



For Immediate Release

MARCH IS MAPLE SYRUP MONTH IN MASSACHUSETTS

Experience Sticky & Sweet Maple Delight All Month Long For A Day or a Weekend Getaway

BOSTON, February 24, 2010. Massachusetts's maple forests have endured the winter months and are ready to produce sweet and flavorful maple syrup found across the Commonwealth. As syrup makers begin tapping, the Massachusetts Office of Travel + Tourism (MOTT) and the Massachusetts Maple Producers Association (MMPA) invite travelers to experience all the offerings of "March Massachusetts Maple Month". Statewide events, sugarhouse visits and farm fresh maple delights from restaurants, markets, bed and breakfasts and local farms, provide the ideal settings for day trips or overnight stays all month long.

"Local farms producing locally grown products are growing substantially in Massachusetts and this time of year, the Maple Sugaring industry offers so many opportunities to taste and savor one of the states greatest products, maple sugar." said Betsy Wall, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Office of Travel + Tourism (MOTT).

"Sugarmakers around Massachusetts are looking forward to the season. We're all proud to be continuing a craft that has been part of Massachusetts for hundreds of years. We encourage people to visit their local sugarhouses to see how it's done and taste the best maple syrup made," said Winton Pitcoff, Coordinator at the Massachusetts Maple Producers Association.

Maple syrup lovers should visit www.massvacation.com and www.massmaple.org/ for a sugarhouse directory, map of sugarhouse locations, recipes, nutrition information and much more to plan and explore your culinary maple syrup experience.

Massachusetts Maple Industry Facts:

- 300+ Massachusetts maple producers annually produce about 50,000 gallons of maple syrup worth almost \$3 million
- Industry employs 1,000+ workers
- Approximately 60,000 tourists spend over \$1.5 million during the sugaring season
- The industry preserves over 8,000 acres of Massachusetts woodlands
- Of the 11 major maple producing states in the US, Massachusetts ranks eighth

The annual kick-off event for maple sugaring season in Massachusetts will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Friday, March 5 at Williams Farm Sugarhouse in Deerfield, MA with the ceremonial tapping of the first tree to celebrate the beginning of the maple season.

Visit MOTT's social networking pages on Facebook (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Visit-Massachusetts/132857061913?ref=ts>) and Twitter (<http://twitter.com/VisitMA>) are another great resource for information on "March Massachusetts Maple Month".

Maple Inspired Events & Activities:

Sap-to-Syrup Farmer's Breakfast (Lincoln, MA)

http://www.massaudubon.org/Nature_Connection/Sanctuaries/Drumlin_Farm/listing.php?program_code=1486-DFP10WI2

Real maple syrup on fresh pancakes is the centerpiece of Mass Audubon's Drumlin Farm's annual Sap-to-Syrup Farmer's breakfast, but don't forget about our homemade sausage and roasted potatoes! Before or after your breakfast explore the natural history of maple trees, and see how sap is collected from Drumlin Farm's sugar bush. Reservations are required.

Red Lion Inn - March Maple Dinner (Lenox, MA) March 22

<http://www.redlioninn.com/>

Celebrate the first harvest of the growing season with a Maple-Inspired dinner from celebrated Berkshire chefs. Berkshire Grown is a member supported non-profit organization created to support local food and farms and promotes locally grown food, flowers and plants through a variety of programs that build partnerships between farmers, chefs and consumers. The March Maple Dinner features the work of several area chefs and begins with hors d'oeuvres and cocktails featuring locally produced beverages from the Barrington Brewery and Berkshire Mountain For more information and for reservations, please call 413-528-0041.

Blackstone Valley Sugaring (Uxbridge, MA)

<http://www.blackstonevalleysugaring.org/>

Experience "Maple Sugar Days" on the first three weekends of March. The tour offers a demonstration about the art and science of sugar-making, A visit to the sampling table to try a bit of maple sap before it becomes syrup and other maple goodies, a walk to see the maple tapping and collecting process. Watch as a tree is sapped and maybe even lend a hand with a drill and a visit to our new sugar house to see how sap is made into syrup.

Furnace Brook Winery at Hilltop Orchards (Richmond, MA)

<http://www.hilltoporchards.com/>

Historic apple orchard/farm winery on picturesque hilltop, free wine tasting, fresh baked goods, farm winery store, apple picking in season. Maple Syrup Weekend – March 20 & 21 - 9:00am-5:00pm The Berkshires (and Hilltop Orchards) is blessed with sugar maple trees and when the sap runs we use it to make 100% pure maple syrup, stop by to see how it's traditionally done outside over an open fire. Sample some maple candy, plus free wine tasting of award-winning Furnace Brook Wines.

High Hopes Farm Sugar House (South Worthington, MA)

<http://highhopesmaple.com/>

High Hopes Farm taps as many as 4,000 trees with more than 20 miles of sap lines strung from tree to tree, bringing the sweet sap by gravity to the sugar house. Purchase maple products and dine in the maple inspired restaurant.

Natick Community Organic Farm (Natick, MA)

http://www.natickfarm.org/Pages/Maple_Magic.html

Maple Magic Day, Saturday March 6: learn about Native American and Colonial Sugaring Techniques while experiencing how the Farm sugars today. Enjoy music and agricultural demonstrations. Farm also offers maple sugaring tours throughout March.

Hanging Mountain Farms (Westhampton, MA)

<http://www.hangingmountainfarms.com/>

you will find us making our pure maple syrup, in one of the oldest sugar houses in the pioneer valley. You will be able to enjoy a tour and see how this sweet product is made. During the

month of March, which is our busiest sugaring season, our cafe transforms itself into your neighborhood sugarhouse restaurant

North Hadley Sugar Shack at Boisvert Farm (Hadley, MA)

<http://www.northhadleysugarshack.com/>

Located in Massachusetts' scenic, historic Pioneer Valley, the North Hadley Sugar Shack allows visitors to purchase maple sugar products, dine at it's famous pancake breakfast and participate in sugaring tours.

Pomeroy Sugar House (Westfield, MA)

<http://pomeroyshouse.com/>

Guests can enjoy breakfast, smell the sweet aroma of maple, have an opportunity to speak with the proprietor about the syrup making process, and see the cows and calves of the working dairy farm. With the recent addition of the Pomeroy Bed and Breakfast, visitors can stay at the Inn, tour the dairy farm, and enjoy a delicious breakfast while learning the process for making Maple Syrup.

South Face Farm (Ashfield, MA)

<http://www.southfacefarm.com/>

This farmland has been producing maple syrup for over 150 years. The present sugarhouse, built in 1952, and offers visitors to dine at the sugarhouse restaurant serving homemade pancakes, waffles, corn fritters and many other special maple goodies. Try a stack of French Toast made with fresh homemade bread, topped with justmade maple syrup.

Ioka Valley Farm Sugar House (Hancock, MA)

<http://iokavalleyfarm.com/>

Watch the fascinating process of turning Fresh Maple Sap into Pure Maple Syrup! Come, talk to a real sugar maker. Ask your maple questions during the maple sugaring season. Ioka Valley Farm has more than 4000 taps and two modern boilers housed in the sugar house, built especially for production of the sweet treat.

CONTACT:

Lisa Simmons

(617) 973-8508

lisa.simmons@state.ma.us

Ron D'Amico

Connelly Partners

(617) 521-5428

rdamico@connellypartnres.com

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The Massachusetts Office of Travel and Tourism is the state agency dedicated to promoting Massachusetts as a leisure travel destination and to stimulate the Massachusetts economy by generating state and local tax revenues, creating jobs, and supporting the growth of travel related businesses. MOTT serves as a leader in the tourism industry, bringing together the public and private sectors to promote Massachusetts as a leisure travel destination. For more information about MOTT visit www.Massvacation.com