

# ONTARIO MAPLE MAINLINE



Maple Dateline

Mainline Deadlines

Fall - August 15

Winter - November 15

Spring - February 15

Board Meetings - 2020

June 8, July 17,

October 5, December 7

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The world has changed quickly since the start of this maple season! As I mentioned previously, **when I was tapping, I wasn't** thinking we would need Government confirmation that Maple Production be listed as an essential service.

The Executive and Committee Chairs have been meeting more frequently than our normal once a month calls. We started with meeting every other week and now are meeting weekly to deal quickly with issues arising from the pandemic: first dealing with Maple Weekend, then postponing the Summer Tour, and now how best to support our members through these constantly changing times.

When Maple Weekend was cancelled for 2020, we stopped the advertising campaign. Due to the circumstances, our funder allowed us to shift some of these resources to Maple Weekend 2021.

The Summer Tour Committee asked if the 2020 summer tour

could be postponed till 2021 and the following tours be postponed by one year. Quinte agreed, the Executive supported this and we will be back on track with summer tours in 2021. The 2020 AGM will be **rescheduled, but we haven't** determined how that will happen yet.

With Maple Weekend and all the other festivals being cancelled, the Executive was looking at ways to help support members that have lost sales. After discussion with various Local Presidents it was determined that a social media campaign promoting Sweet Ontario and the great product OMSPA members had produced would **benefit it member's best.** To this end OMSPA is developing a social media launch and have committed a minimum of \$10k for the balance of this year. This is similar to what was planned with Maple Weekend.

OMAFRA has come out with a

*(Continued on page 2)*



## *Current Board Officers and Committee Chairs*

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*(Continued from page 1)*

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support program to create or upgrade ecommerce in the agri-food sector. OMSPA is applying for stream 2 (\$75K) on a 90% cost share to enhance our website and help direct consumers to our members individual ecommerce platforms. We have also produced a template to help our members apply for stream 1 grants (\$5K). OMSPA can NOT do the individual application for members but can supply guidance via templates and letters of support.

I have been in contact with OMAFRA weekly since this pandemic started, working on a variety of items from getting confirmation that the production of Maple Syrup was listed as Essential, to pushing for computer purchases within the funding guidelines.

With regard to the Steam Exemption, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs issued it's findings and currently it remains status quo, but more will be done on this. I would think after this pandemic settles down, we can expect more regulation on all agricultural fronts as public safety will be forefront in public sentiment.

OMSPA has reached out to the OMAFRA Minister Ernie Hardeman for another meeting to address our concerns relating to Maple in Ontario. At this point, a meeting date is still being scheduled, although I have talked with his policy advisors. Maple is a low priority right now with all the other issues going on.

OMPSA had agreed with a request from Foodland Ontario to have OMSPA attend a photo shoot with Mr. Hardeman and the premier Doug Ford. They wanted to film their commitment to Maple in Ontario before March break. This was arranged with Rock Maple but was cancelled by Mr. Ford at the last minute because there was the rumour of protestors attending. This was before the pandemic closures.

Reports from across the province are coming in confirming that an average crop has been produced but of very good quality. There is still strong demand for a quality product in the marketplace it's just the method of getting it to our consumers that is changing and we must adapt.



Let's work together as we will get through this and come out stronger.

Brian Bainborough



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Since the last Mainline, so much has changed., but most of the usual work flow has continued in the office: membership, bookkeeping, producing the Eletter and Mainline.

There have been added activities to help our members with COVID-19. These include:

- Re-working our CEF/Maple Weekend grant.
- Sending emails with support program details to members.
- Producing support letters for members applying for funding.

On the Membership front there has been much to do:

- New certificates, for those who haven't received them, they should be in your hands shortly.
- The 2020 stickers will come with this Mainline. If you renewed until 2021, you will receive the sticker separately.
- Website producer database updated and email database updated.
- If you have any problems with your membership, or listing, please don't hesitate to call, or email the office.

We have had several grants on the go this year, to support this I have:

- Written the final report for the OMAFRA grant of \$7K for the tasting and grading workshops.
- Done all the bookkeeping and helped with claims for the CEF, RED, and OMAFRA grants.

Finally, I have been working to get this years Production Survey organized. Please complete yours and return it to the office. This survey helps us understand what is happening across the province and most importantly provides information that helps secure grants and government support for maple in Ontario.

John Williams

### OMSPA OFFICE

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## Marketing & Promotions Committee Report

By now we are finished our production season. I'm hearing that Ontario had an above average crop again this year. The province in general is faced with challenging marketing conditions; all maple festivals were canceled and markets closed. I conducted several calls to producers in Ontario to see how they are managing in their areas. All have said the same message, that they are doing more Ecommerce sales, curb side pick up, organized delivery, and meeting spots.

We need to remember one thing, selling cheap doesn't pay. I realize everyone has different financial situations, and maple sales in the season are part of their cash flow, but ridiculous price cuts do not help anyone. One suggestion is to have promotions on value added products and keep the syrup price strong. We did a small 60 ml butter one year free with a purchase of a 2 litre or 4 litre of syrup. Or, maybe a couple of bags of sugar leaves, to boost interest.

M&P is working with the executive group to do the most we can for our members. We are listening to feedback that we need to boost our social media campaigns. We approved a start of \$10,000 dollars to create ads that educate people to look for Sweet Ontario and look for farms local to them, with a cap of \$25,000. Now that things are slowly starting to open, producers are seeing more traffic out to the farms, which means more sales.

I won't touch on available government assistance as other reports will have that covered. There is help for setting up or upgrading your web site to do Ecommerce. The one item we need to remember is maintain your price. You strive to produce the best product available, and you deserve top price.

There are still two events not canceled yet. There is a Breakfast on the Farm in Napanee still scheduled. Quinte and District will cover that if it goes ahead. The Royal Winter fair has yet to cancel. M&P will be considering doing the one day there again. All memberships and sponsorships that OMSPA has committed to for 2020 will be renewed again.

M&P is working on a small oval sticker for producers to use on packaged products. We feel

many members are unable to display the brand logo on each bottle. We are working on having it available in the store or as a PDF which members may use to print their own. We are just in the design stage so keep a eye on the eletter for updates.

Eastern local is currently requesting pricing, to translate and produce a French version of our famous cookbook. Once prices are confirmed M&P will review.

In closing I still think we may have some positive outcomes with this COVID pandemic. Customers are finding ways to connect with farms for many products: maple, beef, vegetables, honey, etc. This gives us a great opportunity to communicate with our costumers. All should be encouraged to return next year and those who are part of Maple Weekend should encourage returning that weekend. Sugarhouses, hopefully, will be back in full swing.



I am including a photo of some syrup in a grocery store in Western Ontario. This is from Quebec, shipped to a distributor in Ontario. This is likely a lost leader, but we are competing against this. Most of us are single sourced product; from the tree to the bottle on your farm. This really means a lot to the consumer. I had a mentor (Ross Stead) say to me, "It's too bad their cheap syrup isn't worth as much as ours." I hope everyone has a great summer and we get back to a normal life.

Steve Needham M&P Chair

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## Aid and compensation programs for COVID-19

What help do maple producers qualify for?

Currently, there are no specific compensation packages for maple producers. You should document your losses and expenses related to COVID-19 so that you can be ready if compensation comes. Following this is a summary of COVID programs that may help our members. There are many other programs available that may apply to you. The details of these programs are evolving quickly so make sure you check the current details before acting.

### Agri-Food Workplace Protection Program

This will help farmers enhance health and safety measures in their operations. It is provided through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership (CAP). You can claim up to 70% of a project to a maximum of \$7,500. For details, search on [omafra.gov.on.ca](http://omafra.gov.on.ca) for the Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

### Agri-Food Open for E-business Program

Another CAP program that helps producers adapt to online commerce in their business. Stream 1 provides up to \$5,000 as a grant for individual producers. Stream 2 provides up to \$75,000 to larger scale operations, partnerships, etc. For details, search on [omafra.gov.on.ca](http://omafra.gov.on.ca) for the Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

### Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS)

This is a 75% wage subsidy for the employees Canadian businesses and organizations. It is retroactive to March 15 and will run until August 29th. You need at least a 15% drop in revenue during late March and early April and a 30% drop after that. This may be very useful for our members running pancake and event/catering businesses. It allows you to keep some or all of your employees on while preparing your business for our changed world.

### Deferral of Income and Sales Taxes

Payment deadlines of personal and corporate taxes have been extended to September 1st. The payment of HST collected has generally been deferred to June 30th. These are just deferrals with your full amount owing due on those dates. Please confirm the deadline dates for your taxes. This will be helpful with cash flow for those severely

affected by COVID.

### Canada Emergency Business Account (CEBA)

If your payroll was over \$20,000 in 2019 you can receive an interest free loan of up to \$40,000. If you repay the balance of the loan by the end of 2022 you can receive up to \$10,000 in loan forgiveness. This could be a \$10,000 shot to your bottom line and help with cash flow in the short term. It is offered through most financial institutions.

### Deferral of Loan Payments

Farm Credit Corporation will be deferring loan interest and principal payments on request up to 6 months, and principal payments up to 12 months. There is also the possibility of increased borrowing capacity.

The Federal government has also asked major lenders to provide deferrals to help those under financial stress. Speak to your financial institution.

Taking any of these deferrals will increase your costs long term, however your cash flow may improve.

### Advanced Payment Program

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada offers the APP where producers may take a loan out against their crop until it is sold. There is an admin. fee involved, so this is generally used by large producers only. The Producer-Transformers of Maple Products Association and the Agricultural Credit Corporation are both administrators of this program in Ontario. Search for Advance Payments Program at [www.agr.gc.ca](http://www.agr.gc.ca) for more information.

**Don't qualify for any of the Federal relief supports? This one is for you!**

### Rural Business support through CFDC's

Community Futures Development Corporations are providing loans of up to \$40,000 to viable businesses important to their rural communities. Preference is given to those not qualifying for other federal support programs.

For details on all the federal programs visit [Canada.ca](http://Canada.ca) and click on Corona virus.

The OFA also provides a great summary of resources for farms affected by COVID in their website at: [ofa.on.ca](http://ofa.on.ca)



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## No feedback on your contest syrup? Here's some

*This is a reprint of an excellent article on syrup grading and quality from the October 24, 2019 Maple News. Les Ober, has worked in Ohio Agricultural Extension services for over 16 years. He is well known as an authority and speaker in our industry. The Peter he refers to is Peter Gregg, publisher of the Maple News.*



Les Ober  
Ohio State U  
Extension

Peter always comes up with some interesting topics in his column each month. What caught my eye in the last edition was his comments about the maple contest judging at the NY State Fair. No, not the fact that he did not take home a ribbon. I feel his pain when it comes to that. With the level of competition we have at the local shows and festivals, I know where

he is coming from. I guess some producers **specialize in getting it right at contests, and let's face it they work hard and earn every award.** What caught my eye was the statement that almost 75 percent of the entries were disqualified for one reason or another at recent NY State Fair Maple Syrup competition. The result is that many of the producers entering the contest fell short of their expectations and may not know the reason why.

One of the main reasons for entering a contest is to see how your syrup compares to the other entries and to learn. In many contests all the producer receives back is a score and no explanation. This need for knowledge is one of the reasons I encourage every producer to attend a grading school, be it local, regional or international.

We all know that maple syrup is judged on Density, Clarity, Color & Flavor.

The USDA standard for pure maple syrup is a product that is made only from pure maple sap. It must be cooked to a sugar density of not less

than 66 brix. This means that the syrup when properly stored will not spoil.

Syrup below 66 brix is subject to fermentation and spoilage is likely to occur.

The normal range for contest syrup is 66 to 69 brix. Many contests award points for densities within that range, with the highest number of points going to the samples closest to 66 brix.

This type of scoring has eliminated many a producer from obtaining the top award even though their entry falls within the acceptable range for density. In other contests if you are within the acceptable range you will advance.



Samples are then judged for Clarity. A high score in clarity means that the syrup has been properly filtered, and is clear and free of all residue.

Cloudy syrup is the result of improper filtering and usually means the entry will be disqualified. Because refractometers are used to determine the final density of contest syrup it is important to have a clear sample with a stable temperature. This is one of the reasons you do not want to use a refractometer to determine the density of hot syrup coming directly from the evaporator.



Color is the primary means of determining a grade; however, it is Flavor that sells the syrup. When it comes to grading, color and flavor have an identifiable link. Each grade not only has a distinct color, but there is also a matching flavor that is representative of that grade. Many times, in contests, entries are placed down because the flavor does not match the color.

That is one of the reasons that a flavor descriptor was added to each one of the grades in the IMSI International Maple Syrup Grading System.

This changed the game when it comes to understanding the difference between maple syrup grades. It also added a new dimension for the marketing of maple syrup and opened the door for producers to learn more about what impacts the quality of their syrup.

In the process of making syrup, there are two primary elements an operator can control when it comes to color and in many cases flavor. The first element is time in the evaporator and the other is exposure to bacteria. Both can be responsible for a darker color and off flavors. These are problems that can sneak up on a producer.

Excessive time in the evaporator can be the result of slow boiling caused by wet wood, improper firing techniques, niter build up and excessive foaming of the sap. All of these can cause an interruption of the sap flow moving from the back to the front of the evaporator. One of the biggest problems is syrup forming in the middle of the evaporator instead of the draw-off point. This results in big batches, excessive caramelization even burning. This is where experience, observation and attention to detail can avoid an unfortunate mishap.

Because sap is 2 percent sugar, it is subject to microbial growth. Not all microbes are bad. There are strains of microbes that are vital to obtain the desired color and flavor of maple syrup. When sap ferments it is caused by unwanted bacterial growth. Bacterial buildup is caused by warm weather and other factors related to sanitation. Bacteria changes the

biochemical makeup of the sap. When the altered sap is exposed to heat, the result is a darkening of the syrup and a more pronounced maple flavor.

Under extreme fermentation, sap can become sour and the syrup can become stringy and unpalatable.

Many producers relate this to the budding of the trees at the end of the season when in fact there are two distinctly different processes involved. There is also a distinct difference in the flavor of sour and buddy syrup. Sour sap is not an end of the season problem, it can happen any time you have a warm up during the season or unsanitary conditions occur.

The key to stopping bacterial growth is sanitation and quick, efficient processing of the syrup.

Buddy syrup on the other hand is the result of physiological changes within the tree at the end of the season.

When present, it cannot be stopped and the season is over. The presence of either of these flavors in a contest entry, will end up in a disqualification.

As you can see grading is more than winning a contest.

The primary reason for grading syrup is to guarantee a quality product that meets industry standards. But it is more than that, consumers today are more conscious of what they are buying and what they are eating.

Many consumers have become advocates for food quality. Maple syrup, that is graded properly, gives the consumer an assurance that the product meets quality standards for pure maple syrup.

It also gives the producer an opportunity to communicate with consumers not only about quality but the value of maple syrup as a healthy, nutritional, all-natural product.

Reproduced with permission from Les Ober and Peter Gregg (The Maple News)



## RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER COMMITTEE REPORT

### Buddy Sap Research Project

Dr. Miller is very close to publishing a paper on the research findings of the buddy sap research project. It will appear in an online scientific journal. We will provide the details of this when we have them. Then, we should be on to the final stage of the project – working on how to develop an inexpensive field test for testing for buddy sap.

### Research and Technology Strategic Plan

RTTC has developed a strategic plan to identify and prioritize potential research project topics and technology transfer topics for 2020 – 2025. The plan is based on input received from the OMSPA membership in the 2018 Annual Production Survey, and a few other ideas that have been identified since then. The research topics are areas that require research. The technology transfer topics are areas where in fact the research has already been done. These topics are very useful to know as they can be utilized to help determine relevant articles for the OMSPA newsletter, provide a list

of potential speaker topics for Information Days, Summer Tours, Local Workshops, etc. The plan is has been forwarded to the Executive Committee for final review prior to printing.

### Frozen Syrup Experiment

Two members of the RTTC committee have been **doing some “citizen science” to try to obtain** some data on at what temperature/thickness does maple syrup freeze. They have come at it from slightly different directions. See the results of one experiment in this edition of the Mainline newsletter. The other experiment will be published in the next Eletter.

Bob Gray  
RTTC Chair



## QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMITTEE REPORT

The Maple Judging Workshop has received the NAMSC funding (\$5 K US) and the OMAFRA final application funding of \$7K was submitted and approved and we have received payment.

Final video editing of the workshop was being done at the University of Maine but has been delayed as COVID-19 issues have been prioritized in resource allocation. All Zoom videotaping was completed by John Henderson, Todd Luety and myself.

Future grading and tasting workshops are being planned for this Fall in Eastern (Sept.) and Grey Bruce (tba). Details will be finalized once there is more clarity regarding social distancing.

Maple Flavour wheels were purchased from Cen-

tre Acer to be used at the workshops and have been distributed via the last Mainline. This cost of these came out of the Maple Grading Workshop funding.

OMPSA is in conversation with OMAFRA on new funding projects but with the current situation **this isn't government priority.**

100 BPM manuals are being printed for new members.

Regardless of the current situations we are facing, a quality product always sells and holds its value.

Brian Bainborough



## MAPLE WEEKEND REPORT

Since the February board meeting the Maple Weekend Working Group has had to make the difficult decision to cancel Maple Weekend 2020.

As initial inquiries came in from members, the group met to discuss the need to cancel or reconfigure the event. We met in early March and we decided to wait to see if there was any formal direction from the province or other stakeholders. While we waited, we received requests from participants to remove their profiles from the Maple Weekend website as they had made a personal decision to withdraw from the event. It quickly became apparent that we needed to decide the status of the event sooner than we expected.

On March 16, we met as a group and decided to cancel the event. We took advice from Amy Hogue who is very well connected in the tourism industry and knowledgeable on how to handle this **type of decision**. Amy's advice was that it would be socially irresponsible to continue to promote this event during the pandemic. We were also becoming aware of other maple festivals (ex. Elmira) who had cancelled their festival. The working group agreed and based on what was happening across the province made the decision to cancel Maple Weekend 2020. The decision was communicated to all the participants through the local representative. A survey was created to ask

for feedback to assess the economic impact to participants. John also circulated the announcement and survey to the whole membership. A media release was prepared and circulated through social media pages at the provincial and local level.

Maple Weekend 2020 would have been a record year for participants. There were 88 confirmed participants with representation across all locals. We had success in creating new branding kits and ordering new banners and signs (which were delivered to participants). The metal signs created under the CEF grants were not distributed, but will be before next year's event. We were able to salvage some of the marketing and repurpose it for next year. However, there were some costs incurred this year under the grant due to the timing of the cancellation.

I would like to thank John, Amy, and the Maple Weekend Working Group for their extremely hard work preparing for the 2020 event. Although it is disappointing that it could not take place, I personally feel that we made leaps and bounds in developing the event this year and 2021 will be better than ever!

Leann Thompson

Chair, Maple Weekend Working Group

## MARKETING AGREEMENT REACHED IN QUEBEC

The Canadian Industry Council (CIE) and the PPAQ ( former Federation) have reached a three year deal on pricing of bulk maple syrup. The prices vary according to grade and climb slightly over the 3 year agreement. To compare, here is the 2020 prices per pound:

Golden \$2.98

Amber \$2.94

Dark \$2.87

Very Dark \$2.20

Processing grade ( the agreement calls it "Transformation Category") is \$1.80

Organic syrup gets a premium of \$0.20/lb. rising by 1 cent a year over the next 3 years.

The system is complex and authorized buyers handle the transactions and make transportation arrangements. A number of other fees are subtracted from the amount the producer gets and are used for administration, marketing and storage in the strategic reserve. Penalties are levied for under and over density syrup and a premium is paid for syrup shipped in stainless steel barrels. A translated version of the main article related to pricing is available at the OMSPA office if anyone is interested.





## IMSI UPDATE

Like most organizations, the IMSI did not meet in person for our May meeting but hooked in using Zoom technology. The meeting was focused on the spring crop report and what organizations were doing because of the pandemic. All Maple Weekends were cancelled and there are significant impacts on direct sales to consumers due to travel restrictions. Store sales are reported to be strong and demand is good.

The crop overall was very good with most States reporting higher than average yields. Quality is good and major packers are making commitments to long term customers who ship bulk to them. The CIE (Canadian Industry Council) and the PPAQ (the former Producer Federation) have struck a 3 year deal on bulk prices. That should provide some price stability and assist in marketing planning. The Quebec production was strong,

reporting 49 million taps that were operational. A lot of lighter colour class was made and the organic component is nearing 50 % of the entire crop, which is telling.

Equipment suppliers reported that tubing and maple supplies were moving well despite most of their facilities running on reduced staff and restrictions due to distancing etc. There is still interest in expanding, even from smaller producers.

The large conference scheduled for late October in Wisconsin is cancelled.

Ray Bonenberg  
IMSI Director for Ontario



## NORTH AMERICAN MAPLE SYRUP COUNCIL REPORT

NAMSC held a delegate Conference call May 8th at 3 pm. This was to have taken place in Croghan, NY in conjunction with the induction ceremonies for Ray Bonenberg and Joe Polak into the Maple Hall of Fame on May 9. Another Maple Event that has been postponed.

The North American Maple Producers Manual is progressing and most chapters are in the review process now.

I received a call from Joe Polak in April regarding the 2020 convention in Lacrosse, Wisconsin. Due to the virus concerns the committee was looking at options and since Ontario is hosting in 2025 we were consulted. The NAMSC executive later confirmed that the 2020 convention had been cancelled.

The 2021 Conference is to be held in Niagara Falls,

NY as scheduled, Maine agreed to push back one year in hosting and Wisconsin will take that spot and host in 2022 all other associations are pushed back one year, with Ontario now hosting in 2026.

Dues to NAMSC are now due in May vs. August. **Ontario pays it's membership based upon producing members only (not including hobby) at a fee of \$4 CDN although we convert that amount to US currency for payment purposes since NAMSC doesn't have a Canadian bank account.**

NAMSC has appeared to be very quiet on the virus situation as it relates to producers. Also, Vermont is **still not a member and this wasn't addressed on the call.**

Brian Bainborough, NAMSC Rep.



## MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE REPORT

Hello fellow syrup makers,

**What crazy times we live in.** There isn't anything more important than our own health and I hope you are all practicing social distancing and following proper guidelines to keep you and your family safe. The corona virus is the worst in 102 years to hit our planet and us, right smack in the middle of the maple syrup industry season. Being an agriculture essential food service we were allowed to make our product but not allowed any visitors. No visitors, no sales, no social interaction with one of the best maple sap runs in history across the province. Large quantities and great quality seem to be the norm for all of us.

We all have been hit in one form or the other in a monetary way due to lack of sales. Pancake houses have been hit the hardest losing 80-90% of their sales, and sitting on pre-bought inventory with no recourse to recover those costs. OMSPA has been working hard to flow as much information to our members on all federal and provincial grants and loans that are available and to help our members apply with as much information as possible. With these trying times we must work together and stick together to help each other.

In saying that, as of this writing 568 members have renewed their membership, the most ever at this time of year. All members in good standing are receiving weekly briefs on the happening of the maple industry.

If you know maple producers who require OMSPA's help, get them to join in. We will prevail. We are family.

Membership at this time is working with the Bank of Montreal on a partnership deal. This will help secure financial help for now and for the future.

Members are finding new ways to sell the products and one major sales technique is shipping our product. OMSPA is in the process of negotiation with UPS to create a 600-member fleet discount for all members.

Our communications department is working with the province for financial relief on TODS signs for this year and next. Some members have paid over \$5K in signage, again with no recourse for recovery of these costs.

John Williams, our executive director, and all the executive volunteers are working hours each day to help our membership. If there is any way you can help at the local level with ideas, thoughts, or time to help, it will be greatly appreciated.

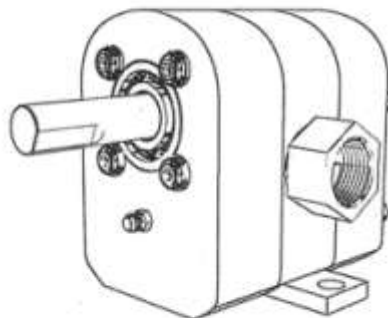
Again, we will prevail, we will survive, we will move forward in life through change.

Stay healthy, stay safe.

Regards,  
Frank Heerkens  
Vice-president  
Membership chair

### **HERITAGE PUMP HTI-175-11**

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**For pricing/information:**

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**<https://www.oursugarbush.ca/heritage-pump>**

## FROZEN SYRUP EXPERIMENT

Background: In this “citizen science” project, maple syrup was cold packed into several 250 ml OMSPA plastic jugs at varying densities (68.0<sup>o</sup>, 67.5<sup>o</sup>, 67.0<sup>o</sup>, 66.5<sup>o</sup>, 66.0<sup>o</sup> Brix) on March 19, 2019. Syrup was drawn off the evaporator at 68.0<sup>o</sup> Brix, and then diluted by 0.5<sup>o</sup> Brix increments to cold pack the samples. A hydrotherm was utilized to determine density. The sample containers were labelled accordingly and placed in a household chest freezer at -18<sup>o</sup>C/-0.4<sup>o</sup>F for testing of pouring times at a later date. The intent was to determine at what density syrup freezes in a household chest freezer, how long it takes to thaw out, and how long it takes to pour out at room temperature (20<sup>o</sup>C/72<sup>o</sup>F).

Purpose: To determine how maple syrup of varying thicknesses (degrees Brix) responds to freezing in a household chest freezer.

Apparatus: evaporator, hydrotherm, cylinder, 250 ml OMSPA plastic jugs, brass flower vase (used as a stand for pouring maple syrup), pitcher, stop watch (IPad), chest freezer, freezer thermometer, household thermometer, masking tape, marker.



Method:

Using a hydrotherm with a plexiglass cylinder, cold pack a 250 ml OMSPA plastic jug sample of maple syrup at 68<sup>o</sup> Brix. By gradually adding pure distilled water to the

same batch of syrup, also cold pack a 250 ml container for each of the following densities: 67.5<sup>o</sup>, 67<sup>o</sup>, 66.5<sup>o</sup> and 66<sup>o</sup> Brix. Identify each of the containers using a marker and masking tape. Store all of the samples in a household chest freezer at -18<sup>o</sup>C /-0.4<sup>o</sup>F.



Much later (see dates in observation tables), remove a sample container from the freezer, place in a horizontal position in the holder, remove jug cap, and let it pour into a pitcher below.

Record time that it takes for the first drop to exit the sample jug, and the time when the continuous flow of syrup breaks into individual drops (indicating that it is near the end of the pour).

Return syrup to the sample container from the pitcher.

Place cap on sample container.

Wash any syrup from pitcher and dry.

Obtain next syrup sample from the freezer and repeat above process for each sample.

When all samples have been tested, leave out in room temperature (22<sup>o</sup>C/72<sup>o</sup>F) for several hours, then flip containers several times to mix up contents (condensed water and syrup), and return to freezer.

Repeat process and record results on different dates to obtain 4 sets of observational data.

Observations:

Table 1:

Date: April 19/20

Syrup Sample ( <sup>o</sup> Brix)	Time to 1 <sup>st</sup> Drop (minutes:seconds)	Time to End of Continuous Flow	Comments
66.0	4:45	20:16	A large plug of frozen syrup came out at 18:54 followed by continuous flow.
66.5	4:17	12:30	Frozen plug came out at 10:02 followed by continuous flow.
67.0	2:32	6:14	A small frozen plug came out at 3:42 followed by continuous flow.
67.5	0:06	4:26	Very little frozen syrup present – no plug.
68.0	0	4:47	No frozen syrup present at all. Began to pour immediately.

The syrup samples recorded in this table had been stored in the household chest freezer for 13 continuous months before testing. The 66.0<sup>o</sup> Brix sample took a very long time for the first drop to pour out, for a large plug of frozen syrup to come out, and then to begin to drip at the end of the continuous flow. This is likely due to the higher amount of water in the syrup (least thick syrup). The thicker (higher Brix level) the syrup, the faster it would begin to pour out of the sample container. The syrup at 68.0<sup>o</sup> Brix did not freeze at all. At 67.5<sup>o</sup> it was barely frozen, but did pour faster than syrup at 68.0<sup>o</sup> Brix (likely because it is slightly less thick).

Table 2:

Date: April 21/20

Syrup Sample ( <sup>o</sup> Brix)	Time to 1 <sup>st</sup> Drop (minutes:seconds)	Time to End of Continuous Flow	Comments
66.0	0:56	9:30	Frozen plug started out at 5:30 and took 0:30 to dislodge followed by continuous flow.
66.5	0:17	7:45	Frozen plug came out at 5:34 followed by continuous flow.
67.0	0	4:12	Frozen crystals throughout but no frozen plug in syrup.
67.5	0:15	5:21	Small plug came out at 0:43 followed by continuous flow.
68.0	0	4:51	No frozen syrup present at all.

See page 16 for description of Table 2

Table 2 caption:

These samples were tested two days later than those in Table 1. Once again, the 66.0<sup>o</sup> Brix syrup had frozen more than the other samples, and it took the longest for the syrup to pour out of the container. At 67.0<sup>o</sup> Brix the syrup poured the fastest, likely because it had less freezing than the two thinner samples and was less thick than the 67.5<sup>o</sup> and 68.0<sup>o</sup> Brix samples.

Table 3:

May 9/20

Syrup Sample ( <sup>o</sup> Brix)	Time to 1 <sup>st</sup> Drop (minutes:seconds)	Time to End of Continuous Flow	Comments
66.0	1:12	20:21	Frozen syrup visible inside jug. Large plug exits at 19:14
66.5	0	2:50	No frozen syrup present at all.
67.0	0	2:42	No frozen syrup present at all.
67.5	0	4:40	No frozen syrup present at all.
68.0	0	4:28	No frozen syrup present at all.

These samples were tested 18 days later than those in Table 2. Again, the 66.0<sup>o</sup> Brix syrup was frozen and took the longest time by far to reach the end of continuous flow. At 67.0<sup>o</sup> Brix the syrup poured the fastest.

Table 4:

May 12/20

Syrup Sample ( <sup>o</sup> Brix)	Time to 1 <sup>st</sup> Drop (minutes:seconds)	Time to End of Continuous Flow	Comments
66.0	0:14	3:19	Small ice plug exits at start of pour.
66.5	0	3:42	No frozen syrup present.
67.0	0	3:44	No frozen syrup present.
67.5	0	4:19	No frozen syrup present. Looks thick.
68.0	0	4:45	No frozen syrup present. Looks thick.







**Conclusions:**

Syrup at 68.0° Brix when placed in a household chest freezer for long periods of time will not freeze. Syrup at 67.5 Brix will barely freeze. Syrup at 67.0° Brix will freeze, but will easily thaw at room temperature (22°C/72°F) in half the time or less that syrup at 66.0° Brix does. Syrup at 66.0° Brix does freeze when placed in a household chest freezer and can take a considerable amount of time

to thaw before it can be poured out at room temperature. When not frozen, the thicker the syrup samples, the slower they pour.

**Comments:**

In order to prevent mould damage, when storing open or cold packed maple syrup for long periods of time, it is best to store it in a freezer. When required for consumption, syrup can be decanted into a smaller sized container for use. For convenience, if the syrup is thick enough, it will pour relatively quickly into the smaller container for use. This could be yet another selling point for making your maple syrup at a higher Brix level than the minimum 66° Brix required under the Ontario Regulations. Many people agree that the mouth feel is better with thicker syrup. And we know that there is a reduced chance of mould damage with thicker syrups assuming that clean containers have been used for packaging.

Bob Gray

## FINANCE REPORT

Currently, we are working on finishing up last year's books. I have handed them over to our new Midland based accountant. We just received the final cheque of \$6381 from the Grey-Bruce Summer Tour (thank you very much!) and the initial 2019 year end numbers look promising. They show we are at about a breakeven.

2020 is off to a good start. We are already within \$4500 of our membership target. In early May, our bank balance was running at almost \$95,000. Thankfully, we are in a good position to be facing the unknown of COVID-19. We do have a good cash reserve to spend on helping our members face the current difficulties. With that in mind, our executive has committed \$10,000 as a base for a social media promotion of Ontario Maple Syrup to help with sales issues from COVID-19. Also, granting programs, like the CAP funding for Ecommerce, are being pursued to boost that.

What affects will COVID have on our finances?

On the income side COVID will affect:

- Jug program
- Summer Tour
- Store contribution

Estimated drop in these budget lines of about \$17.5K.

On the expense side COVID will affect:

- IMSI - membership and travel
- NAMSC - membership and travel

Travel will drop completely; freeing up about \$5K.

I expect our reserve of about \$60K to drop approximately \$22.5K (17.5-5+10)

For this, we will at the very least, get a significant marketing program and may get a complete re-development of our website if our CAP application is accepted.

I don't think we will face funding short falls as we have a substantial reserve and Government wants to help, so money is and will be available with very little matching funds.

John Williams, Executive Director

## UPCOMING EVENTS & NEWS

Get your events on the list by emailing [admin@ontariomaple.com](mailto:admin@ontariomaple.com). Remember COVID-19 may affect these events.

Date	Event	Local	Location	Time	Contact
June 25th?	Potluck Dinner	Waterloo-Wellington			Kevin Snyder <a href="mailto:aksnyder@snyderheritagefarms.com">aksnyder@snyderheritagefarms.com</a>
July 16th	Provincial Board meeting		TBA		May be postponed
July 17th	Provincial AGM		TBA		May be postponed
Oct. 5th	Provincial Board meeting		Lindsay	10 am	Reports due to office Wed. before
Aug. 15th	Fall Mainline deadline				OMSPA office
Sept. 12th?	Breakfast on the Farm	Quinte & District	Napanee		Food and Farm Care - OMSPA office
Sept. 18th?	Tasting Workshop	Eastern	TBA	TBA	Jules Rochon - <a href="mailto:jules.rochon@videotron.com">jules.rochon@videotron.com</a>
Sept. 24th?	Second Tasting Workshop Added	Eastern	TBA	TBA	Jules Rochon - <a href="mailto:jules.rochon@videotron.com">jules.rochon@videotron.com</a>
October 3rd?	Breakfast on the Farm	Grey-Bruce	Blyth		Food and Farm Care - OMSPA office
Oct. 14th to 17th?	International Plowing Match Booth	Haliburton-Kawartha	Lindsay		Bob Snider - <a href="mailto:bobsnider1@gmail.com">bobsnider1@gmail.com</a>
Nov. 11th?	OMSPA at the Royal		Toronto	TBA	OMSPA office
Nov. 28th	Fall Workshop	Waterloo-Wellington	TBA		
December 7th	Provincial Board Meeting		Lindsay?	10 am	Reports due to office Wed. before
July 14th to 17th 2021	Summer Tour	Lanark & District	Brockville Convention Center		Randal Goodfellow <a href="mailto:rrgoodfellow@gmail.com">rrgoodfellow@gmail.com</a>

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OMSPA Promotion Store

Contact the Executive Director at :

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Maple Mainline Deadlines

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