

A Vermont Maple History Timeline

1557~Andre Thevet, a French traveler in this region, writes about maple trees producing a sweet sap

1630~Treatise of Philosophical transactions for the month of Jan. Feb, March April An account of method of making sugar from the juice of maple trees Honorable Paul Dudley

1791~Thomas Jefferson visits Bennington on June 5. Speaks with maple enthusiast Joseph Fay, who promises Jefferson maple seeds in October

1791~23,000 acres of land in Vermont purchased by a Dutch company for maple sugar production to compete with West Indies cane sugar. Project fails when attempts to hire local workers prove futile

1793~80,000 pounds of maple sugar are produced by 83 families living in Cavendish, Vermont. Nearly as much produced the following year - from Samuel Williams, *The Natural and Civil History of Vermont*, Walpole, NH 1794

1836~Zadock Thompson writes in the *Vermont Register and Farmers' Almanac*, March "The use of imported sugars encourages slavery, for nearly all the imported sugar is made by slaves. Let antislavery men then show their opposition to the nefarious traffick in human flesh and blood by the encouragement of the domestic manufacture of maple sugar"

1870~Vermont is the leading U. S. producer of maple sugar, reporting almost 9 million pounds. During the Civil War, with cane sugar cut off, maple had gained popularity and reached higher prices

1872~Vermont inventor H. Allen Soule describes early evaporator design.

1880~11½ million pounds of sugar are made by Vermonters; cane sugar and maple sugar are approximately the same price

1884~Patent for a sugar evaporator issued to G. H. Grimm company, Hudson, Ohio. Company later moves to Vermont

1885~Maple Sugar is more expensive than cane sugar for the first time

1886~Adams and Haynes company founded to make wooden "Tomahawk" sap tanks in Wilmington

1888~Leader Evaporator Co. founded, Enosburg Falls. Maker and supplier of sugaring equipment

1890~More than 14 million pounds of sugar produced in Vermont

1890~G. H. Grimm Company, maple equipment manufacturer and supplier moves to Rutland.

1890~United States Treasury Dep't issues licenses for maple sugarmaking; unpopular with Vermont sugarmakers

1891~ W. W. Cooke and J. L. Hills publish first maple research at U.V.M. Source: U.V.M. list of publications, U.V.M. list of publications, Experiment Station

1893~Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association formed in Johnson

1898~Early publication of C. H. Jones - *Maple Research at U.V.M.*

1900~Vermont produces more than 160,000 gallons of maple syrup. Interest in maple shifts away from sugar to syrup

1902~Cary Maple Sugar Company, which became the largest wholesale maple sugar company in North America, is founded by George C. Cary in St. Johnsbury, Vermont

1906~U.S. Pure Food and Drug Act passed - strengthened position of maple by making illegal the common practice by food distributors of adulterating maple syrup with glucose. Historians note that Vermont's maple sugarmakers influence Congressmen William W. Grout, and H. Henry Powers, and Senator Redfield Proctor to bring about the legislation. (Grout was a member of the Vermont Sugar Makers' Market, and Proctor a member of the Vermont Sugarmakers' Association.)

1915~Vermont Sugarmakers begin to experiment with metal tubing systems. Metal tubing was leaky, susceptible to freezing and animal damage

1916~A metal tubing system was patented by W. C. Brower of Mayfield, New York

1920~Vermont's maple harvest surpasses 3½ million dollars

1925~Mary and Robert Coombs begin Coombs Maple Candy in Brattleboro

1927~George Cary hires a Hollywood film company to document his sugarbush activities at the Cary plant in St. Johnsbury

1929 - 1930s~The Depression Years ~ trees cut for furniture in order to raise money to survive

1935~Spring Maple Festivals are instituted in Vermont. 134 towns sponsor events; 1,200 maple frosted cakes are submitted for judging.

1935~Green Mountain Distillery begins manufacture in Burlington of "spirituous liquors" made from maple syrup or sap. The "Grade Four" maple syrup used had previously been sold to the tobacco industry

1938~Hurricane – Vermont lost 40% of its sugar maples

1940s~U.V.M. has sugar-on-snow parties for students instituted by Dean Hills

1941~World War II – Sugar rationed – Ceiling price \$3.39 a gallon, 11 cent cans

1943~Dr. James Marvin and Dr. Fred Taylor revive maple research projects at U.V.M.

1946~The University of Vermont founds Proctor Maple Research Farm in Underhill under the leadership of Drs. James Marvin and Fred Taylor. Funds for land donated by then Governor Mortimer Proctor

1946~Dr. Charles Howland Jones publishes "The Maple Rule of Eighty-Six"

1946~Colonel Fairfax Ayers urges changes in the industry-wide pricing and marketing system.

1946~First Central Evaporator – sap brought in from a variety of other producers for syrup production; beginning of purchase of sap instead of strictly individual production

1946 - 1948~Reverse Felt Syrup Filter

1946 - 1950~Hydrotherm - combination hydrometer and thermometer

1946 - 1950~Helen and Scott Nearing install extensive stand pipe maple sap collection system

1947~Vermont establishes a mandatory grading law

1947~Ray Foulds, Extension Forester, institutes the first January Maple Schools

1947~Bill Clark and Bill Jordan invent the first front mounted power tapper

1947~King evaporator sells the first back-mounted power tapper

1947~First lithographed maple syrup can, S. Allen Soule

1950~First publication of The Maple Sugar Book by Helen and Scott Nearing

1956~Vermont Maple Industry Council formed

1958~Rutland County Maple Producers (RCMP) organizes, Truman Young voted president

1958~Bob Lamb, Liverpool, NY creates the Lamb 5/16th plastic tubing system, widely used later on in Vermont; 3M creates a 1/4" tubing system handled by Leader Evaporator, popular in Vermont during the 1960s

1958~Bill Clark opens public view sugarhouse, open weekends

1959~In collaboration with the Proctor Maple Research Farm, Nelson Griggs of Montpelier patents a plastic pipeline sap-gathering system, different from other existing systems, not widely used

1960~Girard Carin successfully uses vacuum on plastic tubing

1960~National Maple Syrup Council formed as a result of need felt at triennial conferences; Vermont one of the original founding states

1961~National Maple Syrup Council decides to begin publication National Maple Syrup Digest, first edition 1962, Lloyd Sipple editor; purpose is to disseminate information to sugar-makers

1961~RCMP has a small sugarhouse all summer in the City Park, in conjunction with Rutland's celebration of the 200th Anniversary of receiving their charter from Benning Wentworth, Governor of New Hampshire.

1962~Professor Robbins, Michigan State, develops paraformaldehyde pellets as a taphole sanitizer

1962~RCMP donates the 1961 sugarhouse to the National Girl Scout Roundup taking place in Button Bay

1963~Harry & Karl Chapman (RCMP) start creating the first silk screened plastic maple syrup jugs

1963~RCMP takes the State's little mobile sugarhouse to Lumber Jack Roundup at Branbury Park, beginning a succession of promotional events of this type

1964~RCMP has a maple booth at the Vermont State Fair in Rutland

1965~First ever showing of a reverse osmosis machine by Dr. Willetts at a Philadelphia maple conference; triennial conferences promoted the founding of the National Maple Syrup Council in 1961

1965--Karl and Harry Chapman South Wallingford create the first Teflon coated pans (unsuccessful because of high heat needed for syrup)

1966--First Vermont Maplerama Tour, created and hosted by RCMP in Rutland County

1966--Vermont State Fair in Rutland agrees to a sugarhouse on the Fairgrounds – the Fair builds a 40 X 60 steel frame structure, RCMP finishes the siding and interior, including equipment and displays

1966--"The Miraculous Maple Tree" a promotional film sponsored by the Vermont Department of Development and the Vermont Maple Industry Council, premieres

1967--St. Albans launches the first Maple Festival, eventually to become The Vermont Maple Festival by an act of Legislature

1967--Franklin County Maple Co-op organized

1967--Donna Smith of Shrewsbury wins first place at the Vermont State Fair for the novelty "Spun Maple Gold" now popularized as Maple Cotton Candy

1968--VMSMA Pres. Eric Nye installs a floss machine at Eastern States' Vermont building for making Maple Cotton Candy

1969--Wilson (Bill) Clark elected President of Vermont Maple Sugarmakers' Association – replaces Eric Nye

1971--Vermont maple production at an all time low – 241,000 gallons

1972--RCMP buys three tractor trailer loads of syrup from Vermont counties – highest prices ever paid for bulk syrup – shipped to Wisconsin

1972-1973--Vermont Department of Agriculture assumes responsibility for the Vermont Building at Eastern States. Ag Enterprises formed and managed the building for the Department

1972-1973--Ontario accepted into membership of the National Maple Syrup Council, which then becomes the North American Maple Syrup Council

1973--Vermont Building at Eastern States reorganized, VMSMA builds new maple booth and assists with other improvements to the building

1974--Meetings begun at the Aiken Lab in South Burlington and continued to alternate between Canada and the United States to organize the International Maple Syrup Institute

1974--Beginning of the energy crunch; fuel in short supply

1975--First R.Os come into practical use in Vermont

1975--On February 20, in Plattsburgh, NY, organization of the International Maple Syrup Institute was finalized, IMSI was born. IMSI was chartered in Montreal for Canada and in the state of Delaware for the United States. Chartees were Aiden Reynolds of Wisconsin, Gilles Croteau for Quebec, Bill Clark, Vermont

1975--VMSMA makes available for purchase tractor trailer loads of epoxy drums

1975--Vermont Maple Promotion Board sponsors the production of a new maple film "The Flavor of Vermont" produced by Campbell films

1981--RCMP and Seward's Dairy create the world's first maple cream

1981--Vermont maple grades change, enacted by the Legislature, following the trend of the USDA grade changes of 1981

1981--Paraformaldehyde pellets outlawed in Vermont – research proved the pellet was harmful to the trees

1982--Research in progress on the use of Reverse Osmosis technology to increase evaporation efficiency by Dr. Mariafranca Morselli and the U.S. Forest Service

1982--Vermont Maple Industry Council and Vermont Maple Sugarmakers' Association create the Vermont Maple Promotion Board at the suggestion of Everett Willard of the Vermont Department of Agriculture

1982--The First Annual Governor's Tree Tapping Celebration held by the Vermont Maple Promotion Board at the University of Vermont Proctor Maple Research Farm in Underhill, as reported in the Burlington Free Press, March 16, 1982. The tree was tapped by Governor Richard Snelling.

1983--Governor's Tree Tapping Celebration held at the Proctor Farm in Underhill

1984--Mariafranca Morselli publishes first Reverse Osmosis research paper

1984--Governor's Tree Tapping held at the Morse Farm in Montpelier, with a bus tour to Joslyn's sugarhouse, Harold Howrigan's, and Leader Evaporator. Media guests housed in Burlington.

1985--"Proud Tradition: Pure Vermont Maple" video premieres at Maple Schools around the State; wins a Pegasus III Award

1985--Gordon Richardson, a Hartland sugarmaker, introduces his invention of the "Piggy-back" unit, designed to increase evaporating efficiency

1985--Governor's Tree Tapping Ceremony hosted by Windham

County. Tree Tapping Celebration held in Dummerston Center. Tree was tapped by Governor Madeline Kunin, first female Governor of Vermont.

1985~Acid rain precipitation becoming a growing problem throughout the northeast

1986~Vermont Maple Industry Council votes to establish the Vermont Maple History Committee, chaired by Fred Laing

1986~Governor's Tree Tapping Ceremony hosted by Rutland County. Luncheon held in Shrewsbury.

1986~VMSMA hosts IMSI and NAMSC for their annual meetings in Rutland in October – the meetings are held at the same time and place for the first time; idea proposed to establish a fund for research – fund began in 1987

1987~Governor's Tree Tapping hosted by Chittenden County, luncheon at Shelburne Museum Round Barn

1988~Proctor Maple Research Center destroyed by fire, to be replaced by a new, modern facility in the early 1990s, with funding from the Federal government, grants, and private donations

1988~Governor's Tree Tapping held in Woodstock; a maple dessert competition for chefs featured, along with beverages by Ben Cohen and Jerry Greenfield

1989~Governor's Tree Tapping held on the State House Lawn in Montpelier

1989~Pear Thrips invasion devastates many Vermont sugar woods

1990~"The Maple Sugaring Story," a video funded by the industry and produced by Perceptions, Inc. of Charlotte, receives U.S. Council on International Non-Theatrical Events Golden Eagle award. Represents the U.S. at Film Festivals in Hungary and Germany

1990~Sap gathering contest with horses held at Harlow's sugarhouse in Putney

1990~Indications are that the tree tapping was held in Dummerston Center, with a luncheon served by the church – (needs authentication)

1991~Vermont sugarmakers celebrate the Vermont bicentennial with an historical tree tapping ceremony in Fairhaven, hosted by costumed Rutland County Maple Producers Association members, Tree is tapped by Gov. Richard Snelling

1991~In celebration of the Vermont bicentennial, Vermont Maple History committee revives the Dean Hill's Sugar-on-Snow party at U.V.M.; becomes a popular annual rite of spring

1992~Fred Laing Memorial Maple History Archives established in the Special Collections at the University of Vermont Bailey-Howe Library

1992~Governor's Tree Tapping held in Taylor Park, St. Albans – Governor Howard Dean taps the tree

1993~100th Anniversary Celebration of the Vermont Maple Sugarmakers' Association held at the Vermont Farm Show in Barre

1993~Pear thrips defoliate maple trees in many areas in Vermont

1994~Glenn Goodrich and James Gaudette receive patent for the "Steamaway" unit, designed to increase evaporating efficiency

1994~On April 24, Governor Howard Dean signs H. 868 into law making maple the Official Flavor of Vermont

1994~Lead problems surface – industry addresses the issues and works to address the problems

1995~Governor's Tree Tap, hosted by Bennington County Sugarmakers, tree tapped on the boundary of New York and Vermont, competitions between Gov. of Vermont and NY Ag Commissioner for sap production; featured boiling of sap in a hollowed out log using hot rocks as was done by the Native Peoples.

1996~VMSMA creates PROJECT MAPLE – a 7 year program to assist sugarmakers with lead testing

1996~Governor's Tree Tapping held at Jay Peak, featured Gov. Dean skiing, a torch light parade down the mountain.

1997~Governor's Tree Tap held at Sweet Tree Farm, Dummerston, land conserved by the Vermont Land Trust

1998~Revision of Bulletin 38 by a committee of VMSMA; renamed "The Story of Maple Time in Vermont"

1998~Re-design of the maple booth in the Vermont building at Eastern States Exposition

1999~Governor's Tree Tapping held at Burke Mountain Ski Area

1999~VMSMA provides members with 1,000+ stainless steel syrup drums at a bargain price

1999- 2000~Planning and development of VTMaple.org website

2000~Governor's Tree Tapping held at the Trapp Family Lodge, hosted by Lamoille County Sugarmakers

2000~VMSMA and UVM Extension host combined meeting of IMSI and NAMSC celebrating the new century, held at the Sheraton in Burlington, more than 500 attendees, the largest meeting ever held

2001~Wilson (Bill) Clark retires as president of Vermont Maple Sugarmakers' Association after "forty years and five days." Jacques Couture elected president.

2001~Last year of statewide Vermont Maple Schools

2001~Governor's Tree Tapping held in Orange County at Randolph Tech. Center; tree tapped by Lieutenant Gov. Doug Racine

2002~VMSMA and Extension create two or more January maple conferences. Addison County the only county to create a County Conference

2002~First Annual Statewide Maple Open House Weekend. Becomes an annual event.

2002~Tree Tapping, hosted by Chittenden County Sugarmakers, in Essex Junction at the Inn at Essex

2003~Tree Tapping Hosted by Bennington County Sugarmakers at the West Mountain Inn in Arlington – tree tapped by Gov. Jim Douglas

2004~"Proud Tradition: Pure Vermont Maple" receives a Classic Telly Award, named one of the most outstanding video films of the past 25 years

2004~Governor's Tree Tapping Hosted by Windsor County Sugarmakers, who created their special version of the "World's Largest Sugar on Snow" down a mountainside at Okemo Mountain Ski Area.

2005~ Governor's Tree Tapping Hosted by Rutland County Maple Producers at Green Mountain College in Poultney

2005~"Pure Vermont Maple: A Proud Tradition - Voices From The Sugarwoods" new video produced with the Vermont Maple Foundation by Perceptions, Inc. is introduced.

2005~"Voices from the Sugarwoods" receives national Telly and Communicator awards

2005~"Operation Maple Sweetness" sends containers of maple syrup to the troops in Iraq and Afghanistan – donations of syrup and cash made by sugarmakers and the public – repeated for several more years

2006~Jacques Couture resigns presidency of Vermont Maple Sugarmakers' Association. Rick Marsh is elected president.

2006~Governor's Tree Tapping Ceremony held at Proctor Maple Research Center in Underhill. 25th Tree Tapping held where the ceremony began. Tree was tapped by Governor James Douglas

2007~Governor's Tree Tapping held on the Statehouse lawn in Montpelier, hosted by Washington County Sugarmakers

2008~Governor's Tree Tapping held on Craftsbury Common, hosted by Sterling College and Orleans County Sugarmakers.



2008-“Maple Sugarin’ in Vermont- A Sweet History,” by B.A. Lockhart, published by History Press

2009-Governor’s Tree Tapping held in front of Mead Chapel, Middlebury College, hosted by Addison County Maple Sugarmakers

2010-Governor’s Tree Tapping hosted by Orange County Sugarmakers at Gifford Hospital, Randolph, Vermont

2010-Publication of “Vermont Maple Times” an educational and promotional pamphlet geared toward children and consumers unfamiliar with maple production; sponsored by The Vermont Maple Festival

2011-Governor’s Tree Tapping hosted by Windham County Sugarmakers at the Vermont Academy – Tree tapped by Gov. Peter Shumlin

2011-Vermont reports more than 1 million gallons of syrup, the first time since 1944

2012-Vermont Maple Foundation (former Vermont Maple Promotion Board) Vermont Maple Industry Council, and Vermont Maple Sugarmakers’ Association reorganize under the umbrella of the Vermont Maple Sugarmakers’ Association.

2012-VMSMA hires the first Executive Director Matthew Gordon

2012-Vermont reports 750,000 gallons production of maple syrup

2012 and 2013-Governors’ Tree Tapping held in Montpelier on the lawn of the Statehouse. Hosted by Vermont Maple Sugarmakers’ Association and The Vermont Maple Festival

2013-Vermont’s maple syrup production is reported by National Agricultural Statistics to be 1,480,000 gallons – a record for recent years

2014-Impromptu Governor’s Tree Tapping held at the Trapp Family Lodge

2014-Vermont grades change, in accordance with newly suggested international grading system. Vermont the first to adopt the system, enacted by the Legislature

2014-Vermont reports 1,320,000 gallons of maple syrup

Compiled by Betty Ann and Don Lockhart with contributions by Sumner Williams, and many additions by Wilson (Bill) Clark. Additional Sources: Nearing, Helen and Scott, The Maple Sugar Book, Harborside, Maine, The Social Science Institute, 1950; Pendergast, Journal of Ethnobiology, 1982:9-14,33; Russell, Howard S. A Long Deep Furrow, Hanover, NH, The U. Press of New England, 1976; Lawrence, James. Sweet Maple. Vermont, Chapters Publishing and Vermont Life Magazine, 1993; “The Vermont Maple History Timeline is a “Document in Progress” We welcome suggestions for additions/corrections of dates significant to Vermont Maple History. Please contact Betty Ann and Don Lockhart, 1030 Hinesburg Road, Charlotte, VT,



Vermont Maplerama congratulates our new Maple Ambassadors and welcomes them to Franklin County. Katherine Ham of Sheffield, VT and Braiden Mayo of Hardwick will be representing the Vermont Maple Industry at many events throughout the year. We hope you have a great year traveling and meeting new people while teaching all about Vermont Maple.