



Cornell University
College of Agriculture and Life
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New York Agriculture in the
Classroom
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Three Schools Win Maple Syrup Contest

New York Agriculture in the Classroom and the New York State Maple Foundation are pleased to announce the winners of the inaugural Schoolyard Sugaring: Maple Syrup Contest. In this contest students and teachers were exposed to the time, patience, and science it takes to turn sap into syrup by participating in every step of the maple syrup production process from tapping the trees to bottling the syrup.

Over one hundred K-12 teachers initially registered their classrooms to participate, and each classroom was equipped with a book, lesson plans, and an empty pint jug to fill with their syrup and return for judging. Schools were paired by request with a local maple syrup producer who mentored the students through the process by either visiting their classrooms or inviting them to their sugarbush. In this hands-on experience, students were exposed to careers in maple production and got a sense of the unpredictability the industry faces each year as it relates to weather.

In the classroom, the elementary students read the book “Sugar on Snow” by Nan Parson Rossiter and the middle and high school students received “The Sugarmaker’s Companion” by Dr. Michael Farrell. These titles were paired with lessons that taught students the basic syrup-making principles including vocabulary, sequencing the syrup-making process, making and using a hydrometer, and role-playing the economic differences between the syrup industry in the United States and in Canada.



*Photo 1 Oakfield-Alabama Elementary
Students taste sap fresh from the tree.*



*Photo 2 Students at Wells Elementary
learn how to use a hydrometer.*

Mr. Mark Kline of Delaware Academy said, “The most valuable thing my students learned is that there is quite a bit of effort and knowledge required to produce a quality maple syrup product. The students learned actively. There are many science, mathematics and technology concepts related to making syrup that the students have learned in other courses.”

“My high school students gained so much leadership experience during this project! They were in charge of working with a community member to identify trees to tap. They then went out and tapped the first 50 trees by themselves before teaching our middle school students how to do it. They were also the crew in charge of weekend collections. Watching this group grow during



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the project has been amazing.”, said Ms. Michelle Barber of Attica Central School.

Fifty entries were submitted for judging by a panel of maple producers. Each entry was scored for sugar content, clarity, color, and taste. The 1st place classroom in each division will receive \$250, co-sponsored by New York Agriculture in the Classroom and the New York State Maple Foundation. The top three rankings and honorable mentions are included in the results. Additionally, a photography contest was held concurrently and the classroom with the best submitted photograph in each division will win \$50.



Photo 3 OCM BOCES student oversees boiling in the sugarhouse.

New York Agriculture in the Classroom and the New York State Maple Foundation would like to thank each school that participated in the contest for increasing the agricultural literacy of their students. The combined hope of the two organizations that students will grow an appreciation and changed perspective about the maple and agricultural industries in New York, and grow in their awareness and understanding of New York’s food and fiber systems. To enter your classroom in a future contest, or to volunteer your time as a mentor maple producer, please contact nyaitc@cornell.edu.

Contact:

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Elementary Division:

Place	School	Teacher	Maple Partner	County
1st	Wells Central School - 3 rd Grade	Ms. Cynthia Richardson	County Cabin Maple Syrup	Hamilton
2 nd	Radez Elementary	Ms. Laura Gagnon	Maple Hill Farms	Schoharie
3 rd	Wells Central School - 4 th Grade	Mrs. Bovee	Brower Rd Sugar House	Hamilton
HM	DeRuyter Central School	Ms. Stephanie Locke	DeRuyter FFA	Madison
HM	William Appleby Elementary	Ms. Carrie Newkirk	Ensign Family Maple Products	Cortland

Photography Contest Winner – Sauquoit Valley Elementary, Ms. Mary Ann Knapp

Middle School Division:

Place	School	Teacher	Maple Partner	County
1st	Attica Middle School	Ms. Michelle Barber	A+A Maple	Wyoming
2 nd	Malone Middle School	Ms. Kitty Eldridge		Franklin
3 rd	Alexandria Central School	Ms. Mary McCart		Jefferson

Photography Contest Winner – Malone Middle School, Ms. Kitty Eldridge

High School Division:

Place	School	Teacher	Maple Partner	County
1st	Stockbridge Valley FFA	Ms. Erin McCaffrey		Madison
2 nd	DCMO BOCES Harrold Campus	Mr. Zach Whittaker		Delaware
3 rd	Delaware Academy FFA	Mr. Mike Cipperly		Delaware
HM	Pavilion Central School	Ms. Catherine Johnston	Happy Hill Maple Products	Genesee
HM	Oneida Herkimer Madison BOCES	Mr. Phil Lacelle		Oneida

Photography Contest Winner: OCM BOCES New Visions Environmental Science, Mr. Chad DeVoe



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Winning Maple Photographs

Elementary Division - Sauquoit Valley Elementary, Ms. Mary Ann Knapp



Middle School Division - Malone Middle School, Ms. Kitty Eldridge





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High School Division - OCM BOCES New Visions Environmental Science, Mr. Chad DeVoe



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