

Maple Producers Maintain Healthy Forests and Provide High Quality Food for Consumers



Maple production is part of the rich cultural history and economy of New York. Maple producers, like other farmers, are connected to the land and committed to ensuring the sustainability of their harvest. Several features of maple production benefit New York citizens:

- Maple producers are local businesses that contribute to local economies.
- Maple syrup operations are a tourism destination providing both public education on sustainable production and enhancing local retail vendors.
- Maple syrup production is uniquely North American, with NY a strong player. Production can not be globalized but markets exist internationally.
- Maple farms retain forest cover and help achieve local conservation goals.
- Producers can increase their profits with fairly easy entry into value-added products.

The Cornell Maple Program (CMP) has been extensively strengthened since 2004 to improve the sustainable production of high-quality food items for consumers. State, university, and private partners have provided resources to allow intensive training for Cooperative Extension educators, hiring of new staff, renovation of field facilities for research and education, and expansion of programs. CMP has used these opportunities to launch several major initiatives that are beginning to demonstrate impacts. Examples include:

1. Two dedicated and two shared maple staff join existing maple faculty on campus and now contribute to the CMP in areas of research, extension, teaching, and production.
2. More than 15 Cooperative Extension educators provide direct educational linkages throughout NY and PA as a result of their participation in professional development. Their capacity expands services statewide to producers through outreach and applied collaborative research.
3. Maple producers now have access to educational resources they can share with patrons and the public. Resources include fact sheets, brochures, poster displays, presentations, and new research findings.
4. Maple producers worked with Cornell food scientists to create a new product, a shelf-stable maple cream that may increase producer profits by 10%.
5. Educational programs annually include 2 educator trainings, 6 regional winter and fall producer conferences, and up to 5 beginner courses. 2005 winter programs reached more than 1000 producers from 7 states and provinces. There are eleven active or recent research projects.



THE CORNELL MAPLE PROGRAM ENJOYS BROAD COLLABORATIVE SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIP WITH:

- Cornell's College of Agriculture and Life Sciences & Department of Natural Resources
- USDA Renewable Resources Extension Program
- Cornell University Cooperative Extension and Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station
- Cornell's Forest Resources Conservation Program
- NYS Legislature via NYS Ag & Markets
- Cornell University's Arnot Forest and Uihlein Forest - Sugarbush and Production Facilities
- New York State Maple Producers Association
- FFA Programs at Vernon-Vernon-Sherill, Pioneer, Letchworth, & Potsdam
- The Henry Uihlein Foundation

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