

For Immediate Release

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Vermont Maple Syrup Industry Gives Awards at Vermont Farm Show

The Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association held its annual meeting and banquet at the Vermont Farm Show on January 29, 2008 and honored five industry leaders with special awards. The annual banquet is an opportunity for maple syrup producers, packers, equipment dealers and political representatives to celebrate Vermont's first agricultural harvest of the year.

Approximately 140 people attended this year's banquet which also celebrated the VMSMA's 115th anniversary.

Outstanding Sugar Maker Award

Rick Marsh, president of the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association (VMSMA) presented the 2008 Outstanding Sugarmaker Award goes to Les & Susan Motschman of Hartland, VT. Marsh described the Motschmans as "a husband & wife team who work very well together and who have been producing maple syrup since the early 70's. Together they tap around 8,000 trees and produce quality syrup that is sold locally and throughout New England under their label." Les Motschman is a past director of the VMSMA and they both have served as directors of the Windsor County Sugar Makers Association an association they helped organize and start back in the 1980's. For years they have written and mailed out their county association's newsletter and were also very involved the past three times that the Vermont "Maplerama" was hosted by their county.

Maple Person of the Year Award

Sam Cutting IV, vice-chairman of the Vermont Maple Industry Council (VMIC), presented the "Maple Person of the Year Award 2008" to Richard and Pamela Green of Poultney, Vermont. Since 1982, the Vermont Maple Industry Council (VMIC) has recognized someone for their outstanding service and dedication to the industry and Richard and Pamela Green are very deserving of this award. Richard has been a director of the Rutland County Maple Sugar Makers Association, a member of the VMSMA Board of Directors, and a member of the VMIC. Pamela is on the Vermont Maple Foundation (VMF) Board and Richard has served as treasurer for the past two years. They are often the first to volunteer to promote Vermont maple syrup at a variety of events both in Vermont and out-of-state and have towed the VMF's mobile sugarhouse to many events.

Sumner Hill Williams Award

Sam Cutting IV, on behalf of the VMSMA, VMIC and the VMF, presented the Sumner Hill Williams Award to Gary Gaudette of St. Albans, Vermont. Gary is the President of Leader Evaporator Company, has been a longtime Board member of the International Maple Syrup Institute, past president of the VMIC and member of the VMIC for thirty years and is a sugarmaker. He has been extremely dedicated to the Vermont maple syrup industry and is very deserving of this award.

The Sumner Hill Williams Memorial Cup is presented jointly each year by the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association (VMSMA) and the Vermont Maple Industry Council (VMIC) to honor an individual for outstanding service and dedication to the Vermont maple industry. The award (previously called the Presidents Award) was renamed in January, 2000 in memory of Sumner Williams, then Assistant Director of the University of Vermont Proctor Maple Research Center. Sumner was a sugar maker, researcher and educator and a friend to anyone involved in the maple industry. At the time of his death, Sumner was serving as President of the Vermont Maple Industry Council.

Maple Product Awards

The Maple Product Awards were given to the following sugarmakers:

- 1 Indian Sugar - Stephen & Diane Jones, Sugar Ridge Farm, Danville VT
- 2 Maple Cream - Jim Wells, Olde Carriage Sugarwoods, Charlotte VT
- 3 Maple Fudge - Ed Merrow, Danby VT
- 4 Class Winner and Best of Show
Maple Sugar Cakes - Sandra Porter, Island Pond, VT
- 1 Class Winners Maple Syrup
 - Fancy - Richard Slocum, Randolph Center VT
 - Dark Amber - Dallas Bennett, Waterville, VT
- 2 Class Winner and Best of Show
Medium Amber - Brian Bailey, Barre VT

After the banquet, the VMSMA held its annual business meeting and elected Rick Marsh of Jeffersonville as president, Dave Mance of Shaftsbury as vice-president and Mary Croft of South Royalton as secretary/treasurer.

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