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**NEWS RELEASE**  
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### **WEST VIRGINIA TO PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL MAPLE SYRUP SURVEY FOR SECOND YEAR**

**Charleston, WV** – West Virginia maple syrup producers should keep an eye on their mailboxes for a survey from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) that will inform state and federal agricultural officials about production trends, and how effectively government promotional programs are impacting the industry.

The USDA's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) - West Virginia Field Office will conduct the survey April 28 through May 15, 2017. West Virginia's inclusion in the national survey is notable because production in previous years was not considered sufficient to merit measuring.

That perception has changed with a renewed interest in commercializing the industry and the formation of the West Virginia Maple Syrup Producers Association.

"It is amazing to see how much our Maple industry has grown. Despite uncooperative weather, our producers have shown no signs of slowing down," said West Virginia Agriculture Commissioner Kent Leonhardt. "Agriculture will help diversify our economy and our maple producers are leading that charge."

West Virginia Field Office State Statistician Charmaine Wilson is also optimistic about the potential for maple production in the state.

"We are looking forward to more participation from producers this year as this program grows. Some estimates from the 2016 survey included production at 6,000 gallons, the number of taps at 48,000, and yield per tap at 0.125 gallons," she said.

Producers who are included in the sample will receive a survey in the mail and may choose to respond by mail, or over the Internet. They may also be contacted by a field enumerator for information about their operation.

Questions on the survey will include the amount of maple syrup produced, the number of taps for the current and previous year, and the beginning and ending dates of sap collection. New questions will include the number of gallons used to make value-added products for retail and wholesale, number of gallons sold as retail or wholesale, and the number of pounds sold to another packer.

NASS keeps all data private and never releases individually identifiable information. After collection, NASS processes data without names and addresses. Plus, NASS employees and agents sign a confidentiality agreement and they are subject to jail terms up to five years and fines of up to \$250,000 for compromising confidential information.

The results of the maple syrup survey will be released in the *Crop Production Report* June 9, 2017 at noon. Visit [https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics\\_by\\_State/West\\_Virginia/](https://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/West_Virginia/) for the survey results. For more information about this and other surveys, call the NASS West Virginia Field Office at 1-800-535-7088.

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