

# WHO'S YOUR FARMER?

## TOM & LAURIE OLLHOFF

### County Line Sugar Bush, LLC



#### DESCRIBE YOUR FARM

I produce maple syrup with my wife, Laurie, as well as our son and daughter. Our farm is located about 12 miles north of Wausau at 2411 Timber Drive in Merrill, WI. We have about 1,450 taps on our property, and we get sap from an additional 1,000 taps from others. Our land has been in our family since 1890 starting with my grandfather. I make most of our equipment. We previously used bags and metal taps, but we now operate all on a pipeline and vacuum system. We run a reverse osmosis machine to remove about 80% of the water before we cook the sap into syrup. We can produce about 72 gallons of finished syrup in six hours. We try to make our operation faster and more efficient every year, but we always maintain the taste and color of our syrup. We most often make light amber syrup, but we also separate the syrup by grade and color and package accordingly for those wanting stronger, bolder flavors.

#### WHAT BROUGHT YOU INTO FARMING?

My grandfather passed our land down to my father, who then passed it down to me. I still have an old English tin pan from my grandfather. I started making maple syrup as a very young kid. It's just what you would do in the spring, and I chose to continue the tradition with my family.

#### WHAT IS YOUR HOPE FOR FARMING?

A lot of people were farmers when I was a child, but you don't see that as often any more. My hope for farming is that kids and families get more involved with farming again. There is great satisfaction in producing a great tasting product for others to enjoy!

#### WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT FARMING?

What I love most about producing maple syrup is going out into the woods and watching it come alive over syrup season. When you start a season, the woods feels dead with little green. As the season goes on you can see the green underbrush growing in and the leaves filling out and all of a sudden the woods feels alive again.

#### WHAT IS MOST DIFFICULT ABOUT FARMING?

Trying to predict the weather! You need just the right freezing temperature for at night and warm, but not too warm, temperatures during the day to get the sap to flow. However, sometimes you get trees to run on a day you'd never think so that's also unpredictable.

#### WHERE CAN YOU BE FOUND?

Website: [www.maplesyrupandmore.com](http://www.maplesyrupandmore.com)  
Facebook: County Line Sugar Bush LLC  
Address: 2411 Timber Drive, Merrill, WI 54452

#### WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE THING YOU PRODUCE?

We always strive to produce maple syrup that is high quality in taste and color. We also produce Maple BBQ sauce that is extremely tasty.

#### RECIPE: Maple Syrup over Ice Cream

##### DIRECTIONS:

Warm our maple syrup in the microwave or over the stove and pour over your favorite ice cream. That is my favorite treat to eat with our syrup!