



# The Tapline

Quarterly Newsletter of the Indiana Maple Syrup Association

Meeting Edition, November 2007

## Evaporator Operation to be Featured at Annual Meeting

*Vermont expert Brad Gillilan will present latest information*

Brad Gillilan, sales and marketing representative for Leader Evaporator Company in Swanton, VT will be the featured speaker when members of the Indiana Maple Syrup Association gather for their annual meeting on Saturday, December 1 at Pierce Auction Barn in New Castle.

The Vermont expert will address the group on the topics, "Boiling 101: Tips and Tricks to making better syrup, faster"; "Advanced Sugar House Management: Increase the quality and efficiency of your entire maple operation" and "Understanding Reverse Osmosis."

"We'll look at some of the ways we've found to make syrup of the highest possible quality, and as quickly as possible," Gillilan noted.

"Much of our focus for the day will be on increasing our skills in the operation of an evaporator, but we'll also look at the impact of new technologies such as Reverse Osmosis."

The program will conclude with a session by the guest speaker on finishing, filtering, and canning syrup.

"I want us to make syrup in a way that has our customers always coming back for more!" Gillilan added.

Mr. Gillilan grew up on his family's 1000 tap sugar bush in northwest Vermont and graduated from Vermont Technical College. He has been part of the production staff at The University of Vermont's Proctor Maple Research Center and the sugaring operation at Vermont Technical College.

In 2000 he was selected as the Vermont Maple King, the same year he joined the Leader Evaporator Company.

Gillilan is an author and founder of The Institute for Maple Education (TIME) a company that produces and distributes educational products for the maple industry. The company's first publication, "Boiling 101" has been



*Brad Gillilan, sales and marketing representative for the Leader Evaporator Company will be the featured speaker at our annual meeting in New Castle on December 1. — photo R. Gaudette and M. Baker, Leader Evaporator Company*

## Hoosier Production for 2007 Continues to Lag Record

About 5000 gallons of maple syrup were produced in Indiana in 2007 according to Jeff Settle, Supervisor for the Indiana Division of Forestry's Utilization & Marketing (U&M) Program. This is down from 6400 gallons reported in 2006 and the 8200 gallons reported in the Division of Forestry's survey in 2005.

However, this year's production is in line with production reported for earlier years, and it is unclear whether further declines in production can be expected.

Though Indiana has an active maple syrup industry, Hoosier production is too small to be included in the federal agricultural survey.

Because of this, Settle and the Indiana Division of Forestry have kindly stepped in to distribute survey forms and compile results.

Otherwise, we would have no information about maple syrup production in Indiana.

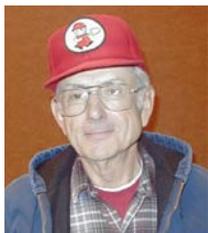
We are grateful to producers who take the time to complete the surveys and return them to Jeff.

Jeff Settle's Report begins on Page 5.

*Evaporator (continued on page 3)*

## Welcome to IMSA's 2006 Annual Meeting

Garry Sink,  
President, IMSA



I want to welcome all of you to the 2007 annual meeting of the Indiana Maple Syrup Association to be held December 1 in New Castle.

This is a great time to visit with other Hoosier producers, look over our dealers' displays, and learn more from our guest speakers, Brad Gillilan and Roy Childers. Dave Hamilton is the local chair for this year's meeting, and we appreciate all that Dave and his committee have done to prepare for our gathering this year.

This fall, our association was co-host with the Ohio Maple Producers Association for the annual meetings of the North American Maple Syrup Council and the International Maple Syrup Institute in Akron, Ohio.

We had good meetings, and if the other member states and provinces had not heard about Hoosier maple and the people who make syrup in Indiana, they have now!

A number of our members attended and I want to thank all who helped with hospitality and the photo contest in connection with that meeting. You'll hear more about the Akron meetings from Dave Hamilton at our December meeting. Dave was our delegate this year.

While I'm saying "Thank you," I want to recognize all the members who helped in the Sugar Shack at the 2007 Indiana State Fair. We had strong sales, having sold more than 350 gallons of syrup in various sized containers along with candy, cream and cookbooks. A special thank you goes to Art and Rebecca Harris who supplied the candy, cream and sprinkles sold at the fair.

The Indiana Maple Syrup Association has been representing the interests of Hoosier maple syrup producers since its formation in 1990, and the annual sugar shack the Indiana State Fair is a great way to promote Hoosier maple syrup.

Attending our annual meeting is a good way to begin your 2008 sugaring season, and I look forward to seeing you on Saturday, December 1.

## Call for Nominations

Following our usual rotation schedule, three directors will be elected at the annual meeting in New Castle on December 1. The terms of Florence Williams, Art Harris and Phil Hanner are up this year.

Ron Burnett, director and chair of the nominating committee, will accept suggestions as well as nominations from the floor at the annual meeting. Members present will elect three directors whose terms will run to 2010.

Current IMSA members may make nominations.

You may send your nomination along with a brief statement about the nominee's qualifications to Ron Burnett, 9741 W Baseline Rd., Paragon, IN 46166.



Louise Jewell prepares to share a sample of syrup at IMSA's Sugar Shack at the 2007 Indiana State Fair. — photo L. Yoder

Board of Directors, Indiana Maple Syrup Association Directors are elected for 3 yr terms at the IMSA's annual meeting held the first Saturday of December. Directors elect the officers of the association.

Ron Burnett (2009) (South)  
9741 W Baseline Rd  
Paragon, IN 46166  
(765) 537 2375  
RBURNETT@SCICAN.NET

Phillip Hanner, (2007) (South)  
6500 N 825 W  
Norman, IN 47264  
(812) 995 3155

William Owen, Secretary (2008) (North)  
0535 S 500 E  
Avilla, IN 46710  
(260) 636 2073  
owenwf@igtel.com

Pam Childers (2008) (Central)  
3509 W River Rd  
Peru, IN 46970  
(765) 836 4432  
pchilders\_99@yahoo.com

Arthur Harris (2007) (At Large)  
999 E CR 325 N  
Greencastle, IN 46135  
(765) 653 5108  
aharris@link2000.net

Garry Sink, President (2009) (North)  
17430 Zubrick Road  
Roanoke, IN 46783  
(260) 638 4919  
gnsink@yahoo.com

David Hamilton, Treasurer (2008) (Central)  
6025 N 100 East  
New Castle, IN 47362  
(765) 836 4432  
sugarcamp@bigfoot.com

Don Jewell, Vice President (2006) (Central)  
10577 E 450 North  
Otterbein, IN 47970  
(765) 583 4865  
hbce@iquest.net

Florence Williams (2007) (South)  
1152 W Egg Farm Rd  
Rockville, IN 47872  
(765) 569 3704

*The Tapline*, quarterly newsletter of the Indiana Maple Syrup Association, is published in December, April, July and October. Larry Yoder, Editor.

well received, and Gillilan and his staff are currently working on other manuals. Eventually they plan to provide video instruction as well.

"I've grown up making maple syrup," Gillilan commented, "and by age 10 I was in the sugar house every night learning the secrets of making syrup from my grandfather and father."

The Gillilan sugar bush has won many awards for their syrup, including 4 times as North America's Best Maple Syrup.

While his primary job at Leader is Sales and Marketing, Mr. Gillilan was responsible for the design, research and development of Leader's new MAX Flue Pan.

The speaker also conducts introductory and advanced seminars throughout the year on the use of tubing systems.

"I am very energetic and excited about the future of maple," Gillilan observed.



Mike Ross (left) representing RMG Maple talks with attendees at the 2006 meeting in Rockville. The annual meeting is a great place to talk with dealers and see the latest in equipment and supplies. — photo L. Yoder

"That future rests solely on the incoming syrup makers who often begin as small hobbyists who gradually grow and become larger."

Gillilan considers himself to be a relatively small syrup producer by Vermont standards.

"I try to make the point that being small doesn't mean you cannot be as good or better than the large producers."

Mr. Gillilan notes that he has boiled on almost every type of evaporator that the industry has to offer, and he has tried to learn the details about

how they differ and why.

"I am still learning, and I will always be looking for more bits of information to help me be a better syrup producer. When you think you know everything there is to know about this business it's time to get out!" he chuckled.

"Learning, and making the mistakes is what keeps the industry evolving, and I want to be a part of the education that helps all producers get better."

Producers may register for the meeting by contacting Dave Hamilton, 6025 N 100 East, New Castle, IN 47362.



Director Florence Williams (left) waits on customers at IMSA's Sugar Shack at the 2007 Indiana State Fair — photo L. Yoder

### Many Visit Sugar Shack During State Fair

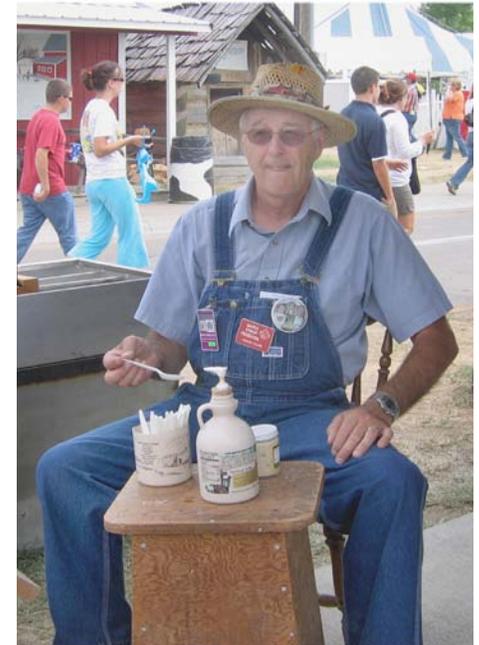
The Indiana Maple Syrup Association's Sugar Shack, located in Pioneer Village on the Indiana State Fairgrounds was a popular spot for those who attended the 2007 fair held August 8 - 19.

"This is a great way for Hoosiers to learn about maple syrup making in Indiana, and many visitors purchase their supply of maple syrup, sugar

and maple cream at the sugar shack," commented Garry Sink, President of the state-wide association of maple syrup producers.

This year saw strong sales of maple products that were packed by Hoosier maple syrup makers. The sugar shack is the organization's major fundraiser, and funds are used to bring speakers and maple experts to the association's annual meeting held each year on the first Saturday of December.

Our thanks go to all the association members who helped out by greeting visitors, answering questions, and introducing Hoosiers to this fine natural product.



Director and IMSA Treasurer Dave Hamilton was ready to share samples on a moment's notice for visitors at IMSA's Sugar Shack at the 2007 Indiana State Fair — photo L. Yoder

Bottles of syrup beckon customers at IMSA's Sugar Shack at the 2007 Indiana State Fair — photo L. Yoder

## Indiana and Ohio Associations Host International Meeting

Members and delegates to the North American Maple Syrup Council and the International Maple Syrup Institute gathered in Akron, Ohio October 21-24 for the 2007 annual meeting. The Indiana Maple Syrup Association was co-host with the Ohio Maple Producers Association for this event. Our association provided syrup and partial financial underwriting for the international meeting, and members of IMSA were present to help with hospitality and conduct the photo contest.

Those who helped with preparations but did not attend included Art & Rebecca Harris, Don & Louise Jewell, Sandy Ragan and Larry Yoder.

Those who helped and also attended included Roy and Pam Childers, Dave and Carol Hamilton, Bill and Kim Owen, Keith and Sue Ruble, Garry and Nancy Sink, and Phil Hanner.

Dave Hamilton was our delegate and Bill Owen served as alternate.

Dave Hamilton will report to us at the annual meeting, and highlights will be published in a subsequent issue of the *Tapline*.



Nancy Sink (left) IMSA member and wife of our president, Garry Sink joins Fort Wayne artists Maria Kirkland and Sherry Sheppard as they judge entries in the NAMSC-IMSA photo contest. The Indiana association conducted the contest as part of our co-sponsorship of this year's international meetings. — photo L. Yoder

## Equipment for Sale

Lowell Byrd (765) 749 1355 who is located in the New Castle area has a 3' X 12' oil fired evaporator for sale.

Also available is a two-diaphragm pump and a 1000 gal holding tank.

Asking price for the entire set is \$4,000.

Call Lowell for more details.



IMSA board members gather in the farm kitchen in Pioneer Village at the Indiana State Fair for their August meeting. Pictured (from left to right) are Bill Owen, secretary; Louise Jewell, public relations director; Dave Hamilton, Treasurer; and directors Phil Hanner, Ron Burnett and Pam Childers. The group finalized plans for the fair and prepared for the international meetings. — photo L. Yoder

## Stock Up on IMSA Items for Holiday Sales and the 2008 Sugaring Season

Some quarts and smaller sizes of syrup are available to IMSA members who need additional syrup for holiday sales. This is extra syrup packed during canning day that was left over from the 2007 state fair.

As you prepare for the 2008 season, remember that cookbooks are available to members at \$2.50 each if you would like to make them available to your customers.

Also, thanks to the good work of Art and Rebecca Harris, your IMSA has prepared an informational handout about Hoosier maple syrup that you can share with your customers.

All of these items will be available at the annual meeting.



IMSA volunteers take a break during state fair set-up day. Pictured (left to right) are Erica Gause, Pam Childers, Nancy Sink, Louise Jewell and Kim Owen. — photo L. Yoder

# Maple Syrup Production in Indiana for 2007

**Jeff Settle, Supervisor  
Utilization & Marketing (U&M)  
Program**

## Indiana Division of Forestry

Shortly after the close of the 2007 Maple Syrup season, 166 questionnaires were sent to all known producers of maple syrup in Indiana. 70 individuals promptly responded to the questionnaire resulting in a 42% response rate, down slightly from the 45% response rate in 2006.

For the sake of comparison of similar climatic regions, the results were broken down per two major regions. The dividing line chosen was U.S. Route 40 bisecting the State into a Northern region and a Southern region. 18 questionnaires were returned from the south region and 52 came from the northern region.

Of the producers that responded to the questionnaire, only 30% of these folks produced syrup in 2007, a significant drop from the 70% reported in 2006. 11 producers from the southern region and 39 producers from the northern region reported production in 2007.

It should be noted that 13 large producers accounted for almost 75% of the state's total syrup production of 5018.75 gallons. The total number of gallons produced was about 27% lower than the 6355.75 gallons produced in 2006. Northern producers accounted for 3964.75 gallons compared to 5663.5 gallons in

2006 while southern producers generated 1054 gallons, significantly higher than 292 gallons reported in 2006. Figure 1 compares the total number of gallons produced each year from 2003 through 2007.

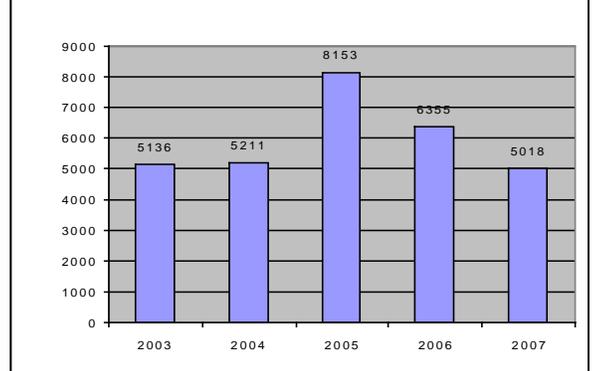
There are 31 counties in the state that have at least one active maple syrup producer. Elkhart County was once again the county with the most reported sugar camps – 31. Elkhart County was once again, the home to the largest sugar camp, producing almost 750 gallons of syrup.

The state average for the opening date was 2/25/07 and the closing date was 3/19/07. Regionally, the average opening dates were 2/28/07 and 2/21/07 for the north and south respectively. The average closing dates were 3/25/07 for the north and

3/14/07 for the south.

The average amount of sugar water (sap) needed to produce a gallon of syrup was 44.8 gallons in the north and 45.1 gallons in the south. The state average was 45.3 gallons of sap to produce a gallon of syrup.

**Figure 1**



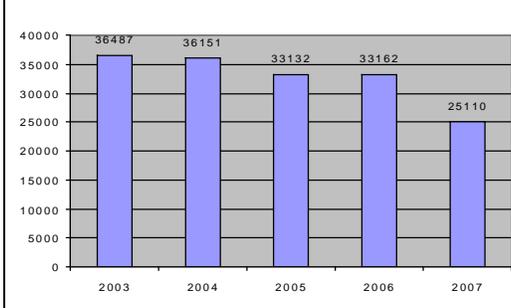
of syrup produced per camp was slightly over 100 gallons, down slightly from 122 gallons per camp reported in 2006. Almost all the sugar water was produced at the producer's own sugar bush(es), however in 2007 producers did purchase around 1700 gallons of sugar water from outside producers.

Of the 25,110 taps, almost 39% of the state's syrup production was accounted for via producers using only buckets for sugar water collection. Almost 10,800 buckets were used in 2007 for collection purposes. The amount of sugar water collected solely by buckets accounted for total syrup production of 1913 gallons in the north and 32 gallons in the southern region. 56 Indiana maple syrup producers used an average of 284 buckets in their collection operations. Figure 2 shows the total number of taps used each year from 2003 to present.

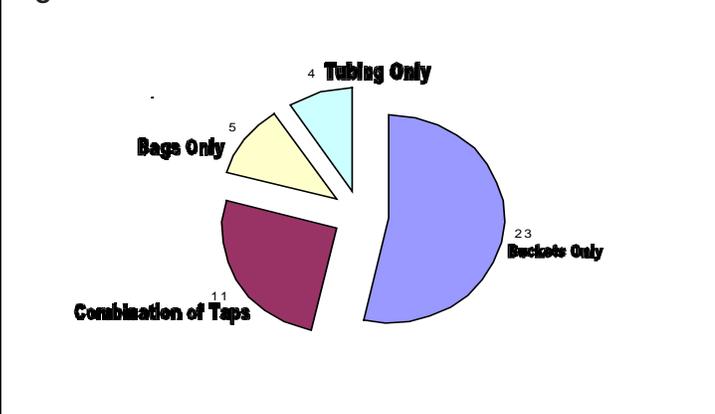
Buckets continue to remain the most popular way to collect syrup regardless of the region. The largest single producer utilizing buckets hung 1140 buckets in the northern region and 74 buckets in the southern half. Several producers reported using plastic bags and tubing in addition to buckets for the collection of sugar water. Figure 3 shows the number of producers per type of tap used in 2007.

Although plastic sap collection bags have yet to really catch on, 11 producers used 1650 collection bags. Many of these producers also used buckets and or tubing as well. Producers using only bags to collect sap set on the average, approximately 40 taps. Exceptions are present though with

**Figure 2**



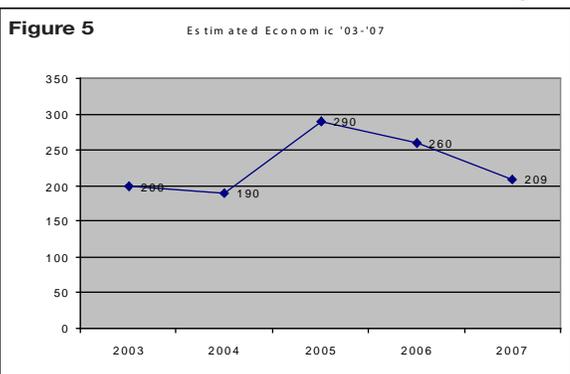
**Figure 3**



The average amount of sap needed in 2006 to produce a gallon of syrup may not be wholly accurate, as quite a few producers do not maintain accurate records of sap inflow. The average amount

one individual using over 1200 bags for collection. Those using only bags for sap collection accounted about for 165 gallons in 2007. On a regional basis, those using only plastic sap collection bags were split pretty evenly between the two regions. Three northern producers using 1355 bags collected 136.5 gallons of syrup. Three producers in the southern region using only plastic bags collected 28.5 gallons and set 153 bags for collection.

A number of producers are trying tubing for sugar water collection and are slowly changing over as terrain, dollars and results allow. Statewide, 13 operations (9 in the northern region and 4 in the south) used over 199,000 feet (38 miles) of tubing for collection purposes in 2007. Those using only tubing produced 1927 gallons of syrup. This was an increase from the 2006 figure of 1657 gallons. This amounts to 481 gallons per producer.

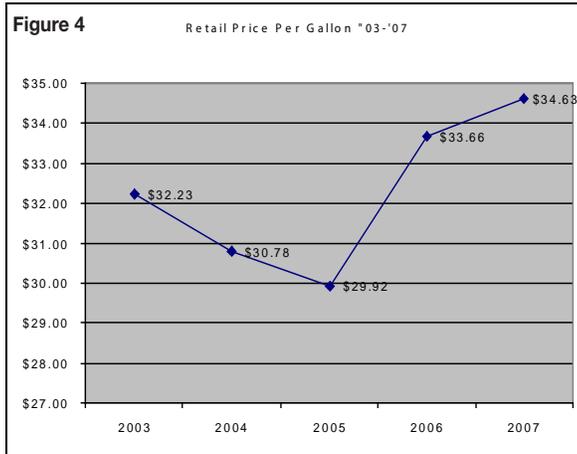


The statewide average price received for a retail gallon of syrup was \$34.63, which is less than a dollar higher than the price reported for 2006. With only 2 producers from the south reporting, we did not feel comfortable documenting an average price for the southern region. Northern producers averaged \$34.55 per retail gallon. The average statewide price received for a quart of retail syrup was \$13.39. Considerably more surveys were returned this year with information about pricing per pint. The state average per retail pint was \$6.94. Statewide wholesale average gallon price was \$28.20. Figure 4 compares the average price per retail gallon of syrup since the year 2003.

The statistics gathered via our 2007 maple syrup production questionnaire most likely will not reflect the true income generated from Indiana's producers. The statewide reported syrup income for 2007 (multiplying the average \$/per gallon X reported production) is almost \$174,000.00. However, if one appreciates that which was consumed via the producers' family, given away, or simply not reported, the calculated dollar figure may very well conservatively grow to almost \$209,000.00. Assuming this figure to be realistic, the average dollar return per tap hole is \$8.32, a little higher than the \$7.84 reported in the 2006 maple syrup producer's survey. Figure 5 shows the estimated economic impact for maple syrup production during the past 5 years.

Sales do not appear to be a limiting factor for Indiana maple product producers; rather, the inability to produce enough syrup due to the unfavorable weather and/or short tapping seasons were the greatest impediments to finding our maple fortunes. Prime tapping conditions center on below freezing temperatures of an evening with a fairly fast thaw in the mornings that normally promotes good syrup flow. 14% of the producers reported the 2007 season was below average, 47% as average, and 39% as above average.

Overall, 64% of the produced syrup is sold at a retail level. Of those reporting sales, over 38% of those respondents reporting production, state that at least a portion of their production is given away or consumed domestically; of course these same producers tend to be smaller in scope and production. Packaging preferences show the majority favoring retail sales in gallon containers, fewer favoring quarts, with remainders sold in smaller units. A few producers offer maple sugar, creams, candies, cookies, etc., but apparently these maple products do not account for substan-



tial percentages of any one producer's sales.

We are all aware that each sugar bush has unique characteristics and that no two bushes produce alike. Although Indiana is a relatively small geographic area, the variation in weather is significant as evidenced by prior years. As reported earlier, conditions in 2006 were less favorable to a good tapping season compared to 2005 but the conditions reported for that year were about as close to perfect as could be.

Some 29 respondents stated they would like to be listed in the Indiana Maple Syrup Producers Brochure. As time and funds permit, we are hoping to prepare an updated brochure. Additionally, we believe it would be beneficial to have "Indiana generic" maple syrup articles on hand for the barrage of requests from reporters for local newspapers and other media come next February, 2008.

I sincerely thank all the maple producers for their prompt questionnaire responses. I have updated our maple database and will continue to be a contact for Indiana maple products.

Please remember the data compiled in this report is only as good as the data received. To be able to more accurately report maple syrup production figures, we'll continue to need a high response rate.

Although our time is limited for personal visits to your operation, we do welcome your calls and inquiries on all facets of maple production.

Special forest products such as maple syrup contribute substantially to many rural folk's income while offering wholesome therapy at the same time.