



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

SENATE AG COMMITTEE TO FEATURE MAPLE EXPERT TUESDAY

PATTY RITCHIE March 14, 2016

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Cornell University's nationally recognized maple expert, Stephen Childs, will be the featured guest at Tuesday's meeting of the State Senate Agriculture Committee.

The appearance by Childs, Cornell's New York State Maple Specialist, comes as part of the run-up to New York's annual Maple Weekends, beginning this Saturday and Sunday, and again April 2-3 at more than 160 farms and other locations across the state.

Mr. Childs' research is helping New York's growing maple industry become more productive, boosting quality and profits for farmers, and helping to identify challenges to the industry's future growth. He is frequent lecturer at "maple schools" in communities across the state, helping to inspire new interest in the industry, as well as sharing tips with existing maple producers on ways to grow their businesses.

Under its chair, Senator Patty Ritchie, the Senate Agriculture Committee has been a leading supporter of New York's maple farmers. Once again, Senator Ritchie is working to reverse cuts in funding for maple producers in both the Governor's and Assembly's budgets. The Senate's own budget plan fully restores the cuts to both the Maple Producers Association, which promotes sales of maple syrup, candies and other products, and Cornell's maple research.

"New York maple is a growing part of the success of family farmers all across the state, and I have been pleased to work with the experts at Cornell University, the maple Producers Association and hardworking farmers to promote and grow this important industry," Senator Ritchie said.

"The committee is looking forward to hearing Steve Childs' presentation, and learning more about ways we can help support our family farmers and spread the good news about agriculture—including maple farming—across this state."

Mr. Child's presentation can be viewed live, beginning at 9 am on Tuesday, March 12th, on the Senate website, www.nysenate.gov. A recorded version will be available later in the day at Senator Ritchie's website, ritchie.nysenate.gov.

New York is the nation's second largest producer of maple syrup—after Vermont—with 2.3 million taps—twice the number of 2009. Syrup production in 2015 reached its highest level in

70 years, according to the USDA.

Lewis County is the state's leading maple producer, followed by St. Lawrence County in Senator Ritchie's district.

More information on upcoming Maple Weekend events, including tours, participating farms and pancake breakfasts, is available at the NYS Maple Producers Association website, www.nysmaple.com.

(Attn. photo editors: Senator Ritchie is pictured in the above photo at a recent tree tapping event that took place at the Cornell Cooperative Extension Learning Farm in Canton)