



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

Plant Management Enhancement Activity – Sugar Bush 28-Inch Drop Line (MI-EPL45)

Plant Management

Maple syrup production requires the tapping of trees by drilling holes that cause scarring. Buy utilizing a minimum of 28-inch drop lines to evenly distribute taps along each tree trunk, the health and vigor of the tree will be improved.

Benefits

Drop lines are the permanent, vertical tubing that connects the spout (tap) to the horizontal tubing, which carries the sap (either by gravity or vacuum) to the sugar house. The purpose of a drop line is to space the newly drilled hole so that it is far enough apart from past years' drilled holes or wounds so that the operator is utilizing the entire circumference of the tree when tapping from year to year. If an operator is "cluster tapping" or over tapping, then a large area of the tree will not have enough time to heal and will no longer be a producing area of the tree. Using drop lines not only ensures future sap collection, but it also maintains the health of the tree for the transportation of sugars from the leaves to the roots and back to the leaves again. When a tree is over tapped, the area will no longer be available to transport water and nutrients. The length of drop line is important because if the line is not long enough, the operator is unable to utilize the entire circumference of the tree when spacing the hole or holes. The longer the drop line, the better spacing of taps, which leads to increased plant health.

Criteria for Plant Management Enhancement Activity

This enhancement requires a participant to **provide the following documentation for the activity:**

- Plan map showing locations where minimum 28-inch drop line is being utilized on each tree being taped for maple syrup production.
- Photo documentation

References:

Heiligmann, R.B. 2007. Hobby Maple Syrup Production. Ohio State Univ. publ. F-36-02, <http://ohioline.osu.edu/for-fact/0036.html>

Koelling, M.R. and R.B. Heiligmann. North American Maple Syrup Producers Manual, 2nd Ed. 2007. Ohio State University Extension Bulletin 856. 329 pp. <http://extension.unh.edu/forestry/Docs/Maple1.pdf>



United States Department of Agriculture
Natural Resources Conservation Service

CSP Enhancement Certification Sheet

Sugar Bush 28-Inch Drop Line (MI-EPL45)

Participant Acknowledgement Statement:

I agree to apply this enhancement under the terms and conditions of my CSP contract and understand the requirements of the activity.

The participant must:

- Use a minimum of 28-inch drop lines to ensure future tap collection and maintain the health of the trees in a sugar bush.

Number of Trees Taped	Drill holes Per Tree	Acres of Sugar Bush Tapped

Compensation will be on a *per acre* basis as described in my CSP contact.

I agree that the following information will be provided to NRCS upon request:

1. Plan map showing locations where minimum 28-inch drop line is being utilized on each tree tapped for maple syrup production.
2. Photo Documentation.

I understand that it is my responsibility to obtain all necessary permits and to comply with all laws, regulations and ordinances pertaining to the application of these activities.

Accepted by: _____ **Date:** _____