



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

## A "Sweet" Time At The State Capitol: Ritchie And Colleagues Celebrate "Maple Day"

PATTY RITCHIE March 21, 2017



Chair of the Senate Agriculture Committee Senator Patty Ritchie welcomed maple producers, FFA students and industry leaders to the State Capitol Tuesday for the New York State Senate's annual "Maple Day."

The special event, which Senator Ritchie co-hosted with North Country Senators Joe Griffo and Betty Little and Central New York Senator Jim Seward, aims to highlight New York's growing maple industry.

“Maple is more than just a sweet treat—it’s a major part of New York’s agriculture industry that helps generate \$20 million for our economy annually,” said Senator Ritchie. “I am proud to join with my colleagues to highlight the importance of maple, and look forward to continuing to work to see that its producers receive the support they need to grow.”

During Maple Day, participants hosted exhibits—including one that allowed individuals to tap a tree—as well as shared samples of maple products and information on the industry with legislators, staff and visitors.

Tuesday’s event comes in between a series of two “Maple Weekends” in New York State, where producers open their doors to host pancake breakfasts, tours and more. Those interested in learning more about Maple Weekend events taking place on March 25th and 26th can visit Senator Ritchie’s website, [www.ritchie.nysenate.gov](http://www.ritchie.nysenate.gov), for more information.

New York State is second behind Vermont in maple production with 1,500 producers and more than 2.5 million taps. The Empire State has the greatest number of tappable maple trees in the United States, at 300,000 million, producing over 700,000 gallons of maple syrup each year. In 2015, New York maple production had reached its highest level in 70 years, according to the USDA.

Meanwhile, Senator Ritchie has advocated for increased support to help the state’s maple industry continue to grow. In the last five years, the Senator successfully increased funding for maple production and research by over \$1.6 million. Just last week, the Senate adopted its one-house budget, which included \$340,000 for maple promotion that was eliminated from the Governor’s spending plan.

*(Attn. photo editors: Senator Ritchie is pictured in the above photo with students from the Vernon-Verona Sherrill FFA during Maple Day at the State Capitol)*