Certified Naturally Grown

Supplemental Inspection Questions for Maple Producers

(to supplement CNG Produce Inspection Worksheets)

1. Maple sap is considered a wild crop. CNG's Wild Crop Harvesting Standard states that:

   A wild crop must be harvested in a manner that ensures that such harvesting or gathering will not be destructive to the environment and will sustain the growth and production of the wild crop.

   a. Ask the maple producer what steps they take to protect and ensure the sustainability of their sugar bush.

   b. Does the land seem well cared for? Are the trees healthy?

2. What does the producer use for a de-foamer (if anything)? Is it organic?

3. In rural areas, woods have unfortunately been used as dumping grounds for all manner of garbage, including toxic waste. Are there any dumps or other sources of potential contamination (old vehicles leaking oil, for example) near the sugarbush? Does the producer refrain from tapping any trees that stand within 40 feet of dumps?

4. Over-tapping trees can stunt their growth. The Cornell Sugar Maple Research & Extension Program guidelines state

   Trees 10-17 inches in diameter (31-53 inch circumference) should have no more than one tap. A tree 18-24 inches in diameter (57-75 inch circumference) should have no more than two taps. A tree larger than 25 inches in diameter (79-inch circumference) should have no more than three taps.

   Does the producer adhere to the Cornell guidelines for number of taps per tree based on size?

5. To maximize tree health and sap production, Cornell recommends that all taps are 5/16" in diameter or smaller. Is this their practice? If not, would they consider transitioning to smaller taps? (This isn't a requirement as of 2010, but a strong recommendation.)

For questions about Maple certification, please contact Caroline at 518.234.4858