

Growth Potential in the Northern NY Maple Industry

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There is a vast resource of maple trees in Northern New York that could be tapped to fill the growing markets for pure maple syrup. With worldwide demand for maple products rapidly outpacing supply and prices at record levels, there is a great opportunity for NNY maple producers to increase production and sales. The following table contains information on the number of potential taps in the six county region according to the latest forest inventory data gathered by the US Forest Service Forest Inventory & Analysis (FIA) program. Currently valued at \$3.25 million, the value could grow to over \$9 million annually if we were able to increase the utilization rate for all of NNY to that of Vermont (2%). These conservative figures are based on the bulk price of \$3/lb for all grades of syrup. By accounting for the additional value of selling syrup in retail containers, producing value-added maple confections, and the associated revenues generated through agri-tourism events such as Maple Weekend, the economic impact is actually much greater.

Table 1. Current Production Figures and Potential Growth Based on Increasing the Utilization Rate to 2% for all NNY Counties (based on bulk prices of \$3/lb)

County	Number of Potential Taps	Actual Taps (2000 Census)	Utilization Rate	Current Annual Revenue	Possible Annual Revenue
Clinton	5,146,949	91,618	1.78%	\$687,135	\$772,042
Essex	10,164,673	20,677	0.20%	\$155,078	\$1,524,701
Franklin	14,255,577	24,352	0.17%	\$182,640	\$2,138,337
Jefferson	3,862,308	12,528	0.32%	\$93,960	\$515,618
Lewis	12,215,797	186,977	1.53%	\$1,402,328	\$1,630,809
St. Lawrence	21,022,781	97,356	0.46%	\$730,170	\$2,806,541
Total				\$3,251,310	\$9,388,048

Clinton and Lewis counties already have a very strong maple heritage similar to that of Vermont. At 1.78% and 1.53%, respectively, their utilization rates are much higher than the other NNY counties and almost as high as the 2% rate achieved in Vermont. There is enormous potential for growth in Essex, Franklin, Jefferson and St. Lawrence counties, as they all tap less than .5% of their available trees. By enhancing the maple producing capacity of all of northern NY, we can achieve the full economic development potential from our forests while maintaining the highest standards of environmental quality.