

Southern Syrup-makers Association  
PO Box 207  
Blountstown, FL. 32424

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Summer 2011



# Skimmin's

## Second Annual West Central Florida Syrup Tasting Event. By: Wilbur Dew

With the success to last years Syrup Tasting Event the Pioneer Florida Museum, Dade City, FL, in cooperation with the Southern Syrupmakers Association is looking forward to making the second annual west central Florida syrup tasting event even bigger and better.

The museum has set the date for the event at January 12, 2012. Of course the Pioneer Museum's syrup making crew will be making a batch of syrup for those who come to the event to watch. In addition the event will feature our monthly "garden tractor pulls" with competition between the young aspiring mechanics in the area.

Also, for the enjoyment of old and young we plan an antique farm tractor exhibit. The antique tractor parade will start soon after noon. Any one who has a tractor that they are especially proud of is invited to bring it to exhibit and drive in the parade. Other events and displays may be added as we go along.

## Southern Syrupmakers Association Members in Florida By: David White

On June 29, 2011, I had an inspector from the Florida agriculture Dept. to tell the people at the produce market in Blountstown that they had to remove my cane syrup because I did not have a permit #, nutrition list, and food testing results on my label. He waited until they found me and I went to the produce market. We had discussions about our disagreement for an hour or so. He said his concern was botulism. We discussed the bill that allows us to make and sell our syrup. I got him to call his supervisor and ask about the bill, "Fl Statutes 500.12.4" and tell me what has changed. After a lengthy phone call, he said to keep selling syrup, the bill excluded 100% cane syrup and Sorghum. This is to give everyone in Florida a heads-up on inspectors that may hit on you. Make sure your label have the product name, ingredients, your name and address, where the syrup is produced, phone #, weight, the bill "Fl statutes 500.12.4. Also, "This product has not been produced in a facility permitted by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services." Any of this left off your syrup label can cause your syrup to be pulled off the shelf.

### **Directors & Officers *Time remaining reflects January 2011***

**President** Clyde Smith, (3 years remaining)  
**Secretary** Wesley Pope (1-year remaining) [ruinvest@gmail.com](mailto:ruinvest@gmail.com) 229 403-7580  
**Treasurer** Roy Flowers, (2 years remaining) [royflowers@fairpoint.net](mailto:royflowers@fairpoint.net), 850 447-0298  
**Director** Wilbur Dew (1 year remaining) [WilburDew@aol.com](mailto:WilburDew@aol.com) 352-567-5802  
**Director** Curtis Fletcher (3-year term) [Fletcher@gadsdenclerk.com](mailto:Fletcher@gadsdenclerk.com) 850-556-4084 cell  
**Director** Todd Hester (3-year term) [thester@ufl.edu](mailto:thester@ufl.edu) 352-376-8398  
**Director** Rodney Johnson (3-year term) [minniejohnsonmhj@aol.com](mailto:minniejohnsonmhj@aol.com) 850-639-2292  
**Director** Bobby McDaniel (2-year term) [BobJoy1@embarqmail.com](mailto:BobJoy1@embarqmail.com) 850-593-6542  
**Director** David White: (2-year remaining) [Dwhite131@gtcom.net](mailto:Dwhite131@gtcom.net) 850-674-5579

### **The Southern Syrup-makers' Association annual dues for 2011.**

If your dues are paid for 2011, you should have a membership card with 2011 on the date line. If you do not have a membership card with 2011 on it, please pay your dues now. The dues are \$20.00 per year. If you paid your dues after August 31, 2010, but have not been credited with paying for 2011, please notify Roy Flowers, Treasurer at [royflowers@fairpoint.net](mailto:royflowers@fairpoint.net) or PO Box 207, Blountstown, FL 32424. We do not want to lose any members, but we do need everyone to keep their dues up-to-date. Please make checks payable to: Southern Syrupmakers Association.

## **News Articles for our Newsletter**

We are always looking for articles from members on syrup making or sugar cane that can be shared through the newsletter. If you have an article, please send it to Roy Flowers and it will be included in the next newsletter

### **Southern Syrupmakers' Association Workday and Annual Meeting**

The annual association workday and annual membership meeting is set for Saturday, October 29, 2011. The workday and meeting will be held at the Panhandle Pioneer Settlement, Blountstown, FL. We encourage all members to attend the workday and membership meeting, even if you are not able to participate any of the workday activities. During the workday we will be discussing all phases of cane planting, weed control, fertilization, insect control, harvesting grinding, cooking, and bottling. We will even offer tools to anyone that wants to get their hands dirty to plant, strip, cut, feed the cane mill, or assist with the cooking, and bottling of the syrup.

The association membership meeting will be conducted during the late morning to discuss the future of the association, the desires and wishes of the membership, election of officer to director positions that will be expiring this year. Anyone that knows of someone that would like to serve on the board of directors are asked to submit the individual's name or if you would like to serve then let us know and your name will be placed on the ballot that will be conducted during the meeting.

The meal planned is: Chicken Rice Pilaf, coleslaw, green beans, bread, and dessert, with drinks and coffee. If you plan on attending, please send \$1.00 per person to Roy Flowers, P O Box 207, Blountstown, FL 32424. This will ensure that we have sufficient food prepared to feed everyone. Waiting until you arrive to pay may be to late, to ensure that we can feed you. Whether you want to eat or not, please come and join us for the day, we plan to have a fun filled day.

### **Artisanal sugars from domestically grown organic cane By: Elizabeth Sachs, UC Davis Group**

I'm a pastry chef, used to be an organic vegetable/flower farmer, and did my grad work in ag development at UC Davis. Lived in the South for 12 years and headed back soon. A group of us (plant science, ag econ, and development folks from our Davis group, and a finance/social enterprise expert) is exploring the possibility of starting a small organic sugar enterprise. The enterprise could supply artisanal unrefined sugars for a retail bakery, and possibly to market to other bakers and chefs. We're now doing some preliminary research to determine if a small niche producing artisanal sugars from domestically grown organic cane is at all feasible. We've looked to several models in corn (SC) and wheat (CA)--groups working with local growers to grow heirloom strains and process a specialty product for the trade. The idea would be to identify sugar varieties that are differentiated in flavor and character and other culinary qualities, and process in a way that preserves/enhances these. Sugar hasn't found too big of a role in the world of local foods/heritage foods/food-based cultural preservation that we know of,

although it sounds as if some of you syrup makers are doing all that and more. I've worked a lot with the more rustic imported sugars over the years and I've wondered what might be possible as a small enterprise here in the States. From a baker's standpoint, whole cane sugar, semi-refined sugars like muscovado, and molasses and cane syrups offer deeper, more multi-dimensional flavors than conventional white sugar. Our vision includes a small bakery that would feature products using these sugars and also serve as a lab and resource for learning about and promoting these in the local cuisine. We know it might be a long shot, but worth looking into whether heirlooms are at all feasible at a small commercial scale (maybe 5-20 acres?), ideally in an organic production system. Richard's given me some great food for thought. I'm still trying to get a grasp on if there's enough heirloom stock to think of doing something at this scale; what varieties might be best; what it would take to grow organically; yield estimates; if we could find interested growers; what kind of milling setup would be needed, etc. Any thoughts or suggestions from this group would be greatly appreciated, including the opinion that it's a crazy, far-fetched plan. We're still in the "stupid question" phase and I know very little firsthand about growing or processing sugar. I'm sure I'll be asking more specific questions in time.

## FOR SALE

This section in the newsletter is where members can advertise their items for sale, trade, etc. Provide the information to Roy Flowers at [royflowers@fairpoint.net](mailto:royflowers@fairpoint.net) or PO Box 207, Blountstown, FL 32424, or Clyde Smith at 2228 Bridge Creek Rd. Marianna, FL 32448. This is free to members. The information will be published in the next newsletter and will also be given to individuals calling and asking for information on available, such as, seed cane, sugar cane, cane syrup equipment.

11 Cast iron fire grates, 3 feet long, 6 inches wide, and weigh about 70 pounds each. \$25.00 each. Bobby McDaniel, 850 593-6542.