

Maple Syrup Production

NRCS Opportunities



Partnering with NRCS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) assists private land users in addressing natural resource concerns. West Virginia has a long history of maple syrup production and in recent years, interest in maple and other types of tree syrups has increased.

NRCS assists syrup producers by providing conservation technical assistance. This assistance may lead to funding through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). NRCS conservationists work with landowners and managers to implement energy and forestry conservation practices on the farm. For many of these operations, conservation work is mostly for the sugar houses or facilities where the syrup is processed.

EQIP Ag Energy Assistance

Why does syrup production depend on energy? The sap collected from trees is mostly water. To get to the thick consistency and rich taste we all love, water needs to be evaporated, and that takes energy. Through EQIP, energy auditors conduct an Agricultural Energy Assessment, recommending possible conservation practices to use energy wisely.

Through EQIP, energy assistance is available to producers in two ways.

1. EQIP enables the producer to identify ways to conserve energy through an Agricultural Energy Assessment, also known as a Conservation Evaluation and Monitoring Activity (CEMA 228). An Agricultural Energy Assessment is also known as an on-farm energy audit. Agricultural Energy Assessments are typically completed by a certified Technical Service Provider (TSP).

Payment for the completion of an Agricultural Energy Assessment is provided through EQIP based on the type and size of the agricultural operation.

2. After an Agricultural Energy Assessment (228) is completed, a producer may be eligible for additional financial assistance to implement various recommended measures using Energy Efficient Agricultural Operation (374) conservation practice.



NRCS provides financial assistance through the Energy Efficient Agricultural Operation (374) conservation practice to upgrade inefficient equipment with more efficient technology such as reverse osmosis (RO), evaporators, and high-efficiency pre-heaters. These upgrades can reduce fuel burning leading to better air quality and a streamlined syrup operation.



EQIP Forestry Assistance

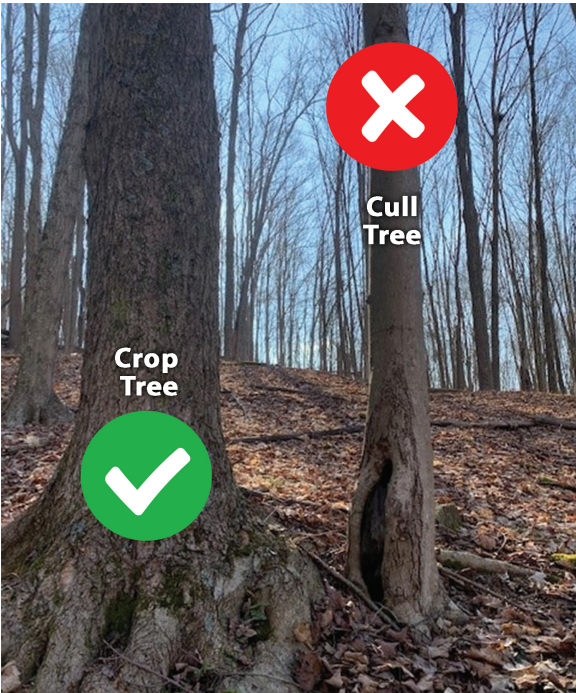
NRCS also provides assistance for forest management practices that would benefit sap producing trees. To qualify for financial assistance, producers must complete forest management practices consistent with an NRCS-approved forest management plan. Two beneficial forestry practices are as follows.

- 1. Forest Stand Improvement (CPS 666) includes activities that will favor maple species and other tree species used for sap collection and syrup production by forest stand improvement to reduce competition.
- 2. Brush Management (CPS 314) includes removal of invasive species such as autumn olive, Japanese barberry, bittersweet, or grapevines that can invade sugar bush stands.

For additional information on how NRCS can assist you please contact your local NRCS Field Office.

WV USDA Service Centers

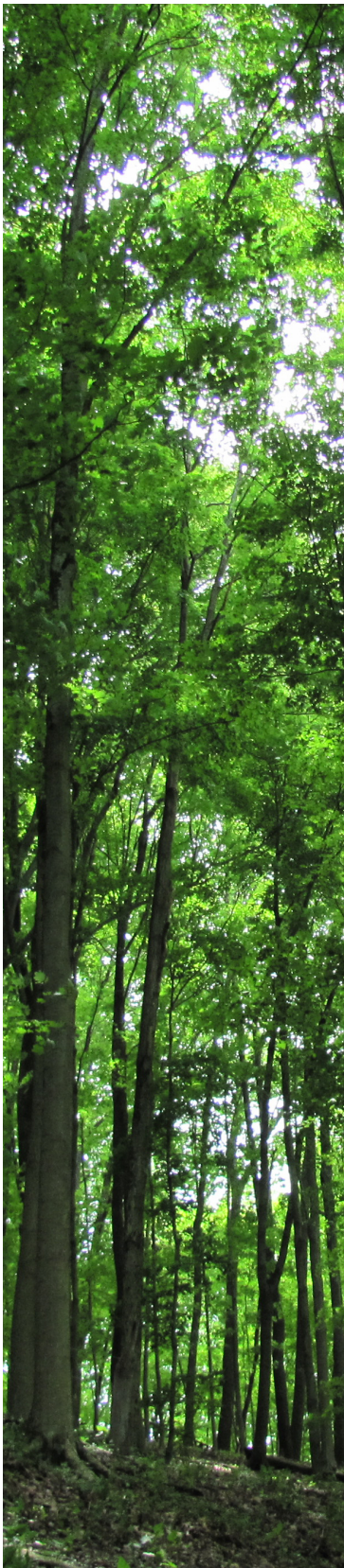
Beckley	681-220-5761
Buckeye	304-427-3006
Cross Lanes	304-776-5256 ext 108
Elkins	304-635-4399
Franklin	304-358-2285 ext 3019
Gassaway	304-364-5103 ext 4012
Glenville	304-462-7171 ext 3
Huntington	304-697-6033 ext 8396
Keyser	304-788-2332 ext 108
Kingwood	304-441-3770
Lewisburg	681-318-4025
Martinsburg	681-247-3016
McMechen	304-238-5648
Middlebourne	304-758-2173
Moorefield	304-530-2825 ext 106
Mount Clare	304-566-3727
Parkersburg	304-422-9072 ext 111
Petersburg	304-257-4702 ext 117
Philippi	304-457-4516 ext 115
Point Pleasant	304-857-5101
Princeton	304-557-3132
Ranson	304-930-9043
Ripley	304-514-7171
Romney	304-822-3020 ext 101
Spencer	304-519-3007
Summersville	304-618-6126
Union	304-772-3006
Weston	681-533-4128
White Hall	304-368-6910



Typical forest stand improvement activity.



Maple syrup evaporator in a WV sugar house.



West Virginia
Natural
Resources
Conservation
Service