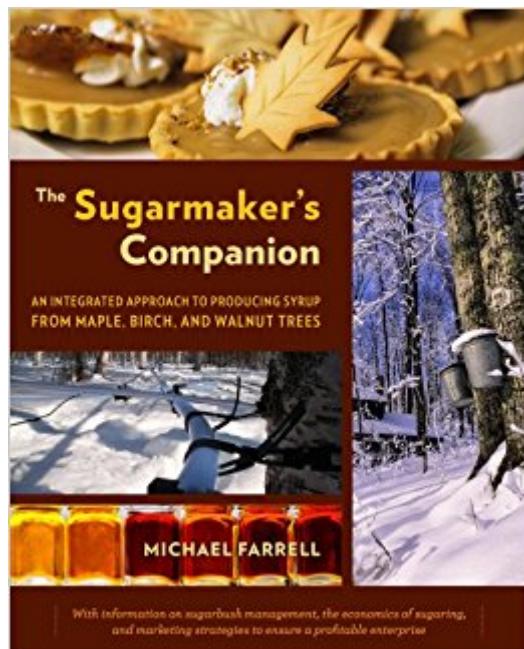


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# The Sugarmaker's Companion: An Integrated Approach To Producing Syrup From Maple, Birch, And Walnut Trees



## Synopsis

The Sugarmaker's Companion is the first guide of its kind addressing the small- and large-scale syrup producer seeking to make a profitable business from maple, birch, and walnut sap. This comprehensive work incorporates valuable information on ecological forest management, value-added products, and the most up-to-date techniques on sap collection and processing. It is, most importantly, a guide to an integrated sugaring operation, interconnected to the whole-farm system, woodland, and community. Farrell documents the untapped potential of American forests and shows how sugaring can turn a substantial profit for farmers while providing tremendous enjoyment and satisfaction. Michael Farrell, sugarmaker and director of the Uihlein Forest at Cornell University, offers information on setting up and maintaining a viable sugaring business by incorporating the wisdom of traditional sugarmaking with the value of modern technology (such as reverse-osmosis machines and vacuum tubing). He gives a balanced view of the industry while offering a realistic picture of how modern technology can be beneficial, from both an economic and an environmental perspective. Within these pages, readers will find if syrup production is right for them (and on what scale), determine how to find trees for tapping, learn the essentials of sap collection, the art and science of sugarmaking, and how to build community through syrup production. There are many more unique aspects to this book that set it apart from anything else on the market, including: A focus on maple as a local, sustainably produced and healthy alternative to corn syrup and other highly processed and artificial sweeteners; The health benefits of sap and syrup in North America and throughout the world; Attention to the questions of organic certification, sugarhouse registration, and the new international grading system; Enhancing diversity in the sugarbush and interplanting understory crops for value-added products (ginseng, goldenseal, and mushrooms, specifically); An economic analysis of utilizing maple trees for syrup or sawtimber production and the market opportunities for taphole maple lumber; The value of sap as a healthful and profitable energy drink; Detailed analyses on the economics of buying and selling sap; Lots of great information on marketing to create a profitable business model (based on scale, interest, and access), and more. . . . Applicable for a wide range of climates and regions, this book is sure to change the conversation around syrup production and prove invaluable for both home-scale and commercial sugarmakers alike.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Anyone who enjoys a good pancake breakfast now and then knows the difference between artificial, fructose-laced concoctions and authentic maple syrup harvested directly from trees. The natural version of this elixir also trumps the competition by containing abundant beneficial nutrients, an interesting detail that is just one among thousands readers will discover in this comprehensive guide to "sugarmaking," the common term for turning sap into syrup, by Cornell University researcher Farrell. The author, who taps some 5,000 maples every year at a scientific field station in Lake Placid, New York, offers a wealth of expertise to entrepreneurs hoping to turn a profit in the popular, still-growing maple syrup business. In more than 350 well-illustrated pages, Farrell covers everything from locating prime tapping trees and the basics of syrup collection to syrup grading systems and marketing strategies. While the manual is directed mostly at landowners with enough trees for a high production operation, novices interested in tapping a few backyard maples for a flavorful treat will also benefit from Farrell's seasoned advice. --Carl Hays

Library Journal- "The art of sugaring (tapping trees to make syrup) is enjoyed by home hobbyists and commercial farmers alike. Here, Farrell uses his experience as director of Cornell University's Uihlein Forest, a maple syrup research station, to create a comprehensive volume on the subject. Traditional and modern techniques are combined with a multitude of how-to's on topics that include finding trees, collecting sap, processing, and marketing. Farrell also covers niche markets, such as tapping birch and walnut trees for sap and syrup, and outlines how to create a viable and profitable sugar-making business. Full-color images, along with

charts and highlighted topics, make this book accessible to both the beginner and the experienced sugar maker. **VERDICT** While the wealth of information may seem daunting to novices, this work is a required reference for those who are seriously exploring sugar making as a small- or large-scale business. Hobbyists will find innovative techniques and ideas to broaden their scope of knowledge. "Booklist- "Anyone who enjoys a good pancake breakfast now and then knows the difference between artificial, fructose-laced concoctions and authentic maple syrup harvested directly from trees. The natural version of this elixir also trumps the competition by containing abundant beneficial nutrients, an interesting detail that is just one among thousands readers will discover in this comprehensive guide to 'sugarmaking,' the common term for turning sap into syrup, by Cornell University researcher Farrell. The author, who taps some 5,000 maples every year at a scientific field station in Lake Placid, New York, offers a wealth of expertise to entrepreneurs hoping to turn a profit in the popular, still-growing maple syrup business. In more than 350 well-illustrated pages, Farrell covers everything from locating prime tapping trees and the basics of syrup collection to syrup grading systems and marketing strategies. While the manual is directed mostly at landowners with enough trees for a high production operation, novices interested in tapping a few backyard maples for a flavorful treat will also benefit from Farrell's seasoned advice." "Having quality 'go to' sources of information for the sugarmaker, whether they are new to the craft or experienced is wonderful. When research is done and compiled into easy to read and understand formats that hold the interest of the reader, it benefits the sugarmaker and the maple industry. Today's sugarmakers are hungry for sources just such as this to learn all they can to improve techniques, efficiency, and quality in their operations. This book is a wonderful resource!" --Glenn Goodrich, owner, Goodrich Maple Farms "Dr. Farrell's book is a must for any novice or beginning sugarmaker. It clearly explains the industry, products, and processes of maple sugaring. For experienced sugarmakers this is a book to join the Nearings' The Maple Sugar Book and the North American Maple Syrup Producers Manual--always on the shelf for ready reference. Thanks to Michael for a welcome addition to the maple library." --David Marvin, president, Butternut Mountain Farm "In The Sugarmaker's Companion, Michael Farrell presents both a philosophical and a practical look at today's tree sap and syrup industry. The book provides pertinent and useful information for both hobby and commercial tree tapping operations. In a changing industry that is heavily shadowed by tradition, Michael combines the old tested methods with up-to-date research and science. This comprehensive book looks at both the big picture and many of the small details. Even for non-sugarmakers, it will be an informative and enjoyable read." --Gary

Backlund, author of *Bigleaf Sugaring: Tapping the Western Maple*—“Mike Farrell’s The Sugarmaker’s Companion should be on every maple producer’s bookshelf. Along with the *North American Maple Producers Manual* and resource notebooks from Steve Childs, it is an essential reference resource. It contains a substantial amount of information not found elsewhere, especially marketing ideas, novel products, economic analyses, and creative ideas for expanding markets for pure maple products. Topics that are covered elsewhere receive updated treatment. Difficult concepts are explained well with attractive illustrations. The author’s enthusiasm for this engaging business is displayed through an easy-to-read conversational style containing many personal anecdotes and opinions. There is a good amount of firsthand information from many hours spent in the woods, in the sugarhouse, and involving his community in enriching their lives with maple. Mike’s positive point of view and creative ideas will encourage sugarmakers to engage a broader audience of potential customers.”—Brian Chabot, professor, Cornell University—“Thomas Jefferson urged all farmers to plant maple trees, so that the colonies would not have to rely on imported sugar. In this spirit, Michael Farrell provides us with everything we need to know to produce America’s own, natural, delicious sweetener. The section on maple sap—a healthy beverage that deserves a place in the American diet—is especially welcome.”—Sally Fallon Morell, president, The Weston A. Price Foundation—“The Sugarmaker’s Companion is a delightful read. For the family with access to a few trees, or the larger sugarbush owner, the information provided in this book will be an affirmation of their efforts. The book delves into not only the maple harvest, but also many of our lesser-known tree resources, as well as fascinating facts like the nutritional benefits of maple sap. The message is clear. To preserve our forests we must enjoy them. . .yummy!”—B. Keith Harris, B.Sc., owner/CEO, Troll Bridge Creek Inc.—“The Sugarmaker’s Companion is an amazing book. It uniquely fills the gaps in currently available maple reference material. It does not repeat what is in the *North American Maple Syrup Manual* but perfectly supplements it with up-to-date information, fresh ideas, and interesting examples. It also does not try to duplicate the details in the *New York State Maple Tubing and Vacuum Notebook* and the *New York State Maple Confections Notebook* but wonderfully adds to the ideas in these areas. It is the first book that integrates the making of other tree-based syrups such as birch and various nut species with the production of maple, improving the efficiency of equipment use and market opportunities. This is a great reference for all tree lovers.”—Stephen L. Childs, New York State Maple Specialist—“This most useful book for tree tappers is especially valuable because it includes the most up-to-date information on all the facets of the sap and syrup

business. Particularly written for those in commercial sugaring, the book is also most interesting for the hobbyist or beginner who may not be aware of the amazing advances that have been made in the business lately. The book also gives detailed information on the tangential commercial and hobby possibilities in sugaring that are seldom examined in earlier books. --Gene Logsdon, author of *A Sanctuary of Trees*

This book is not for the beginner or home maple syrup producer. It is for business use in the main. It's a great read and full of info, but it is misleading to present it as one size fits all.

I was hoping this book had information on how to construct your own arch and evaporator but it does not. As a hobbyist I have quickly outgrown the capacity of a gas turkey fryer and a couple of pots and now need to find out how to process more sap more efficiently and cheaper. (And I really don't want to spend the large \$\$\$ when I have access to inexpensive 304 stainless and the means to weld up my own evaporator.) This book does not point you in that direction.

Farrell's book is an excellent resource for anyone who would like to harvest syrup from trees. It provides a how-to for anyone with only a few trees or with many acres of forest land.

A lot more than an information book. Lots of side notes and tips well beyond how to cook sap.

A great guide for maple syrup producers. I actually got to hear the author speak on the subject at a maple syrup expo, and he is very knowledgeable. He is a great resource for anyone in the business.

Great book. Well written and researched. Tons of great information for both the sugaring professional or hobbyist.

Very well written! This book is a MUST HAVE for anyone who wishes to know Maple Syrup!

Very helpful especially in pioneering the growing Walnut and Birch industries.

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