



WELCOMES YOU TO SUGARING WITH YOUR NEW *10 Tap Kit with Droplines*

The *10 Tap Kit with Droplines* you've just received are specially designed for extracting sap to make syrup.

Your Kit Includes:

- 10 plastic 5/16" taps for tubing
- 10, 3-foot sections of 3/16" drop line
- These basic, easy-to-follow directions for the tubing newbie!

Taps and sap lines come in a few sizes. Antique taps are 7/16" and modern tap sizes can be 7/16", 5/16" or 3/16". Sap lines are typically 5/16" or 3/16" in diameter. Your new taps are 5/16" for a 3/16" line. In other words, they carry sap from a 5/16" hole in the tree to a drop line with a diameter of 3/16". The smaller line size helps create a bit of suction, keeping the wound in the tree open and extracting as much sap as possible for you.

How to Tap a Maple Tree

Ready to tap? In addition to your new kit, you will need:

- a mug of hot water
- a cordless drill with 5/16" bit (we recommend our *5/16" Tapping Bit*)
- a hammer (we recommend our *Tapping Hammer with Spile Remover*), and
- unless you are connecting to lateral sap lines, buckets or other closed containers to catch the sap (we recommend our *Food Grade, 5-Gallon Sap Storage Buckets with Lids*).

Before you go outside, you will want to fit your taps into your drop lines. It's easiest to do with bare hands and a bit of hot water to help the drop line expand. Simply warm up one end of each line in the water for a few seconds, and insert the shorter, less-tapered end of the tap into the line. Now you're ready to tap.

Proceed to your first tree. Choose a height that is both convenient for the driller and within 3 feet of your sap collection container or lateral line. Choose a spot that is easy to drill at that moment, but also think about the current depth of the snow. If your sap collection container rests on snow on the ground, it will sink as the snow

melts. If your sap collection container is attached to the tree, any snow melt will put the collection container further away from the arms of the sap collector.

Having settled on a height, inspect your tree. For best results, you should choose a place on the tree that is either below a big branch or above a big root, and not near a knot or wound in the tree. Cardinal direction doesn't matter too much—every year you should tap at least 6" away, horizontally, and 12" away, vertically, from the prior year's tap anyway—but a southern tap *will* flow before a northern one, so do think about how you'd like to time your season this year.

When you've chosen your spot, drill a hole of about one and one-half inch deep at a slight, upward angle and look for nice, light, creamy wood chips and sawdust coming out. If what you see is dark or dead, find another place on the tree to tap and try again.

When you have your hole, set your tap in the hole by gently tapping it with your hammer. Connect to lateral sap lines with appropriate fittings if applicable. Otherwise, place your sap collection container on the ground or tree and feed the line into it. Move on to the rest of your sugarbush. Now it's time to wait for the sap to run!