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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

NEW HAMPSHIRE PREPARES FOR PROMISING MAPLE SUGARING SEASON

NH's Maple Weekend 2011 Takes Place March 19 – 20 with More than 60 Sugar Houses Providing Open Houses for Demonstrations, Sampling and Family-Friendly Activities

Concord, New Hampshire, February 21, 2011 – Thanks to positive weather conditions this fall and winter, maple producers across the state are optimistic about a very successful maple crop for the upcoming maple sugar season. According to the New Hampshire Division of Travel and Tourism Development (DTTD), after an average season in 2010, the 2011 maple sugar season may be one for the record books and a sweet deal for visitors to New Hampshire. Maple Weekend in New Hampshire will take place this year on March 19th-20th.

“We are optimistically watching the weather and are looking forward to seeing and tasting what appears to be the makings of a fantastic maple sugar season in New Hampshire,” said Lori Harnois, DTTD Director. “Visitors from near and far come to New Hampshire to experience the maple sugar excitement, and get a chance to learn about this ancient tradition, and indulge in sugar on snow, pancake breakfasts, even horse-drawn rides. It’s great fun for the whole family and is the unofficial kick off to spring in New Hampshire.”

According to the [New Hampshire Maple Producer’s Association](#), the maple season in New Hampshire usually lasts about 4-6 weeks, from mid-February to mid-April, although the days and length of the sap runs depend entirely on the weather. During those weeks, the New Hampshire maple industry produces close to 90,000 gallons of maple syrup. It takes approximately 40 gallons of sap to yield 1 gallon of syrup.

“What we look for is lots of rain in the late summer and fall to saturate the tree roots and a good amount of snow in the winter, all of which are good predictors for a successful season,” said Peter Thomson, owner of [Mt. Cube Sugar Farm](#) in Orford, NH who taps about 9,000 trees per season and has been generating sugar for 52 years. “Even though all this snow makes it harder to get to the trees, the snow helps keep the trees refrigerated.”

Thomson added, “Once the spring thawing starts, the sap will move up from the roots to feed the new buds, and when it freezes at night the sap will go back into the roots. The freezing and thawing process is very important for yielding a good maple crop and there will likely be a lot of that this season.”

Maple Season brings special activities throughout the state, with sugarhouses, inns and restaurants offering special events and packages. Here are several options:

The [Enfield Shaker Museum](#) is hosting a “Maple Sugar Weekend” from March 12-13 when guests can take sugarhouse tours, sleigh rides and make crafts celebrating the maple sugaring season.

[Fuller’s Sugarhouse](#), a “[Best of New Hampshire Grand](#)” in Lancaster, NH, and a fourth generation, family-owned business, offers guests the opportunity to tour its maple sugar making facility that produces syrup voted “4th Place in 2008 by Yankee Magazine’s Best Maple Syrup Contest.”

Maple tours are back on tap at The [Rocks Estate](#) in Bethlehem, NH. Discovering the history of maple sugaring, participating in the process of tapping trees and making syrup, horse-drawn wagon rides through the scenic 1,400-acre Rocks property, and tasty treats have made these tours a favorite springtime tradition. In addition, the on-site New Hampshire Maple Experience museum, housed in a renovated historic building, provides a fun and educational program for visitors of all ages. The Rocks has again teamed up with the famous Polly’s Pancake Parlor in nearby Sugar Hill to offer an abbreviated menu at The Rocks from 10 a.m.- 2 p.m. each day of The New Hampshire Maple Experience.

[Sugar Hill Inn](#) in is one of the inns near The Rocks offering special packages for the weekend of March 19 and 20 and have made the Maple Program part of its Food and Wine Weekend. Packages include 5-course gourmet dinners, wine tastings, wagon rides, and more.

Held in North Woodstock, New Hampshire, the [NH Maple Fest](#) is a hub of activity during New Hampshire Maple Weekend, with many local restaurants featuring maple products in their menus. Throughout the weekend, join in the fun with such planned activities as Maple Obstacle Course, Maple Dinner Ball with the crowning of Maple King and Queen, New Hampshire Maple Festival Parade, and Maple Festival Bed Race. Leave room for pancake breakfasts and taste testing at Fadden's Sugar House, hosted by the Lincoln/Woodstock Chamber of Commerce.

The Bed & Breakfasts Inn Mount Washington Valley (BBIMWV) host their annual [March Maple Madness Tour](#) on Saturday and Sunday, March 26th and 27th. Visitors embark on a self-guided inn-to-inn tour, and ticket holders can sample tasty delights, visit "sugaring" locations and participate in "The Maddening Scavenger Hunt," competing for hundreds of dollars in prize packages, Inns participating include: Buttonwood Inn, Cabernet Inn, Covered Bridge House, The Farm by the River, Mt. Washington B&B, The Notchland Inn and Spruce Moose Lodge. Tickets are \$15 per person and are available by advanced reservation or at the door from the participating Inns. Tickets are valid for both days of the event, 11am to 4pm. Currier & Ives presents a Maple Sugar Weekend from March 18-20 in collaboration with the [Rosewood Country Inn](#), [The Candlelite Inn](#) and [Henniker House Bed & Breakfast](#). Visitors can take advantage of a two-night package that includes a mapped, self-guided tour of neighboring sugar houses and a three-course Progressive Dinner with hors d'oeuvres at the Henniker House, entrees by fireside at the Rosewood Country Inn, and desserts at the Candlelite Inn.

Enjoy maple sugaring at the [Remick Museum and Farm](#) in Tamworth, on March 26th and see a timeline of Native American, Colonial, and modern day sugaring demonstrations. Visit the historic Maple Sugar encampment, take a closer look at the tapped trees in the sugar bush, come inside the Maple Sugar house and see how the modern day evaporator works and sample pure maple syrup and sugar-on-snow. Families will also enjoy scenic horse-drawn wagon rides pulled by the farm's Belgian horses, Lady and Brandi.

[Stonewall Farm Sap Gathering Contest](#) in Keene takes place on March 26th. Each year,

Stonewall Farm invites about twenty teams of draft horses and their owners to race along a course set up in the woodlands behind the Learning Center. They gather sap from old-fashioned buckets, which are then dumped into a large holding tank at the end of the run. Teams are judged for technique, time and quantity, and both spectators and participants have a blast!

For a different kind of maple sugar experience guests at the [Mountain View Grand Resort](#) can enjoy a [maple sugar body scrub](#) followed by a light massage involving the use of maple-based lotion that rejuvenates, softens and smoothes the skin.

“Spring is a great time to visit New Hampshire, especially because room rates tend to be low and there’s still plenty of activities to enjoy,” said Harnois. “Our innkeepers will spoil guests with breakfasts smothered in local maple syrup and then send you on your way for a full day of fun. After a day of exploring, visiting sugar houses, shopping or even spring skiing, you'll have every reason to indulge in a spa treatment or sample some classic New England cuisine!”

ABOUT THE DIVISION OF TRAVEL AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The Division of Travel and Tourism Development, as part of the New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development, works with the state’s seven travel regions to increase visitation, travel and visitor expenditures in order to expand business activity and employment throughout the state. The division is responsible for domestic and international advertising and public relations, literature publication and distribution, www.visitnh.gov administration, grant administration and research to monitor and measure the impact of travel and tourism to the state. For more information about New Hampshire tourism, call 603-271-2665 or visit www.visitnh.gov.