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**KENT A. LEONHARDT**



304-558-3550

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**NEWS RELEASE**  
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**Contact: Crescent Gallagher**  
Communications Director  
304/558-3708; 304/380-3922 (cell)  
[cgallagher@wvda.us](mailto:cgallagher@wvda.us)

## **USDA SURVEY SHOWS CONTINUED GROWTH FOR WEST VIRGINIA'S MAPLE SYRUP INDUSTRY**

**Charleston, W.Va.** – The West Virginia maple syrup industry is tasting sweet success. The United States Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (USDA-NASS) released the results of its National Maple Survey this month. Maple syrup production is on the rise in the Mountain State. This year, 9,000 gallons of pure, maple syrup were tapped from West Virginia trees. That's a 33 percent increase from 2016.

"This is tremendous news for West Virginia. While our state economy remains stagnant, we are seeing growth in our maple industry," stressed Commissioner of Agriculture Kent Leonhardt. "The West Virginia Department of Agriculture (WVDA) has been working closely with the West Virginia Maple Syrup Producers Association and its members over the past year to promote the industry and help new producers develop their business plans. With more maple syrup on the market this year, we'll continue to spread the word about our superior product."

West Virginia's maple season opened on February 3, 2017, and wrapped up on March 7, 2017. Despite a relatively short season due to a warmer than normal winter, 61,000 taps yielded an average of 0.148 gallons of syrup.

"It was a challenging year for some of our producers, but it's also exciting to see our industry continue to grow," said West Virginia Maple Syrup Producers Association President Rich Flanigan. "The state has a lot of untapped potential providing us the opportunity to become one of the top producers of maple syrup in the United States."

This is the second year West Virginia has participated in the USDA's Maple Survey. In 2016, the average price for a gallon of West Virginia maple syrup was \$48.40. Forty-eight percent of that was sold retail, 6 percent wholesale and 46 percent bulk for a total of \$290,000.

For more information on the survey, contact WVDA Communications Director Crescent Gallagher at 304-558-3708 or [cgallagher@wvda.us](mailto:cgallagher@wvda.us).

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