NHMPA Annual Summer Meeting Minutes

Saturday, July 30 2022 10:30am

Patch Orchards, Lebanon NH

The day started with a tour of the maple facility at Patch Orchards. Matt and Barbara Patch graciously hosted the meeting for us today at their beautiful facility, and showed everyone around their maple operation. They have over 50,000 taps with two evaporators as well as a very impressive RO set up.

* **Welcome & Introductions:** Andy starts the meeting with introductions; Andrew Chisholm, President of NHMPA; Alisha Powell, Secretary of NHMPA. Many thanks to our hosts at Patch Orchards for hosting this meeting, facilitating lunch and offering us their wonderful cider donuts and maple creamies.
* **Felker Award Presentation:** Andrew Chisholm & Dale Smith

Andy shares that Dale Smith has been helping out with the Felker Award for many years, and we appreciate his help with it. Dale says that we had a good amount of participation this year. In years past there were only a couple entries; this year, there were 16 entries. We want to continue to encourage more young people to submit projects in the future, one thing that would be helpful would be for sugar makers to encourage young people they know to get involved, and also to involve teachers.

Most of the entries came from a couple towns in the southern part of the state. Dale hopes to make a goal of getting 50 entries next year, from all over the state. We need more young people to get interested and involved in sugaring for the future.

Dale thanks the parents of the students who brought their kids here today as well.

The judges of the entries were educators, teachers, and others; Dale doesn’t participate with judging since he knows so many involved and since he facilitates the competition.

Third Place Award: This student wrote about the science of maple trees, Anders Hannou. He is a homeschooler. He is presented with a check for $50.00.

Second Place Award: Tess LaValliere. Her project was about the process of making maple syrup on a small scale. She is presented with a check for $150.00.

First Place: Dannicia LeBlanc: She did a beautiful, large scale painting using all of her siblings handprints to make the leaves on a maple tree. She also put together a large binder describing the maple process, and including a cookbook. She gathered maple recipes to make the cookbook, and categorized them according to appetizers, desserts, etc.

Andy wraps up the Felker award presentation noting how important it is to get young kids involved with Maple Sugaring. He started sugaring at 8 years old and it became a big part of his life.

At this time, we proceeded with lunch.

We reconvened the meeting after folks finished eating.

**President & Treasurer Report, Board Updates: Andrew Chisholm**

Andy shares information regarding the mid-year numbers. The association is staying pretty close to our budget, a little under in some cases. Containers are really starting to get out to our members. We are behind by about 96 cases of quarts at this point. We have made a lot of progress getting ahead of the container deficit.

We ordered cream containers last year, and they are finally coming in mid-August.

Andy put together the container order for next year. After meeting with the container subcommittee and reviewing information, he copied the order from 2022 for 2023. The expectation is to try to carry a slight surplus for next year. We would rather be ahead all the time, rather than being so far behind in orders like we have been this year.

Candy boxes are available currently. We are going to get another larger size of candy box made; it will hold the Santa or two leaf sizes. Rice packaging is working with us on that, and hopefully they will be ready before the holidays.

Budget: for Maple Month, we budgeted $40K for promotional spending this past year. Actual spending was $28K. We ended up having money left over in our budget with Townsquare Media, the media company that did the bulk of our online and radio advertising, and we will be putting that toward advertising for the Deerfield Fair.

Future spending: We have several fair expenditures coming up. Bud Taylor is currently representing the association up at North Haverhill Fair right now. We do need more help with the upcoming fairs and we are looking for more volunteers. Bud even needs help tomorrow at North Haverhill if anyone is available. Cheshire, Lancaster, Big E are all coming up as well. We are also looking for more syrup for the fairs; we need the syrup to be Seal of Quality certified to be sold at the fairs. We have many producers who are going to contribute product for fairs, including the Big E. Alisha and Andy are going to be drop-off points for product to get it down to the Big E this year, so if producers can get product to them, they will bring it down.

**Grant Awards**

The association has been given a grant of about 60K which is spread out over the next couple of years. We have things like signage, promotional materials and some of the promotions budget are coming out of the grant award. We were also contacted by the Office of International Commerce regarding applying for a grant to promote NH Maple on an International level.

The office of International Commerce decided on the amount, $450K, to promote NH Maple internationally. This is a very exciting opportunity for the association for the future and we are waiting to hear back about this.

**2023: Outlook & Plans**

We intend to run a surplus of containers into 2023. We need fair help. We have a large undertaking with doing 5 fairs this year. The bulk of the work is being handled by Bud Taylor, who is doing all the behind the scenes legwork on that which we very much appreciate. Andy notes that while it is a lot of work, it’s also a lot of fun. We are hoping to find more engagement and help from association members as much as possible for the future.

Promotions and grant spending for next year will be more aggressive. Some of the money has to be very specifically used in certain ways determined by the grant paperwork and application. We really want to promote NH Maple as a brand and bring more recognition to NH Maple.

Last year we started the Face of NH Maple social media campaign on our association social media pages to help personalize our NH products more as well. We want to continue things like this for the future.

**Keynote Speaker Glenn Goodrich** was welcomed forward to give a multi-topic presentation including a robust question and answer session asking about the specific needs of the producer attendees, as well as some focus on Glenn’s operation, tapping techniques, and tap/tree health.

Following Glenn’s presentation, more drinks, donuts and ice cream were available to the attendees. The portion of the meeting at Patch Orchards finished up, and attendees moved to 16 Sugarbush Road in Wilmot, NH for a tour of a new tubing installation that Harding Hill Farm has been working on.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alisha A. Powell, Secretary

7/30/22