

West Virginia Department of Agriculture

Walt Helmick, Commissioner



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NEWS RELEASE
June 10, 2016

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USDA MAPLE SURVEY RELEASES WEST VIRGINIA NUMBERS FOR THE FIRST TIME

Charleston, W.Va. – For the very first time, West Virginia has been included in the National Maple Survey, conducted by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA-NASS). West Virginia Commissioner of Agriculture Walt Helmick and the year-old West Virginia Maple Syrup Producers Association have been working towards this goal.

“We are excited to see another agriculture commodity expanding its production and marketing,” said Commissioner Helmick. “A former Massachusetts Maple Syrup Association executive was in our state last month and he was very impressed by what West Virginia is doing and, more importantly, the industry’s potential. Maple production could become a significant economic driver in our state.”

Survey results include:

- 83 maple syrup producers participated in survey, 75 responded, yielding a 90 percent response rate
- 48,000 taps were reported in 2016 in West Virginia
- Each tap produced on average .125 gallons of syrup
- 6,000 gallons of maple syrup were produced by those responding to the survey
- This year’s maple season in West Virginia ran from February 9 through March 12

“A huge thanks goes out to the participants who completed the survey. The response rate was exceptional,” said West Virginia Maple Syrup Producers Association President Ed Howell. “In addition to recognizing West Virginia as a maple producing state, the survey results will be used to monitor our production compared to other states. West Virginia has a terrific group of dedicated syrup makers with a very bright future in the Mountain State for developing this pure, healthy and delicious product from our forest resources.”

The 2015/2016 maple season was a challenging one for West Virginia producers. Unseasonably warm weather through the end of December delayed the start of sap flow. Two weeks of 70-degree weather in early March ended the season early. Despite the weather conditions, West Virginia maple syrup producers were able to make quality products.

The maple survey was conducted from April 28 - May 17, 2016 through. Most producers received a questionnaire in the mail. Others responded over the Internet and the phone. Some of the questions included the number of taps, the amount of syrup produced, sap flow temperature, the color of the sap, sales and the length of sap collection.

For more information on the survey, contact WVDA Communications Officer Buddy Davidson at 304-558-3708 or bdavidson@wvda.us.

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