

Submitter: Gary Pendergrass

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Labor and Business

Measure: SB882

We support the addition of Maple syrup and related products to Senate Bill 882...e.g Maple sap, sugar, and similarly related products from Walnut, Birch and other sap producing trees. These trees are often considered trees of low to no value in a small woodlot. By demonstrating the value of these trees, this will encourage the fostering of diversified woodlands instead of monoculture stands of timber trees which are increasingly susceptible to drought, diseases, and insect attacks.

This addition to Senate Bill 882 will both give a valuable product addition to those farms, woodlot and timber owners and individuals looking for additional income that can often occur in the winter months when there is time available to do such work (i.e. collecting and processing sap).

Selling farm products directly to consumers benefits both consumers and farmers. Direct farm sales let consumers purchase fresh local products ordinarily not available to them, while allowing growers and producers to capture more of the food dollar than they would by selling to distributors.

Although Maple, Walnut and Birch saps have been collected and processed locally for decades, if not centuries, it is only recently the Oregon State University (OSU) has become involved in research, training and publicizing of Big Leaf Maple which is spurring the interest in many landowners into re-learning the trade.

The leap from tapping a single tree in your backyard to scaling up to a full commercial kitchen is rarely feasible without a large capital outlay and the need for additional experience and expertise...all of which are gained by allowing these products to be added to the farm direct marketer sales and consignment of sales...Senate Bill 882.

Big Leaf Maple is not to be confused with the East Coast Sugar Maples, nor is our English Walnut to be confused with the Eastern Black Walnut. Both Big Leaf Maple and English Walnut are unique in taste and have several markets looking to benefit from such.

A few examples...responses from Oregonians that have tried one or both.

- I just emailed you about the type of soda/spritzer that I made using the Big Leaf Maple syrup for a low calorie drink. Low sugar content, carbonated with natural vanilla extract. People love that drink. If, however, we had access to a packaged version someday I am sure that many businesses would be interested.
- As for the bagel business, they would love to try some samples. Both maple and walnut are appealing.
- Several Winemakers in Yamhill County have done a taste test and the reports that have come in are all highly positive. The Walnut syrup in particular was considered stellar and fit as drizzle over steak or salmon.
- One winemaker did a small case lot run of a Big Leaf Maple 'lightly sweetened'

wine that we found great for casual dining.

- Barrel aging whiskey and other distilled spirits, by coating the interior of barrels with syrup.
- The largest Big Leaf Maple syrup company in Washington regularly sells out of product, even with the retail pricing being considerable higher than the East Coast Sugar Maple (and the addition of a smaller % of Walnut syrup to the Maple increases its value even more).
- Tree saps can be used to make coffee/tea, brew beer and added to about any recipe (usually as syrup), that calls for some sweetness...not just for pancakes. Tree saps can be used in candy making, baking, as a maple balsamic glaze (over pork ribs), added to salad dressings, as maple water (basically the sap...great in kombucha), in cocktails, ice creams, yogurts, dipping sauces.

I would further like to support increasing the \$20,000 limit currently in place. The limit in a few States is \$25,000 with most being higher. With the labor and equipment costs needed to collect and process tree saps at any scale other than for personal use, the potential income level should be considerably higher to encourage entry into this cottage industry.