vermont Veterans' Home as well as Brattleboro Memorial Hospital.

While not the largest County in terms of membership (around 36 at last count), we share information and hospitality with our neighbors across the line in New York and Massachusetts. We also share the common bond of sugaring. This past weekend I was checking stock on one of my customers shelves and started chatting with a father and son who were selecting syrup to buy. After selecting a half gallon of our syrup, I commented that "you're going to enjoy that – I made it". They responded; "Oh, so this other is your competitor's syrup?" and I had to pause. "Yes", I replied, "I suppose he is, but he's also a nice guy and friend." I've rarely thought of our fellow sugarmakers as competitors - mostly we're a group that share a passion for making a great product and carrying on a rich tradition.

## MEET A SUGAR MAKER

As part of a new series highlighting our Members, we're starting short interviews with Vermont's sugar makers, large and small, near and far. In April, Cory interviewed Meriah Disorda, Vermont Maple Ambassador from Rocky Ridge Sugarworks in Benson, Vermont.

**CORY AYOTTE, VMSMA COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR: TELL ME ABOUT YOUR OVERALL EXPERIENCE BEING VERMONT'S MAPLE AMBASSADOR.**

Meriah: This experience has been amazing. I've met a lot of awesome people. It's been wonderful being able to share my passion for maple with others. This opportunity has given me a lot of insight into the industry, especially larger scale operations since my family's business (Rocky Ridge Sugarworks) is on the smaller side of the scale. I'm excited to see how the industry continues to grow.

**C: HOW DID YOUR SEASON GO THIS YEAR?**

M: We had our best season yet. We made 757 gallons on 1,500 taps, averaging over five pounds per tap. Now that the world stands still because of COVID-19, we're sitting on a little bit of syrup. This season, I got to be in the sugar house for most of the season. Which was nice because I missed the last three seasons because of college. During those years, I'd only come home for Maple Open House Weekend.

**C: I UNDERSTAND YOU HAD A PRETTY NEAT CONTEST IDEA FOR MAPLE OPEN HOUSE WEEKEND BEFORE IT WAS CANCELED. CAN YOU ELABORATE ON YOUR IDEA?**

M: My idea was to host a poker run style contest. Instead of poker, we were going to use business cards. I recruited four other sugar houses in the area to participate. The sugar houses are located in Addison and Rutland Counties. Over the course of Maple Open House Weekend, guests would need to grab a business card from each sugar house. When they got five business cards, they were put into a drawing for gift baskets with maple and other local products. I'm extremely bummed we weren't able to try it out this year, but we certainly will next year.



Maple Ambassador Meriah with Gov. Phil Scott

**C: WHAT WAS YOUR ROLE IN YOUR FAMILY'S OPERATION THIS SEASON?**

M: I helped boil a lot. This season we boiled a lot more than normal. In years past we held onto sap a little bit before boiling, but this year we were boiling just about every night. On top of this, I was in charge of finding leaks in the new section of our sugarbush.

**C: YOU'RE CURRENTLY ENROLLED AT THE MASSACHUSETTS HEALTH SCIENCES UNIVERSITY. WHAT YEAR ARE YOU? AND WHAT IS YOUR MAJOR?**

M: I'm currently a senior and my major is Molecular Biology.

**C: WHERE HAS YOUR ROLE AS MAPLE AMBASSADOR TAKEN YOU THROUGHOUT THE STATE?**

M: I've gone to a lot of places including the Governor's Tree Tapping Ceremony, the Addison County Maple School, Maplerama, the New York State Sugar School, the Big E, Addison County Farm and Field Days, the Champlain Valley Fair, and the Vermont State Fair.

**C: WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF SUGAR MAKING?**

M: That's a tough question. I think my favorite part is being in the sugar house during the season. The social aspect of the sugar house is simply wonderful. This year with COVID-19, it was nice having the opportunity to spend so much time with family from the start of the season to the end.



# FALL MAPLE CELEBRATION

BY ALLISON HOPE, VMSMA EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Now is the time to share your input on our upcoming (and still in the final stages of planning) Fall Maple Celebration. We're working in partnership with the Agency of Agriculture, other maple producing states and other Vermont partners and the celebration is tentatively scheduled for Friday, October 9 through Sunday, October 18.

We envision that in this first year, we may follow some of the same ideas as our spring Maple Open House Weekend - sugar makers and partners around the state will register for the event and receive road signs, grading postcards and recipes. In addition, the Association will work with our partners to market the fall celebration both in-state and out-of-state (pending how Vermont and the region is responding to the pandemic at that time). The chosen time frame purposely spans two weekends, so registrants can choose to hold events on one or both weekends and during the week, as it works best for them.

As we prepare for this first year of the fall celebration, we'd like to know what ideas you have for participation. Are you interested in participating (within the pandemic guidelines in place at the time, of course)? What sorts of activities do you have in mind? Will you be open one weekend or both (or the entire time)? Please take our quick survey and give us some information to help shape this event or send an email to Allison (allison@vermontmaple.org) or Cory (cory@vermontmaple.org) with your thoughts and feedback! Thank you!

**SURVEY LINK:** <https://members.vermontmaple.org/Sys/Poll/14904>

PLEASE COMPLETE THE SURVEY BY JUNE 30TH



## YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Executive Committee

Chair - Emma Marvin  
 Vice Chair - Arnie Piper  
 Secretary - Dave Mance  
 Treasurer - Mark Bigelow  
 At Large - Jason Gagne

### Staff

Executive Director,  
 Allison Hope  
 Communications Director,  
 Cory Ayotte  
 Quality Director,  
 David Tremblay

### County Directors

Addison | David Folino  
 Bennington | Dave Mance  
 Caledonia | Jason McFarland  
 Chittenden | Paul Palmer  
 Franklin | Jason Gagne  
 Lamoille | Arnie Piper  
 Orange | Roger Palmer  
 Orleans | Donna Young  
 Rutland | Jenna Baird  
 Washington | James Buck  
 Windham |  
 Windsor | Reid Richardson

### Industry Directors

Arnold Coombs | Coombs Family Farms, Brattleboro, VT

Sam Cutting IV | Dakin Farm, Ferrisburgh, VT

Mark Bigelow | Maple Grove Farms of VT, St. Johnsbury, VT

Emma Marvin | Butternut Mt. Farms, Morrisville, VT

Peter Purinton | Huntington, VT

Kerry Sedutto | The Sugarman, Hardwick, VT



# VMSMA SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE

BY CORY AYOTTE, VMSMA COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

As many began sheltering at home during the beginning of the pandemic in March, VMSMA quickly updated its usual social media posts (Facebook and Instagram) to better engage our large audiences and keep Vermont maple in their thoughts (and purchasing decisions). To this end, we began running two popular contests, Maple Trivia Tuesdays and Sap is Flowing Fridays.

Tuesday's contest tests our followers' knowledge of Vermont trivia. Winners are gifted items from VMSMA's online store or maple products that have been donated from members. Friday's contests are a bit more involved. We've asked fans to create a maple haiku, share their favorite maple recipe, and share a memorable moment from a sugar house visit. Winners have received a "Vermont Resiliency Care Package", which includes a quart of Vermont maple syrup, maple candies, maple cream and a Vermont maple cookbook. All contests have received tremendous engagement!

In March, we also ran two paid advertisements to reach both Vermont residents and out of state folks who identify as "foodies". The messaging in both advertisements was that Vermont sugar makers were selling their products online as well as through curbside pickup or local delivery.

VMSMA has also created a new member benefit by offering to assist sugar makers build a more robust presence for their businesses through social media advertising. I have been working directly with Vermont sugar makers to assist them with updating and enhancing their social media presence, so feel free to reach out to me for assistance!

In recent weeks, VMSMA's Facebook page has shared numerous maple recipes with the hopes that consumers will incorporate maple in their quarantine baking. We'll be updating the website to add new recipes throughout the spring and summer, as well.

VMSMA is planning to continue to have a strong online presence in the coming months in order to engage maple lovers from all parts of the country. If you have social media ideas to share, please reach out to [cory@vermontmaple.org](mailto:cory@vermontmaple.org).

 /vermont.maple

 /maplesyrupvermont

 **Vermont Maple Syrup**  
Published by Cory Ayotte [?] · May 1 at 1:46 PM · 🌐

Sap is Flowing Fridays

We're giving away a Vermont Maple Resiliency Care Package, containing a quart of Vermont maple syrup, maple candies and maple cream.

For a chance to win, you need to reply to this post with your favorite memory from visiting a Vermont sugar house. We will pick a winner on May 8.



 **Vermont Maple Syrup**  
Published by Cory Ayotte [?] · May 19 at 9:55 AM · 🌐

Maple Trivia Tuesdays

Every week we're asking questions about Vermont maple. Those who correctly answer the question by Thursday at noon will win a prize. If there are multiple people with the correct answer, all names will be thrown into a hat and the winner will be chosen at random. This week's prize is Mint Infused Maple Syrup from Baird Farm - Maple Syrup. Here's this week's question. Good luck!

In 2017, how many trees were tapped in Vermont?



# INVASIVE PLANTS IN THE SUGARBUSH

BY EMILY POTTER, NRCS FORESTER

The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service's (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) provides cost-share funding to private landowners in Vermont for various conservation practices that address natural resource concerns such as infestations of non-native invasive plants. For forest landowners, the most important prerequisite for qualifying for this funding source is having a current forest management plan in place. Cost-share funding for invasive plant control is based on the extent and degree of infestation of invasive plants. Sites may range from light infestations with small scattered plants that are easily controlled to large established populations that can be difficult to control. The payment rate for each of these scenarios varies, with a higher payment rate for infestations that are difficult to control. Current payment rates range from approximately \$50 per acre for a light infestation that will be manually controlled (through hand pulling, mowing, etc.), to approximately \$600 per acre for difficult infestations and chemical control using herbicides.

Once a landowner has applied at their local USDA Service Center (located throughout the state) they will work with an NRCS Soil Conservationist and partner biologists with Vermont Fish and Wildlife Department to assess and map

the infestation. The Soil Conservationist will then rank the application so NRCS can compare projects with others throughout the state to select those applications that will have the greatest positive environmental impact. Once an application has been selected for cost-share funding, the landowner is awarded a contract with NRCS to complete the work. If herbicides will be used to control the invasive plants, NRCS requires that the work be completed by a certified pesticide applicator. The Vermont Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets (VAAF) administers the Pesticide Applicator Program in Vermont. For NRCS contracts, landowners usually hire a commercial pesticide applicator (there are numerous around the state) but in some cases may choose to become certified themselves through VAAF training programs. Typically, herbicide treatments have a much higher success rate at controlling invasive plants and tend to be much less labor-intensive in comparison to manual control practices that require years of follow-up and monitoring to achieve the same results. Go to <https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/vt/contact/local/> to locate your local USDA Service Center and begin the process of submitting an application to control invasive plants on your land. For more information on control treatments for specific species, see [www.vtinvasives.org](http://www.vtinvasives.org).



## LAMOILLE COUNTY SUGAR MAKERS ASSOCIATION HOSTS CLINIC ON ELIMINATING INVASIVE PLANTS

BY ARNIE PIPER, VMSMA VICE CHAIR

Last fall on a beautiful late September afternoon the Lamoille County Maple Sugar Makers Association (LCMSMA) hosted a clinic that focused on how to eliminate invasive plants. With the assistance of Rick Dyer, Lamoille County Forester and Emily Potter, NRCS Forester a half-dozen sugarmakers, consulting foresters, and landowners were given some excellent hands-on instruction regarding how to effectively tackle non-native honeysuckle.

The group looked like they meant business, armed with loppers, a 20-gallon propane tank with flame gun, rakes and hoes, they went through introductions and walked to an old overgrown meadow that had many large non-native honeysuckle plants. The landowner worked unsuccessfully for several years trying to rid the invasive plants. He'd hacked at them with brush saws, chainsaws and loppers with not much to show except thicker pockets of the frustrating plants. Rick and Emily started out by showing the group how to identify non-native honeysuckle. There are four types of non-native honeysuckle in Vermont and they all have a hollow pith that is easily broken. They also explained why it is important to eliminate honeysuckle growing on your property.

When songbirds build nests in non-native honeysuckle they suffer a higher predation rate than when their nests are built in native shrubs. Because honeysuckle stems are sturdier and closer to the ground — raccoons, skunks and other predators can easily scramble up the stems.

Forest regeneration is severely impacted by honeysuckle infestations. The shrubs form dense colonies in the understory, outcompeting native shrubs and trees. Sunlight can no longer reach the forest floor, reducing the diversity and abundance of native wildflower and fern populations.

Birds eat the fruit of the plants due to its attractive red/orange color but get no nutritional value from the berries.

Studies show larger population of ticks that carry Lyme Disease in areas with heavy infestation of Japanese Barberry because these shrubs become homes for white-footed mice which is a favorite host for the ticks. Although no such study exists regarding honeysuckle it makes sense the same type of issue may exist.

Rick and Emily got right to work demonstrating the different methods of killing honeysuckle. There are basically two methods to destroy honeysuckle – chemical and mechanical. We'll explain the variants of each method we used. The first honeysuckle plant we visited was dead. Rick visited the site the week prior to the clinic and sprayed a large plant with a solution of triclopyr with a backpack sprayer. Foliar spray is a very effective method but should only be used by someone who has the proper sprayer, is educated in how to best use it and has the proper personal protective equipment. It also has the unintended drawback of killing adjacent plants if not properly applied. The next method used was the cut-stump method. Participants lopped the tops off the honeysuckle plants leaving a four to six-inch stump. Almost immediately, Emily and Rick painted the stumps with a solution of triclopyr and a dye using a bingo dobber. There was no run-off of chemical that would potentially kill other plants in the area with all the chemical being absorbed by the stem. This method is best done in late summer through fall when plants are transporting resources to their root systems. If done properly this is almost 100% effective and is the least likely chemical method to have an adverse impact on the environment.

The group then watched the landowner demonstrate how to kill a large honeysuckle plant by burning the stems. The tops of the plant were lopped off leaving about six inches of stem to burn. To be effective, the cambium layer must be burned through destroying the plant. Although this method is very satisfying it isn't the most effective method. Experience

shows most plants have to be re-visited and burned two or three years in a row in order to be effective. This method is best used where chemical agents aren't allowed such as near tapped trees in an organically certified sugarbush. Rick and Emily then demonstrated a couple of other mechanical methods of killing honeysuckle. Pulling works well if the plant is small and the soil is loose enough to get all of its extensive root system. Pulled plants should be hung up so the roots dry out and kill the plant. We were also shown an experimental method of killing honeysuckle, pollarding. Pollarding is the cutting of the branches with loppers. This method requires annual pruning in order to kill it and will likely take three to four years to completely kill the plant. The advantage to this method is it takes very little equipment and is relatively easy to do.

Since many of the attendees have certified organic sugaring operations, the Vermont Organic Farmers (VOF) stance on the use of chemicals in "certified" sugarbushes became an issue. Contrary to what many believe, VOF does allow you to use chemicals to control invasive plants under certain restrictions. According to Gregg Stevens from VOF:

"If their invasive plant issue is in a stand (as defined by their Forest Management Plan and shown on the map with the plan) that has no tapped trees, then they can apply herbicides that would not be allowed in organic production as they see fit. If they happen to be treating an invasive that is right next to an "organic" stand, they should not tap any trees within 15 feet if the invasive is treated with a paint-on stump application or 30-50 feet if using a backpack sprayer (30 feet if there is a dense hedgerow between the treated plant and the nearest tapped tree and 50 feet if there isn't). Buffers need to be maintained for three years after application. If they have problem invasives within their organic sugarbush that can't be managed by mechanical means only, they can submit a proposal to the VOF Review Committee. This would include

a description of their plan, a description of the techniques they have tried so far and why they aren't working, materials to be used, method of application, and a map showing treatment locations and proposed buffer distances. The Review Committee either approves of the plan or asks for more info, etc. No one wants "organic sugarbushes" to become nurseries for invasives, so as long as the proposal is reasonable, the RC is willing to work with producers."

The clinic was a success. Emily gave us some handouts and explained the NRCS EQUIP program and how they can help landowners eliminate invasive plants on their property. (See the adjoining article on USDA NRCS EQUIP). By the end of the day, the landowner had 30-40 less honeysuckle plants on his property and everyone in the group was able to identify and destroy non-native honeysuckle using a variety of methods.

For more information on how to control non-native honeysuckle or other invasive plants on your property contact your county forester, local USDA representative, or go to the [VTInvasives.org](http://VTInvasives.org) website.





Vermont Maple Sugar  
Makers' Association  
PO Box 83  
Westford, VT 05494

## WE'RE LOOKING FOR MAPLE RECIPES!

VMSMA would like to start sharing maple recipes from members in future printed newsletters, on social media, and online. If you have a recipe you'd like to share, please send them along with photos to [cory@vermontmaple.org](mailto:cory@vermontmaple.org)

Here is the winning recipe from March 20th Sap is Flowing Fridays Contest.



### MAPLE BROWN SUGAR COFFEE CAKE

- ½ cup oil
- ½ cup yogurt
- 2 eggs beaten
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 cup milk
- 1 apple
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 cups flour
- 3 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- ½ stick margarine/butter melted
- ½ cup Vermont Maple Syrup

Combine oil, yogurt, eggs, vanilla and milk in a mixing bowl.

In a separate bowl stir sugar, flour, baking powder and salt. Combine the ingredients of both bowls.

Pour 1/2 of the batter in a greased 9x13 baking dish. Cut 1/2 of the apple and spread on the half of the batter that is in dish. Drizzle half of the maple syrup over apples.

Combine brown sugar and cinnamon and spoon half of it over apples and maple syrup. Pour remaining batter in dish, repeat steps with the apples, maple syrup and brown sugar mixture. Pour melted butter over the top, and bake at 350 for 30 minutes.

[www.vermontmaple.org](http://www.vermontmaple.org)



[www.facebook.com/vermont.maple](https://www.facebook.com/vermont.maple)



[www.instagram.com/maplesyrupvermont](https://www.instagram.com/maplesyrupvermont)