

The Gathering Tank

A Newsletter of the New Hampshire Maple Producers Association, Inc.

Volume 25, Issue 2

August 2020

NHMPA Summer Meeting

Although an attempt was made to have a July summer meeting, ultimately the social distancing requirements and overall safety of our members felt like too much of a risk. Since we were not able to gather for our in-person meeting, we're sharing information through this special issue of The Gathering Tank.

Fall Maple Promotion

On behalf of the NHMPA, Nick Kosko was working with representatives from most of the maple producing states and provinces on a new coordinated fall promotion. As of the end of July, the event was moving along but holding off on a final decision until the end of August. Additionally, a website, and the possible hiring of a manager to oversee things, was being planned, so some financial support from each state organization involved was going to be expected.

For the association, a late decision date also meant difficulties in advertising, especially obtaining ad space in a high visibility election year. For sugarhouses, the COVID-19 liability insurance needed was another concern.

The association decided to hold off on the fall event for this year and instead look at promotion for the winter holidays. With some funds from Maple Month promotions still unspent, but on account, with 3 media companies, it was voted to develop ads for the holiday gift giving season which would be targeted to run the week before Thanksgiving. This would allow a tie-in with Black Friday, Small Business Saturday, Gift Giving Tuesday and Buy Local in NH.

Fairs Canceled

As you may have heard, many local fairs have canceled for this year. These include both the fairs in which the NHMPA participates, the Deerfield Fair and The Big E.

It's likely the Big E and Deerfield will run in 2021. However, the risk of COVID-19 will likely be with us for a while, at least until everyone can be vaccinated and possibly beyond.

This year, the association can take stock of the new environment that COVID-19 has brought about that may require new fair formats including changes to training, sanitizing, money handling, and more before next year.



**THE
BIG E**

Container Update

Jug orders deliveries started to arrive to some dealers in July. Deliveries will continue through August and the fall. A problem was discovered with the pricing of the gallon jugs, resulting in the Board approving a price increase of \$2 per case for gallon jugs only. The new price will be implemented as of January 1, 2021.

Financial

Revenues were pretty flat through June but the association has not reported a serious loss in the first half of the year. Discussions were held around the loss of revenue from the fairs and container sales that is used to support promotion. With fairs gone this year and container sales down, the association needs to be careful about expenditures for a while. Discussions were had on whether the NHMPA could get funds from other sources but without being a 501(c)3 non-profit, the association can't apply for federal grants or receive charitable donations. The Board agreed to look into the process for changing the association non-profit status to open up other avenues of funding.

Free Services through the New Hampshire Mediation Program

Thanks to updates in the 2018 Farm Bill, new life has been breathed into a thirty-year-old program that helps farmers resolve disputes outside of a courtroom.

Newly covered case types include, leases, family transitions, farmer-neighbor disagreements, credit counseling, organic certification, state flexibility, and conservation easements.

Mediators also provide free services for disputes involving farm credit, farm loans, crop insurance, pesticides, wetland determinations, and adverse USDA decisions.

For more information about mediation and NHAMP visit: www.nhamp.org or contact: Matt Strassberg, (603) 685-4780 ext 101, matts@emcenter.org or Cara Cargill, (603) 685-4780 ext 105, carac@emcenter.org.

UVM Extension - Maple Business and Forestry Webinar Series

University of Vermont maple specialists are hosting a series of online webinars focused on business decision making and forestry practices.

Learn about the best practices to integrate business management and sugarbush management for a thriving maple enterprise that targets profits and forest health. Topics will include: sugarbush leases and rental rates, tapping practices to optimize yield, tubing systems, tapping red maples, business entity set-up, sap-only enterprises and more.

Register at www.uvm.edu/extension/agriculture/maple/bizmodules/node/7322.

Website Updates

With the loss of revenue for this year it was decided to hold off on doing any website upgrades. Win van Mourik has volunteered to work on cleaning up the duplicate and triplicate listings in the database.

NHMPA Board of Directors

President - vacant

Vice President– Dave Kemp
david.kemp7@myfairpoint.net, 603-562-6973

Treasurer -Sue Folsom
mplsugar@icloud.com, 603-887-3672

Secretary - vacant

Advisor to the Board - Nick Kosko
mvsugarhouse@gmail.com, 603-842-0416

Bill Cheney - VLSS708@yahoo.com, 603-254-5507

Darrell Fisk - susanfisk6@gmail.com

Andrew Chisholm - afchisholm@gmail.com, 978-985-1192

Win van Mourik - win@foursapssugarshack.com

Chris Olsen - chris@syrupbythesea.com, 603-988-6174

Editor, The Gathering Tank - Brenda Noiseux

New Hampshire Agriculture Relief Program Expansion

NH Agriculture COVID-19 Relief Program is being expanded to include newly eligible, non-dairy, and farms that cannot apply through the Registered Farm Program (whether because they had less than \$50,000 of 2019 gross sales, or missed the registration deadline). The Expanded Farm Program is open to all agricultural commodities. If you have already applied under the original program you may not apply.

Some of the guidelines:

You must show a loss of income of \$1,000 or more per month OR you must have incurred \$500/mo. in COVID-19 related expenses per month. However, for any period you can have lower expenses one month and higher the next as long as the average meets these thresholds. (i.e. March \$3,500 loss, April \$700 loss, May \$200, June \$300 = \$4,700 which is an average of \$1,175 per month)

You will need to submit information for each period you can claim and you need to include your 2019 & 2020 information as a comparison. This can come from a Schedule F, QuickBooks or other reports and/or data you have to support your claim. Due to the requirement that the CARES Act funds are spent in 2020, the Department of Agriculture said they could not expand the claim periods beyond November 30.

When you are working on either your application or submitting a report, be aware the site will kick you out for inactivity after 15 minutes. Be sure to hit the SAVE button frequently so you don't lose your data.

⇒ To apply :https://nhpublichealth.force.com/nhgoferr/PROPOSAL_CORE_Listing_Page

⇒ For more information: www.goferr.nh.gov/covid-expenditures/nh-agriculture-grants

Questions? Contact Gail McWilliam Jellie, Director, Division of Agricultural Development, at (603) 271-3551.

IMPORTANT DATES

Applicants can submit up to 3 applications for COVID-19-related expenses and/or lost sales incurred during:

- March 1, 2020 to June 30, 2020 (application deadline August 30, 2020)
- July 1, 2020 to September 30, 2020 (application deadline October 15, 2020)
- October 1, 2020 to November 30, 2020 (application deadline December 10, 2020)

Maple Sap Added to Coronavirus Food Assistance Program

The USDA has announced maple sap (for maple syrup) has been added as an eligible commodity for the Coronavirus Assistance Program. Additionally, the application deadline has been extended to September 11, 2020. The Coronavirus Food Assistance Program provides direct relief to producers who faced price declines and additional marketing costs due to COVID-19.

Producers, especially those who have not worked with FSA previously, are recommended to call 877-508-8364 to begin the application process.

Application forms, payment calculators, and other resources are available at www.farmers.gov/cfap.

IMSI Outreach Programs

Dave Kemp had a Zoom meeting with Jean Lamontagne, Director of IMSI, and Pam Green, President of IMSI, about how the IMSI can help local associations, and especially smaller producers.

Concerns included the new FDA mandates for sugar houses. One requirement they think FDA may be proposing is that sugarhouses have a floor that can be swept; stone or dirt floors would not likely fit this condition.

An idea to create a voluntary certification program ahead of the FDA mandates was discussed. Another possibility is a mentor program for which the IMSI would write the syllabus. Beginning sugar makers could possibly receive the most benefit.



Lawrence A Carlisle Memorial Trophy The Best NH Maple Syrup of the Year Award Rules Change for 2020 Only

Rule Changes Approved NHMPA Board of Directors – Aug. 08, 2020

This Award is presented annually by the NH Maple Producers Association for excellence in production of maple syrup. Any NHMPA member can enter and participation from novice to advanced sugarmakers is encouraged.

Commonly referred to the Carlisle Award, the award is named for Lawrence A. Carlisle, a commissioner of agriculture in the 1920s and 1930s, devoted to the development of the maple industry in New Hampshire and best know for introducing the maple grading system.

Qualified Entries

- To enter, a NHMPA member must deliver their syrup to participating NHMPA Container Dealers: Bascom's in Alstead, Fuller's in Lancaster, Somero's in New Ipswich, Sunnyside's in Loudon and Tomapo Farm in Lebanon and Bens Sugar Shack in Temple. Please call the dealer ahead of time to confirm availability.
- A 2-part entry form supplied by the container dealer must be filled out. One to stay with the entry the other as a receipt for the entrant to retain.
- This will only be done during a during a two-week period starting August 24, 2020 and ending September 8, 2020 inclusive.
- Entries will be picked up by a NHMPA representative. No entries will be accepted after September 8th. All entries will be 16oz. and submitted in a sealed 16oz. container with a tamper evident sealed cap.
- Entries will be judged for density, clarity and flavor. Prizes are awarded for the top five syrup entries.
- Winners will be announced at the annual NHMPA meeting. You must be present to win.

A few areas to note

- Competitors must be a current NHMPA member in good standing **prior** to entering the contest.
- Syrup must be Grade A and produced in NH

The NHMPA is dedicated to providing a fair and friendly competition in the spirit of good sportsmanship. Any competitor taking part in non-sportsmanship-like activities may be disqualified from the competition.

Smf/DK 8/9/20 Voted to approve: Dave Kemp, Andrew Chisholm, Darrell Fisk, Bill Cheney, Win van Mourik, Sue Folsom



New Hampshire
Maple Producers
Association, Inc.

2020 Carlisle Registration Form

Name _____

Sugar House Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Town _____ Zip _____ Telephone _____

- Competitors must be a current NHMPA member in good standing **prior** to entering the contest.
- Syrup must be Grade A and produced in NH
- Entrants must be present at the annual meeting to win.

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Dropped off by: _____ (sign here) Date: _____

Received by _____ (sign here) Date: _____

Entrant copy to keep.



New Hampshire
Maple Producers
Association, Inc.

2020 Carlisle Registration Form

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Sugar House Name _____

Mailing Address _____

Town _____ Zip _____ Telephone _____

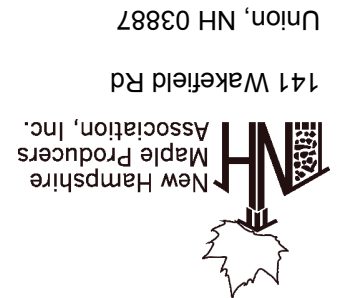
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Dropped off by: _____ (sign here) Date: _____

Received by _____ (sign here) Date: _____

Contest copy to stay with entered syrup.



Congratulation to the Felker Award Winners!

First Place: Kaylin Emerson

Second Place: Cecelia LeBlanc

Third Place: Trevor Gaudet

The annual contest sponsored by the NH Maple Producers Association drew projects from K-12 students from around the state, including popsicle stick sugar houses, a family history of maple sugaring from a simple pot over a fire to an evaporator, a garland of maple facts, a collage/poster over 7 square feet, a technical paper on maple flavors, and a cure to COVID-19 boredom maple activities booklet

The NHMPA is dedicated to raising awareness of NH's maple sugaring industry and proud maple tradition. With articles in The Maple News, press releases, social media, and more, the NHMPA works throughout the year to keep NH maple on the minds of the public.