



New England  
Agricultural  
Statistics Service

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a field office of the  
National Agricultural Statistics Service  
United States Department of Agriculture

## Maple Syrup

June 12, 1998

*A special "THANK YOU" goes to New England producers and buyers who have helped us by completing the annual Maple Syrup survey during April and May.*

### SYRUP PRODUCTION DOWN 11 PERCENT NATIONWIDE

**UNITED STATES:** The 1998 U.S. maple syrup production totaled 1.16 million gallons, down 11 percent from last year and 26 percent below 1996. The forecasted value of production is \$31.5 million, a decrease of 11 percent from 1997. The U.S. estimate consists of the ten major producing States.

Vermont led the U.S. in production with 360,000 gallons of syrup but decreased 9 percent from last season and 35 percent from 1996. New York's production declined 14 percent to 231,000 gallons. Maine was the third leading state with production of 170,000 gallons, 8 percent less than 1997.

Maple syrup production decreased in all States except Connecticut, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania. In Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, weather conditions were not favorable for tapping due to warmer than normal temperatures. This caused the sap to begin running in early February and to end by early April. New York saw a major decline in the number of taps due to an ice storm in January. In 7 major counties in the northern part of the State, over half of the taps were lost. New York's trees which were tapped yielded well despite mild weather during March. The tapping season in Michigan, Ohio, and Wisconsin started earlier than normal, and the mild temperatures caused a poor flow of sap. Pennsylvania's weather during tapping went from warm to cold and back to warm, but produced a good flow of sap.

All States except Massachusetts, New York, and Pennsylvania averaged a lower yield per tap. Overall, the tapping season was the same length as last season, but it started more than a week earlier. Many producers in Wisconsin missed the start of the season and did not tap this year.

Syrup color was medium to light amber. The sap's sugar content was slightly higher than last year for the nation but a little lower in New England. Wisconsin had the highest sugar content, followed by Maine. Preliminary prices for 1998's syrup are up from last year in most states, except Maine, Michigan, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. These preliminary prices are based on the expectations of producers when surveyed in April and May.

**NEW ENGLAND** (excluding Rhode Island): Maple syrup production in New England for 1998 totaled 653,000 gallons, down 8 percent from last year. Vermont remained the largest producing state in New England and the nation, with 55 percent of the region's production and 31 percent of the total U.S. syrup.

Poor weather conditions in 1998 led to decreased production in all New England states, except for Massachusetts and Connecticut. The percentage decrease from 1998's production varied from 12 percent in New Hampshire to 8 and 9 percent in Maine and Vermont, respectively. Connecticut's production remained the same; while Massachusetts showed a 7 percent increase in production. Several counties in New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine were severely affected by January's ice storm, causing many producers to tap fewer trees or not tap at all. New England's 1998 sugaring season lasted approximately 31 days, 3 days shorter than 1997. The season started about two weeks earlier than usual. The average opening dates were February 14 in Connecticut, February 23 in Massachusetts, February 25 in New Hampshire, March 1 in Vermont, and March 17 in Maine. Temperatures were reported to be 57 percent too warm, 31 percent favorable, and 12 percent too cold. The sugar content of this year's sap ran about average, requiring 40 gallons of sap to produce 1 gallon of syrup. Syrup color this year was lighter than normal, with only 15 percent of production reported to be dark amber in color. The average closing dates were March 21 in Connecticut, March 27 in Massachusetts, March 30 in New Hampshire, April 1 in Vermont, and April 17 in Maine.

The preliminary value of New England's 1998 maple syrup crop, based on grower expectations, is \$18.4 million. This is a 6 percent decrease from the 1997 total value of \$19.6 million for the five New England states surveyed. The preliminary average gallon equivalent price for New England syrup across the retail, wholesale, and bulk markets is \$28.16 which is up \$0.47 from 1997's final price of \$27.69.

**1997 PRICES AND SALES:** Average gallon equivalent prices for 1997 maple syrup across retail, wholesale, and bulk sales varied widely across the region. Connecticut's all sales equivalent

decreased \$1.00 to \$41.70 in 1997. Maine's all sales equivalent decreased \$0.30 to \$19.80. Massachusetts' all sales equivalent decreased \$1.70 to \$37.20. New Hampshire's all sales equivalent increased \$3.00 to \$40.20. Vermont's all sales equivalent

*This report is taken from the June issue published by USDA's National on June 12, 1998.*

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increased \$1.10 to \$27.60. As expected, Maine continues to have a low gallon equivalent price due to their large percentage of bulk sales. The 1997 gallon equivalent price of \$27.69 across all New England states reflects a 2 percent increase from the 1996 price of \$27.26.

*of the national **Crop Production** report Agricultural Statistics Service at 8:30 am*

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### MAPLE SYRUP: Production, Price and Value, 1996 - 1998

STATE	Production			Average Gallon Equivalent Price of All Sales <sup>1/</sup>			Value of Production		
	1996	1997	1998	1996	1997	1998 <sup>2/</sup>	1996	1997	1998 <sup>2/</sup>
	1,000 Gallons			Dollars			1,000 Dollars		
Connecticut	10	9	9	42.70	41.70	43.00	427	375	387
Maine	167	185	170	20.10	19.80	19.00	3,357	3,663	3,230
Massachusetts	49	44	47	38.90	37.20	37.50	1,906	1,637	1,763
New Hampshire	89	76	67	37.20	40.20	41.00	3,311	3,055	2,747
Vermont	550	395	360	26.50	27.60	28.50	14,575	10,902	10,260
<b>NEW ENGLAND<sup>3/</sup></b>	<b>865</b>	<b>709</b>	<b>653</b>	<b>27.26</b>	<b>27.69</b>	<b>28.16</b>	<b>23,576</b>	<b>19,632</b>	<b>18,387</b>

Michigan	88	75	55	31.10	31.50	29.40	2,737	2,363	1,617
New York	343	269	231	25.50	25.10	25.50	8,747	6,752	5,886
Ohio	90	95	78	28.50	30.80	28.40	2,565	2,926	2,215
Pennsylvania	71	63	72	24.60	26.00	24.30	1,747	1,638	1,750
Wisconsin	110	87	70	22.70	21.90	23.10	2,497	1,905	1,617
<b>UNITED STATES</b>	<b>1,567</b>	<b>1,298</b>	<b>1,159</b>	<b>26.90</b>	<b>27.10</b>	<b>27.20</b>	<b>42,169</b>	<b>35,216</b>	<b>31,472</b>

<sup>1/</sup> Average gallon equivalent price is a weighted average across retail, wholesale, and bulk sales. This price is lower for states, such as Maine, with more wholesale and bulk sales. The average gallon equivalent price is not the average retail price paid for a gallon of syrup -- see page 3 for retail gallon average prices.

<sup>2/</sup> 1998 price and value are preliminary and based on grower expectations during April and May 1998.

<sup>3/</sup> New England includes CT, ME, MA, NH, VT

SOURCE: *Crop Production*, 8:30 am, June 12, 1998, National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.



**MAPLE SYRUP: Sales Percentages, New England, 1996 - 1997**

TYPE OF SALE	Connecticut		Maine		Massachusetts		New Hampshire		Vermont	
	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997
	Percent									
Retail	70	75	8	10	80	70	70	65	35	40
Wholesale	20	10	7	10	10	15	20	25	15	15
Bulk	10	15	85	80	10	15	10	10	50	45

SOURCE: *Crop Production*, 8:30 am, June 12, 1998, National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

**MAPLE SYRUP: Sales Percentages, Other States, 1996 - 1997**

TYPE OF SALE	Michigan		New York		Ohio		Pennsylvania		Wisconsin	
	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997	1996	1997
	Percent									
Retail	64	48	50	48	65	71	48	49	37	27
Wholesale & Bulk	36	52	50	52	35	29	52	51	63	73

SOURCE: *Crop Production*, 8:30 am, June 12, 1998, National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

**MAPLE SYRUP: Prices by Type of Sales and Size of Container, 1996 - 1997**

STATE & YEAR	Retail					Wholesale					Bulk					All Sales gallon equivalent price <sup>1/</sup>
	Gal	1/2 Gal	Quart	Pint	1/2 Pint	Gal	1/2 Gal	Quart	Pint	1/2 Pint	Grade A			Grade B & C	All Grades	
											light amber	med amber	dark amber			
Dollars Per Container											Dollars Per Pound <sup>2/</sup>					Dollars
<b>Connecticut</b>																
1996	35.40	20.50	11.00	6.95	4.25	3/	17.40	8.85	6.50	3.20	--	--	3/	3/	3/	42.70
1997	34.40	19.90	11.80	6.90	4.20	34.30	17.40	8.90	5.10	3.15	1.60	1.50	1.72	1.25	1.31	41.70
<b>Maine</b>																
1996	32.30	17.50	9.35	5.55	3.70	25.40	13.60	7.50	4.50	2.80	1.60	1.50	1.40	1.30	1.55	20.10
1997	31.80	16.70	9.25	5.35	3.85	27.80	14.50	8.30	5.00	3.15	1.50	1.40	1.30	1.30	1.40	19.80
<b>Massachusetts</b>																
1996	32.40	18.30	10.60	6.65	4.05	25.70	16.00	8.60	5.05	3.25	1.67	1.63	1.32	1.34	1.38	38.90
1997	31.60	18.50	10.70	6.55	4.35	25.20	16.20	8.80	5.30	3.20	1.61	1.68	1.50	1.23	1.48	37.20
<b>New Hampshire</b>																
1996	32.10	17.80	10.50	6.20	3.80	24.90	14.80	8.40	4.90	3.10	1.84	1.62	1.34	1.18	1.36	37.20
1997	33.10	19.10	10.90	6.45	3.70	25.60	15.50	8.55	5.40	2.90	1.72	1.57	1.40	1.28	1.40	40.20
<b>Vermont</b>																
1996	28.30	16.50	10.10	6.15	4.20	24.30	13.90	8.10	4.80	3.05	1.79	1.56	1.39	1.25	1.48	26.50
1997	28.30	17.00	10.00	6.25	4.05	24.70	14.50	8.20	4.55	3.10	1.76	1.62	1.48	1.39	1.58	27.60
<b>Michigan</b>																
1996	27.70	17.00	9.17	5.81	3.47	25.75	13.75	7.60	4.17	2.24	--	--	--	--	1.77	31.10
1997	29.00	16.50	9.41	5.69	4.18	26.60	16.10	7.68	4.36	2.99	--	--	--	--	1.76	31.50
<b>New York</b>																
1996	28.20	16.50	10.00	6.05	3.65	25.70	14.70	8.00	4.80	3.40	--	--	--	--	1.35	25.50

1997	27.20	16.45	9.65	5.95	3.70	22.90	14.15	8.05	5.00	3.15	--	--	--	--	1.45	25.10
<b>Ohio</b>																
1996	26.50	15.00	9.20	5.70	4.30	22.50	13.00	7.50	4.50	3.40	--	--	--	--	1.60	28.50
1997	28.40	16.30	9.50	5.80	4.50	21.40	14.90	8.20	4.70	3.30	--	--	--	--	1.60	30.80
<b>Pennsylvania</b>																
1996	28.70	16.10	9.00	5.40	3.70	26.80	14.60	7.90	4.80	3.00	--	--	--	--	1.30	24.60
1997	27.70	16.00	9.00	5.60	3.50	26.10	14.30	7.80	4.80	3.10	--	--	--	--	1.40	26.00
<b>Wisconsin</b>																
1996	24.80	13.10	7.09	4.45	2.67	23.90	13.10	6.65	3.81	2.51	--	--	--	--	1.42	22.70
1997	26.40	13.90	7.10	4.40	3.00	26.60	12.90	8.10	4.90	2.70	--	--	--	--	1.50	21.90

<sup>1/</sup> Average gallon equivalent price is a weighted average across retail, wholesale, and bulk sales.

<sup>2/</sup> For dollars per gallon: multiply dollars per pound by 11.03 pounds per gallon

<sup>3/</sup> Data withheld to prevent disclosure of individual operations

SOURCE: Crop Production, 8:30 am, June 12, 1998, National Agricultural Statistics Service, USDA.

## FREQUENT 1998 COMMENTS FROM MAPLE PRODUCERS, BY COUNTY

**CONNECTICUT** - **Fairfield:** Warm weather closed many tap holes. **Hartford:** Our worst season in 15 yrs, very few runs, most flow was due to vacuum, trees just weeping in the few buckets hung. Tapped two weeks earlier than ever before, by mid-February, the normal beginning of the season, the 1998 season was for all purposes over. Only the last week of Feb. was productive. We experienced higher than usual quality. Syrup color & taste was real good. Started off great & then too warm & rainy. A very short season. **Litchfield:** First week in Feb. was the best week for the light syrup color. Early start, early finish. Started early. I feel we were very lucky with our performance. If I had tapped the trees the last week of Jan. instead of the 2nd week of Feb, I would have done much better. Weather uncooperative. Quality was exceptionally good; quantity was low. Good conditions in beginning of season, then too warm. Great! Most syrup made in Feb. Erratic. Not a good sap flow; Feb. was warmest since 1932. **Middlesex:** Difficult season: needed to rebore and retap new trees to get anywhere close to last year's production, long periods of warm weather dried off taps. Cold snap in middle of March saved the season for us -- did many small boils on an open pan -- evaporator sat idle a lot. Tapped February 7th and within a week made 75 percent of my season. This is earliest I have tapped (18yrs experience). After 2-14-98 it got too warm. The overall quality was good throughout the season, with medium amber being made on the last run. Excellent season! **New Haven:** Glad I was ready to start early. Short but fruitful season. Season actually began three weeks earlier than normal, thus not tapped for earliest run. Bad season, warm weather stopped run. Poorest season I've seen, plenty of wood left for next year! **New London:** Early

start, week of warm weather 3rd week in Feb. slowed up the rest of the season. Temperature perfect starting Feb 5, two weeks earlier than in the past. Tapped starting Feb 12, then temperatures got too warm starting Feb 16. Quality very good. **Tolland:** Sap ran all night on a few warm nights in February. This has never happened here in the past 20 years. After the first few runs of light syrup, we had a lot of dark. We never had a real super day, but we had quite a few so-so days. Nights were too warm most of the time. Tapped trees earlier than normal due to temperature. Several periods of warm weather stopped sap flow and taps dried out; had to retap some trees. El Nino caused lots of havoc. Should have tapped 3 weeks earlier based on what I know now.

**MAINE: Androscoggin** - January's ice storm caused severe damage to trees & tubing collection system, Could not get cleaned up and rebuild tubing system to make syrup this year. **Aroostook:** Weather warmed up early and snow went fast. So much debris in roads and trails all trees could not be tapped. Two weeks of warm nights and cold windy days in March cut flow down, sap got dark and buddy the last week of March. 70 degree weather stopped the sugaring. Bad season for maple syrup. **Cumberland:** Nice Quality! Didn't tap this year, severe ice storm damage. Ice damaged trees were leaking sap from mid Jan until mid Feb, should have tapped Feb 1st. **Kennebec:** Ice storm damage, could not make syrup 1998. Ice storm wrecked all the trees, It was really bad in this area, going to try to plant more trees in a year or two it will be a long time recovering from this one. Our trees were badly damaged by 1998 ice storm, I estimate crown loss at 50 percent. **Lincoln:** We did not tap this year because

of ice storm damage. Reduced # of taps this year because of damage sustained from ice damage, 15-20 percent tap loss. **Oxford:** Days were great but nights didn't get cold enough. Terrific syrup quality. Did not tap because of ice storm damage. Color was very light this year. **Penobscot:** Most of the season was a little colder than usual then we got the 2 or 3 real warm days & nights our sugaring was all done. It was either too cold or warm and no sun, poor season, trees budded too soon. Too much ice damage. A little of everything this year, excellent quality. Hot spell ended season, early. Very poor season. **Piscataquis:** It was too warm too fast. **Somerset:** Too warm, too quick. Good

**MASSACHUSETTS - Berkshire:** Started two weeks early. Turned very warm in early to mid March and everything stopped, good flavor but lots of sugar sand. Abundance of light syrup. Feb was good sap weather, March was fair sap weather -- quality was good. **Franklin:** Conditions in Feb were warmer this year so we tapped about one week earlier than usual. Other than that season was a very good one for us. Crazy year, great low elevations, lousy high elevations. Real happy with this year's crop. Unpredictable! Strange and inconsistent! Very early. The weather never really gave us a very good run. We made a fair share of nice fancy and most of the rest was a little darker than med amber, but we made no Grade B. It got hot after March 30th & 31st and the buds opened fast, sugaring was done and all the equipment was back in the sugar house before a normal season would end. Didn't tap due to ice damage. **Hampden:** The 1998 season began 3 to 4 weeks earlier than previous years and ended 4 weeks earlier. El Nino did us in. It was a terrible year. Good weather in late Feb came off too cold in early

**NEW HAMPSHIRE - Belknap:** Record sap flow end of Feb. Our family has been making syrup since 1942 and we have never seen a season like this one. 98 season

season overall. **Waldo:** Ice storm wiped out main line, trees lost 50 percent tops. Amount of sap seemed good considering damage. Did not tap any trees due to ice storm damage. Too much ice storm damage to tap. High sugar sand. **Washington:** I believe that the month of Feb was so warm, that by the time I tapped in March the season was all over with. **York:** Crazy. Due to excessive storm damage did not tap. Odd. Because of the Ice Storm of '98 the tree damage was severe, so I did not tap this year for fear of more tree damage. Good flavor.

March and then ran only about 4 to 5 days more. **Hampshire:** Bad sugar sand in 1st runs then nothing, all froze up, until March 26th when we had 3 more days to boil before it got too warm. Started to get buddy sap on March 8 but a cold spell came and syrup went up to a light amber again, above average year. Should have tapped in Jan. Season started with no snow or frost in the ground, too warm too early and then 8 day freeze then only fair toward end of season. Many times we had no freezing night for 6 or 10 days, so no run, very spotty, total season very good, syrup very light color. Nice season, sap seemed to be low in sugar content. Too much ice. Great year. Difficult season. Beautiful taste, terrible year for production. Quality quite good. Started early - ended quickly. Pretty good year. **Middlesex:** Best Feb ever, but March was a dud. **Worcester:** Had one very long run, every day from Feb 22 to March 9, season ended 1 week early, on March 28. Hurry up and wait! Sap runs were sporadic but the end result was good.

started early in Feb with days too warm then during the middle of March prime time in our area -- it was too cold, frozen for 10 days straight, a lot of light

syrup, very little dark made no B Grade, very good quality. We looked back and in 12 years earliest we made syrup Feb 28, we made syrup this year Feb 28. Syrup best ever very light. Strange year, sap flow was good, sugar content up, but season went up and down and ended suddenly. **Carroll:** I have never seen weather as warm in my 25 years of making syrup. Warm start but enough cold weather mid season to make a good year for us. Ice storm of January 1998 severely damaged our sugarbush and totally knocked down our mainline tubing. Sap got cloudy after warm spell. **Cheshire:** Season started too early. In Feb I was not ready for it, only had three good runs in March. Good sugar content -- season ended early 4/1. Warmer than usual, excellent quality. The sap flow was very erratic at times and unpredictable due to temperature fluctuations, too hot or too cold. Season shortened at end due to high temps. Good season. **Coos:** Strangest season we've ever had in 25 years of sugaring, season was earliest ever seen, never had a real nice day, quality was exceptionally high, until 80 degree weather hit. We did not tap our trees this year due to the ice storm, many of our trees were heavily damaged, some beyond survival. Ice storm did major damage. No production in 1998 due to severe ice storm damage. Ice storm prevented us from operating this year -- approximately 75 percent destruction of sugarbush. **Grafton:** Hot weather at end of March brought an abrupt halt to what had been an excellent season, should have tapped one week earlier. Weather overall too warm, syrup quality excellent. Only put out 1/3 of normal taps due to heavy ice storm damage in upper part of the bush, only had time to put out 400 taps on new tubing and then it started to run and then it was over, the sap quality was great though. It was perfect for the first 7 days we boiled consecutively, but froze up for 10 days, boiled small amount 1 day, too

cold for next 5 days, then fair sap flow for 2 ½ days, then 82 degrees and 89 degrees for March 28th and 29th, which killed the season. Color quality of syrup good, flavor was hurt some by very warm temperature. Awful! Good runs early, then two weeks in mid March when too cold for a run. Terrible! Early season was fine it just became too warm in March, Quality of syrup was good-stayed light pretty much. Favorable weather in Feb, no frost in ground made for heavy runs early, too much wind later in season. Ice storm ruined almost entire sugarbush, sap started to flow when we were placing new tubing. **Hillsboro:** The worst season ever for me, lack of snow did not help, should have started early by at least 10 days here in So. NH. February poor run all month. Lots of sugar sand, sugar content relatively high. **Merrimack:** 80 degrees in March, what is going on here! This season started early with sweeter than normal sap, the syrup I produced was excellent in flavor and light in color. Didn't sugar because of ice storm damage. Ended suddenly. The late snow and heavy runs during the last week saved the season for us. Many starts and stops. Ice damage too much to handle. Good early, good late nothing in between, didn't boil for two weeks Hit by ice storm devastated largest sugarbush. Quality better than last year. Super year, good syrup. Screwy season, excellent syrup quality! Syrup quality good. **Rockingham:** Unfavorable temps -- too warm until last 3 days of season, which had the best runs I've seen in 18 yrs. Made nice light syrup early but the weather was too warm for good runs, syrup went off grade quickly, dark syrup was only so-so for flavor. **Sullivan:** Earliest season end in 20 years of record keeping. Excellent quality both flavor and color; weather fine until the big warm up slammed door on the season. We have never tapped this early in 25 yrs, the vacuum pump system helped production - made a full crop

by the first week in March, when we are usually only 2 weeks into the season. Season started off great - sap ran for 2 weeks straight, then it got cold and stayed that way for 2 weeks. Then when it finally warmed up it just got too hot. We didn't sugar this year because

**VERMONT - Addison:** We were not able to sugar this year due to 1998 ice storm. All our tubing is under tree limbs broken off by the ice. We missed the early, early run, then we never seemed to get a real run, sap was extra sweet & light, averaging 2.0 - 2.6uv sap tests. Season started early. Missed Feb, We were still trying to find and repair tubing from ice storm of 1998, Warmed up quickly and came to a halt. Season started well but 80 degree weather pushed trees too far along and caused flavor to deteriorate. The ice storm caused severe damage to our trees and pipeline, However, we were able to tap by Feb 20, missing 3 days of a very early run. We did no sugaring in 1998 due to extensive damage done to the maple trees in the ice storm of Jan 1998. All fancy, great. Lot of ice damage, 50 percent trees damaged. **Bennington:** This was the year to be sugaring in Feb. Mid-February start was unusually early, ended season early & quickly, never seen buds so big so early. It was terrible! Real warm weather spoiled syrup taste. The temperature was way above normal. **Caledonia:** We missed the best run in Feb because we weren't yet tapped. After that the weather either was too cold or later on, too warm and we quit by April 6. Way too much wind for a good season. Crazy! Primary sap flow occurred after buds started, did not boil buddy sap. Season started very early, too warm in mid season and ended early. Good light syrup most of the season. Best run of sap was in late Feb which is way too early for our late sugar bush. Excellent flavor & quality this year. Ice storm equaled less taps. Never a great run. Budded too early. Warmed

up too fast. Erratic. Very good syrup quality. **Chittenden:** The sap seemed sweeter than usual, We could have started in Jan but our bush is on North slope and we expected to have the cold weather to occur 2-3 weeks in early Feb, the extremely warm week of Mar 25- April 4 caused taps to dry up. Light delicate syrup. First year ever all done by April 1st. We sustained tree damage from ice storm in Jan, Decided not to tap this year. Season started fantastic with a lot of nice light syrup. It then got extremely hot - 80 degrees and shut things down, We did make more syrup but it was all buddy. Ice storm damaged lots of trees. Weather conditions were favorable for sap production at least 2 weeks prior to our start-up date, quality excellent this year, lots of fancy syrup, but heavy sugar sand during production. Very unpredictable weather! Too warm too quickly. Did not sugar due to ice storm damage. Tapping early was key. Best quality year for syrup. Long warm spell without freezing. When it ran, it ran like crazy. Never seen sap run so good. Ice storm destroyed many, many lines & trees. **Essex:** Very warm, short season, color & quality very below average for our sugar orchard. Favorable until hit 84 degrees. Weather much too warm, very good fancy syrup in early March. Abnormally warm, abrupt ending to season. **Franklin:** Bad weather. Quality excellent, the first half of the season was great just wasn't long enough. Season took us by surprise. Perfect in Feb. We made some beautiful fancy syrup. Season started earlier than usual with very warm Feb days, then rapid warming to close off an early, short

season Quality very light at first then very dark with warm weather. Too warm Feb then too cold March. Excellent weather conditions in late Feb & early March which produced light colored syrup. You had to be tapped early. Moderately good season. Quality is fantastic never seen anything like it. Good flavored but dark. Very weird year, broke early, get caught off guard. **Lamoille:** Too warm too early, excellent color and flavor, very little dark syrup. Ground beneath snow was not frozen, we tapped two weeks early but still missed one half of early run. Syrup made in March was very light & good flavor, syrup made in April was very dark & poorer flavor. Best sugar weather was before we started. Excellent quantity & quality of syrup late Feb & early March, by March 10th had made a quart of syrup per tap, then a 10 day freeze followed by the most intense meltdown I can remember, by end of March the season was over & the buds were out. It started out almost perfect conditions for 10 days, then it was either too cold or too warm, excellent flavor and color. This year sugaring was all over by the end of March. No good sap runs at all in the last half of March. Excellent flavor, very light color, well above the fancy mark. Great start if tapped early, quick finish. Sugar content of sap was low this year. Except for 2 weeks in late March weather was excellent. Missed early run, wasn't prepared for it. Excellent & had a favorable quality crop. Short season. Good run in beginning then too warm. Good start earliest ever warmed up to quick. Early in season quality & color was excellent, there was a quick change to dark color, with horrible weather at end. **Orange:** We made excellent quality syrup with an early start to the season, but the weather got quite warm nights and days for a week which stopped the sap flow almost two weeks early for us. Fewer taps due to ice damage in top part of sugarbush, I have north facing bush and usually expect to start until end of

March, Not ready for unusual early runs. All syrup Fancy or Medium Amber - unprecedented! Great in beginning, then turned too cold, then too warm. Good quality. Just too warm. Real good quality. **Orleans:** The season was too warm for the flow of sap and then too cold for a week. The eighty degree weather we had in March didn't help. Early part was ideal with good runs and good quality. After a cold spell in the middle of March things just went downhill -- a good series of cold nights from April 5 through April 15 didn't help us at all as the trees were well budded. Early start good runs of light syrup then extreme heat followed by short run of very dark syrup. The week of 60-80 degree temp prematurely ended the season. Too warm, too early. Weird year, worst in 25 yrs! Sap ran too early in Feb, too warm in March. Erratic weather. Earliest boil ever! We had perfect weather for making syrup - right after the trees budded! Fancy was the best ever. More dark syrup this year than ever before. **Rutland:** It was a good sugar season in this area until we got the real warm weather about the 28th of March, good sugar content and light color. Excellent flavor and color despite weather conditions. Paid Attention to El Nino & got taps out had great 3 weeks following Feb 20. Best quality ever. Odd weather, early start, early finish, good quality syrup, no dark amber. Quality just great. Little warmer than usual. Syrup quality unsurpassed! Very good sugaring weather early. Weird year, real good syrup. 2nd best year in last 10 years! Season too short. **Washington:** The weather was either too warm or too cold quality worst year ever, color dark, flavor terrible. I have been sugaring for 51 years and this year was not worth the trouble. Snow too deep to tap in Feb and not worth it in March. End of Feb early March ideal weather, light syrup, end of March early April too warm, dark syrup. Season started early, last week in Feb, characterized by cold conditions, very good

quality syrup made, sugar content in sap was high (2.5 - 3 percent) and niter content very high. Season started with heavy sap flow then warmed up to high and with no freezing temps on evening to restart sap. Unable to sugar, tap due to heavy ice damage. Too extreme! In the 12 years we have sugared this is by far the strangest weather ever, The season started almost one month early, then very cold, then record high temps, Trees never really ran after warm spell, half a crop. Excellent quality, short season, low production, Almost all fancy syrup. Had 1½ great weeks of sugaring 1st part of March, then got a super cold snap for 1½ weeks, then 3 more good days and then temps shot up to 70 & 80 degrees, trees budded, end of season. Best year for production, made 50 percent of our syrup in February, grade was lighter than usual, season game to a quick stop 84 degree in March. I wasn't ready for early run. Early, sweet, light. Good flavored, fancy. Lost taps to ice. Too warm too early. Better weather condition seemed to exist prior to tapping. **Windham:** Too warm! Short & sweet! The time to tap out here this year was Feb 10th, about 10 days earlier than usual, Many people missed the first run because it was so early. Great flavor & color, We missed the early sun & got shut down early by the early hot spell. Season started early, weather ideal until March 12, froze up until March 27, too hot thereafter until mid April. The warm spells were far too warm and brought an early end to the season but fortunately there was enough freezing rain to bring on a few great runs, The warm winter kept the ground from freezing deep, allowing a very early start to the season. Quality excellent, only had two real runs all season. Short season. Quality excellent! Overall poor season. Quality best ever! We

made the most syrup this farm has ever done, the earliest we ever started to boil. Season started very well with ideal condition and excellent syrup. Fancy, light syrup. **Windsor:** Short & sweet. Excellent quality first run. Season started out excellent, syrup quality was super fancy then warm spell hit and color dropped to Dark Amber & B. Our sugarbush suffered severe ice damage and we couldn't tap this year, it remains to be seen if we will be able to tap in the future. Short & sweet, fast & furious -- those who started late suffered El Nino's fate. Early season was terrific. Mid-season got too cold with snow for a week. We made \_ of our syrup the first 12 days of the season. Syrup was very light with good maple flavor. Good early run at end of Feb beginning of March, then too cold until final warmup at end of March. First year I have never made syrup in April. Too warm in March, as buds came out, some good weather after that, but season was over by then. Crazy! Earliest season I have seen -- 1st run the best -- sap appeared to be sweet. Missed some by not being ready early. Ice storm put all lines to the ground, I did not tap. Favorable temperature early then too warm. Too cold, then too warm. One whole bush sheared off from storm (10 acres). Nice! Early heat wave, trees budded too early. Color & quality excellent, sap flow was nonexistent. If you were ready, Feb was good. Trees stopped flowing after 5 days of 75 degree weather. Thank goodness we started early; never boiled in February before. My production for 1998 down because I couldn't take advantage of early Feb run because I was repairing pipeline system heavily damaged by Jan ice storm. You do the best with what Mother Nature gives you.

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