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Description of document: Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) Status and Timeline of the Maple Syrup Producers Manual 2018-2021

Requested date: 29-July-2021

Release date: 14-September-2021

Posted date: 27-February-2023

Source of document: USDA, Agricultural Marketing Service
FOIA Officer
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Room 2055-S, Stop 0201
Washington, DC 20250-0201
Email: AMS.FOIA@usda.gov

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September 30, 2021

Delivered via Electronic Mail

Re: Final Response to FOIA Request 2021-AMS-00227-F

This is the final response to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS). Your request was received on August 2, 2021 and sought access to:

Records identifying the status and timeline for completion of the project to transition to a digital version of the Maple Syrup Producers Manual (Maple Manual) prepared by Michigan State University in coordination with AMS.

The AMS FOIA staff works with subject matter experts across the Agency to locate responsive documents. For this request, a search was conducted within the Grants Division of AMS' Transportation and Marketing Program. This Program enhances the marketability and competitiveness of U.S. agricultural products locally, nationally, and internationally by promoting a variety of agricultural systems. AMS' search began on August 2, 2021. Our search provided responsive records in AMS' control on that date.

We have processed 20 pages that are responsive to your request. After a thorough review, we have determined that parts of one page are exempt from disclosure under (b)(6) of the FOIA, 5 U.S.C. § 552, as amended. The remaining 19 pages are being released to you in their entirety. Accordingly, this request is granted in part.

Exemption 6 of the FOIA permits the government to withhold information regarding individuals in "personnel and medical files and similar files" when the disclosure of such information "would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy." Exemption 6 requires agencies to balance the privacy interest of the individual and the public interest in disclosure. The relevant public interest is whether release would shed light on agency activities. Within this record set, AMS is withholding the signatures of individuals. The individuals have a strong privacy interest in this information which could be used for unwanted contact.

This concludes processing of your request. You may appeal our determination within 90 days from the date of this letter. Your appeal should be clearly marked to indicate that it contains a FOIA appeal and include specific reasons why you believe modification of the initial action is warranted. Any such appeal can be sent to ams.foia@usda.gov and should be addressed to:

Bruce Summers
Administrator
Agricultural Marketing Service
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Stop 0201, Room 3071
Washington, D.C. 20250-0201

If you have any questions about the way this request was handled, please contact Heather Higgs, Government Information Specialist, at heather.higgs@usda.gov or (202) 641-8684. If you have general questions or concerns regarding AMS' FOIA procedures or regulations, please contact our FOIA Public Liaison, Bill Allen, at (202) 631-6412 or via email at ams.foia@usda.gov.

Additionally, you may contact the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) to inquire about the FOIA mediation services they offer. The contact information for OGIS is as follows: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road-OGIS, College Park, Maryland 20740-6001, e-mail at ogis@nara.gov; telephone at (202) 741-5770; toll-free at 1-(877) 684-6448; or facsimile at (202) 741-5769.

Thank you for your interest in AMS programs and policies.

Sincerely,

Mark R. Brook

Mark R. Brook
FOIA Officer
Agricultural Marketing Service

Enclosure

Project Title: Moving the maple syrup producers manual into the modern world with an online module based platform of accessible, updateable videos and trainings that replaces the currently out of date manual.

Project Narrative:

Executive Summary:

The Maple industry across the nation has undergone substantial transformations all aspects of production in the last 15-20 years. The trend toward greater production capacity per acre thru efficiencies and the focus on food safety and modernization has left most printed materials out of date. New producers are turning to the Web in increasing numbers and The Maple Producers Manual is out of print and no longer reflects the educational delivery mode desired by the vast majority of maple producers I surveyed over the last year. The technology shift away from print towards online, video content that can be updated within days not years was the impetus for this grant. We aim to work with the former Maple Manual editors who authored the last two editions and who will assist the PI during initial chapter reviews, updates, and creation of new content. As a team, we will do so on a platform that is more responsive to market and technology shifts, and sugar maker demographic changes. The video content modules will be informative, professionally edited, and represent regional differences across the US maple states. It will incorporate industry R&D advances, University research findings, as well as nationally identified specialists appropriate for the chapter topics. This will all be done in “sprints” so that the first chapter updates will be available in the first 3-8 months with chapters being rendered and disseminated consistently across the three years. It will enable the work to be reviewed and updated on a continuous basis.

Alignment and Intent

Project Type: Producer and Landowner education

Project Narrative:

Maple syrup is uniquely North American and has been a spring rite of passage since before settlers landed in Massachusetts. In the early period, it was one of only a few sources of sugar that indigenous cultures and then settlers had to use for cooking and baking. It was bartered for needed hunting, trapping, home, and agricultural supplies since the early days. Every aspect of maple syrup making has evolved over time. Collection of sap has moved from rudimentary collection sacks to lead painted wooden buckets, tin soldered pails, to plastic tubing with vacuum extraction. Boiling of sap into condensed liquid syrup has gone from wooden troughs, to cast iron cauldrons, to flat pans and finally to flued pans with steam hoods, steam away, and reverse osmosis running ahead of the boiling to remove 70-80 percent of the water. Across time, one of the constants in the syrup world has been the knowledge of production being passed down between generations of sugar makers. Children accompanied fathers into the woods to cut and prepare wood for sugaring season, layout and tapping of buckets in the early spring, follow behind the tappers to carefully drive and seat the taps into the trees, and countless hours of gathering and boiling sap into syrup. Very little knowledge was aggregated and condensed into a usable concise format until Mel Koelling and Randy Heiligmann partnered to produce what most have come to know as the sugar makers Bible, the Maple Syrup Producers Manual. Koelling and Heiligmann oversaw the last two editions of the manual and although they had many guest contributors, Randy and Mel spent countless hours taking dozens of different writing styles and qualities to create one uniform product with a singular voice. While 2/3 of the manual is still accurate in its current form, some chapters (technology, economics, food safety etc) are out of date. Technology is ever changing with the equipment manufactures driving the industry forward with substantial gains in sap extraction and pre and post processing. Efficiencies across the spectrum of sap collection, storage,

processing, boiling, filtering, and long-term storage and consumer packing. Food safety and modernization laws are changing how we handle virtually all aspects of production. These laws change as soon as new technology and research discoveries are brought to the forefront and for producers, are much more time sensitive to adopt. To move the maple industry forward into the modern world we can no longer do things as our fathers and their fathers did before. The writing, editing, and publication of manuals, individual chapters in standalone binders is still antiquated. The speed at which the industry is changing will make the work of written chapters obsolete before they are printed. Having a static manual served the industry well for the last several decades because that is what technology had to offer, but it no longer is feasible or financially prudent as the vast majority of the industry is changing annually, if not faster. There is a small subset of diehard producers (the ones that routinely fill out surveys of how they like to receive info) that want a printed copy of a manual to place on their bookshelf. When I travelled across the Midwest talking to wide range of new and existing producers about a manual revision, they either A. didn't know the manual existed, B. have a copy but rarely use it, and both groups said they get most of their information online or from Video based services like YouTube and Vimeo. The online world of videos has the full gamut of quality and educationally correct information for new and existing producers to learn from. The entire premise of this grant request is to use the current manual format with chapters by topic and make it into an online, searchable series of video / educational modules that are much easier to update to reflect changes in the industry in a cost effective manner that far exceeds the potential "reach" of a limited 30-40k printing run of a new manual or inserts. I have spoken with both Randy Heiligmann and Mel Koelling and I not only have their blessing on this endeavor but I have them as contributors to this new modern manual. When I did a simple YouTube search for maple syrup production it returned pages of search results that vary in viewership from a few downloads to a few million. We know there are over 16,000 producers in the US that are surveyed/censused by USDA NASS (National Agricultural Statistic Services) with many more that are unengaged/ unaccounted for. When looking at the past manual sales numbers, the vast majority of the manuals were sold to producers outside of the associations, NAMSC, and NASS sampling such as hobby producers, or as coffee table books. The reach of the modern delivery that is available is orders of magnitude higher and the ability to change a 10-15 minute segment to reflect new technology or laws is accomplished in days not years.

New producers are entering the production arena at larger starting scales, with larger investments up front in technology, and they are doing so in a time of unparalleled connectivity. The use of smartphones, tablets, and internet is rapidly changing how individuals learn and how they prefer to obtain information. Producers are more apt to search YouTube for answers wanting to watch, listen, and learn rather than pull a textbook off a shelf or download a chapter and read it. This grant enables the maple producers manual to be an adaptive resource that meets the needs far beyond the old manual versions. It will serve the global community not just the maple community. As more and more of rural America is served with broadband, cellular, and direct internet, access and use by underserved communities will rise. This proposal positions the entire maple industry, its producers, Land grant educators and researchers, as well as consumers at the forefront of timely, cost effective information.

Objectives of the project

1. Revise and remodel the out of print maple syrup producers manual to reflect changes in outdated chapters and to deliver the information in a cost effective, highly searchable, ADA compliant manner which better adapts to the increasing speed of changes in the industry, and to deliver the information to a much broader worldwide audience that has already adopted new learning platforms.

Work plan, timeline, and intended benefits –

Objective 1.

This proposal has a singular focus and it will be to work with Randy and Mel (the past editors) to identify the chapters that need to be revised, ascertain from them which chapters they substantially rewrote even though they were not listed as first author and then to convert the chapters into working scripts. From those scripts (new if substantial revisions are needed, or like food safety has evolved so much since the last printing that it is more effective to start over), will dictate the video content needed to be obtained. Video, still photos, voice over audio, etc will be obtained across the maple region from local, regional, national, and international subject experts, and finally condense and edited by chapter into a cohesive and educational story in 1-3 modules per chapter. The material will be made available in stages every 3-8 months so the manual will not be a three year work in progress wait. By rolling out chapters as they are completed we will be able to respond to and adjust future chapters accordingly.

Proposed Timeline of Events

Fall 2018 – Dr. Randall will meet face to face with Dr. Koelling and together they will jointly conference call with Dr. Heiligmann to review the current chapters in the manual. Together the three will decide the level of editing that each chapter needs and will create prioritized rankings of chapters. They will discuss and select potential subject matter experts to engage with and create plans to travel to the expert if work cannot be completed remotely. Dr. Randall will oversee the hiring of a 3 year-term academic specialist who will oversee the chapter script formation and editing, schedule and collect video and still photography needed for the individual chapter content, edit the video segments in chapter modules with a rough target of 6-10 minutes per module. We estimate that chapters will take 1 -3 modules to deliver all the pertinent information.

Late Fall / Winter 2018-2019 – Randall and 3 year term specialist will jointly summarize, prioritize, and initiate video and still photography capture. Specialist will plan a trip throughout the maple region to capture regionally specific content for use in the chapters. Most video clips need to be shot during the mid winter (south zone) to mid april (north zone). To capture the regional differences in production and maple culture.

Late spring 2019 – The academic specialist will have all video segments collected in the fall / winter categorized by chapter and identify if any material is still needed. The specialist will begin to create uniform entry and exit content to reflect the USDA grant contributions and MSU's Extension branding. Randall will oversee the creation of a uniform Maple Producers Manual video channel and begin to market the upcoming manual soft release dates. Every 3-8 months chapters will be made available and marketed to the maple world and beyond.

Summer 2019-Fall 2019 – Make available the first 3-4 chapters worth of video modules available to Drs. Koelling and Heiligmann for review and the video specialist will adjust per their comments. We will also edit videos following review by external content specialist across the maple region that we invite to participate in the formal content review process. These will be specialist selected given their individual expertise areas and contributions to the maple industry. They will be a mix pulled from industry, Extension, government, research etc. Randall and Academic specialist will plan the remaining chapter content collection scheduled for fall 2019-spring 2020.

Each step will be repeated in year 2 and 3 until all former and any new chapters (identified fall 2018) are collected, edited, reviewed, and published online.

I. This grant has not been submitted or funded by any other funding agency

1. Achievability:

Outcome 1. This proposed manual update and conversion will not only serve all member and non-member producers in the US maple producing states (USDA NASS estimated just over 16,000) but given the discrepancy in numbers for Iowa, Wisconsin, and Michigan between USDA numbers and Vendor reported sales in those three states there could be substantially more under quantified syrup makers nationally. Additionally, it will not be limited to US producers and will introduce and educate the global viewers about maple syrup in the US. If we look at the more professional maple production videos online in YouTube they have viewership's in the millions, but few if any are associated with Land Grant institutions or the USDA. What makes this proposal unique is the adoption of the new delivery technique, the ADA compliance, the regional inclusiveness, the adaptive nature of periodic updates that will occur within and beyond the three year grant cycle, and the MSU and USDA branding that will occur. Given Randall's appointment as the Extension forester based out of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan he is well positioned to update (much faster than printed versions) and revise the content well beyond the 3 years .

Indicator	Description	Estimated # or NA
1.a.	Total number of project beneficiaries/stakeholders reached	16,000+
1.b.	Of the total number that were reached, the number that reported buying, selling, aggregating, storing, producing, and/or distributing maple syrup or maple-sap products	NA
1.c.	Of the total number that were reached, the number that gained knowledge on how to access or produce maple syrup or maple-sap products	16,000+

Outcome 2. NA

Outcome 3. NA

Outcome 4. NA

Dissemination plan:

As video modules become available (every 3-8 months) we will utilize a marketing strategy that directly targets established maple associations. Once videos are posted following formal review, we will send links to all Maple associations in the US in hopes that they will create a subpage and link the resource to our page of expanding content. We will disseminate the work through the various maple publications (Digest, Maple trader, Maple News outlets). Videos will be archived and disseminated using the preexisting MSU brand creating an almost immediate audience of potential consumers. Links will also be shared via the Extension Forestry and Wood Products notes list serve that is maintained by Eric Norland (national program leader , Forest Resource Management) USDA. In doing so, it will be automatically be sent to all Land grant institutions, their RREA point of contact and Extension Foresters. All videos will include a reference acknowledgement to the grant funds to further enhance the USDA ACER funding impact.

Key Personnel (bold) and Partners (see also attached Letters of Commitment section)

Jesse Randall, Director and Associate Adjunct Professor, Michigan State University

Jesse is a Senior Research Associate and Director of the Forest Biomass Innovation Center (FBIC) at Michigan State University. He is a former tenured Associate Professor and statewide Extension Forester for Iowa State University. He is a 5th generation commercial syrup producer and is lead PI on the grant request. Dr. Randall lead the Forestry Extension section at ISU for 11 years and routinely offered 20+ field days, 15+ hands on workshops, and 20+ invited presentations per year across the state/region. He has created (planned, video captured, compiled, and edited) 40 natural resources related videos, as well as captured, edited, and published 204 voice over power point modules / video modules. He runs a large tri-state conference for 500+ attendees annually, and handles 12,000 email and 5000+ phone requests for forestry related information annually. At ISU he oversaw a cadre of full and part time undergraduate assistants who specialize in forestry related event logistics and utilized a team of journalism specialists, video editors, videographers, and web developers all focused on creating / updating forestry content throughout the year. His evolving role as Director of the Center will focus on Regional timber and non-timber forest products, landowner/consumer education, market enhancement for products, and research to enhance the capacity of maple producers in the state and region. Please see attached Short 2 page CV.

Video Academic Specialist

MSU forestry Extension under the direction of Dr. Randall would hire a 3 year term academic specialist with a proven history of video and still photography experience. This individual would oversee the chapter layout with Dr. Randall and would be tasked with all video and still photography per chapter, editing of video content, voice over audio of Randall, Koelling, Heilgmann, and other topic specialists.

Currently there are 13 chapters in the old manual and we plan to have 1-2 new additional chapters given changes in the food safety realm. Conservatively, the rate of production on video content is \$1000 per finished minute if hiring an outside firm with rates going higher for more travel and video collection (which this project will most certainly have. We chose to hire a 3 year video specialist to provide uniformity and consistency across the videos and allow for edits and updates for all videos within the 3 year time frame.

Former Manual Editors as Collaborators/Partners/ Advisors

Mel Koelling, is a retired professor at MSU Department of Forestry and with Dr. Heilgmann assembled and edited the last two issues of the maple manual. Dr. Koelling is a long time maple producer and forestry educator. Koelling has authored countless technical publications and lectures on a wide range of timber and non-timber forest products. He is located 15 minutes from MSU and will be a close cooperator.

Randy Heilgmann is a retired professor at The Ohio State University and with Dr. Koelling assembled and edited the last two issues of the printed maple manual. Randall and Koelling will conference call and ZOOM meeting with Heilgmann in Ohio.

Partners with formal Letters of Commitment Attached

Dr. Jesse Randall, MSU Forestry Extension, will spearhead the project with Koelling and Heilgmann as contributors. In doing so, we will reduce the cost of production and expand the potential within each chapter section. Because Koelling and Heilgmann own most of the Photos and editorial content covering the last two manuals we can reduce the cost of production and logistics by limiting the

formal partners. We will utilize guest specialists for video content as they are identified as having technical expertise.

Management plan for communicating with partners and Long-term project viability

We will utilize conference calls, ZOOM to meeting, and in person meetings to brainstorm, plan, and follow-up monthly. By utilizing calls and internet based ZOOM to meetings we will reduce travel costs and time commitments (travel time) for all partners. MSU Forestry Extension will continue as part of its programming to facilitate updates to the online adaptive video version of the maple manual as part of its ongoing education mission

4.2.4 Fiscal Plan and Resources Budget Narrative

Personnel: We are requesting funds for an academic specialist to work on the project in years 1-3 with a starting salary of \$45,000 and an annual increase of 3%.

Fringe Benefits: In an effort to allocate the cost of fringe benefits more realistically, a new system referred to as Specific Identification (SI), went into effect on July 1, 2004 at MSU. Under this system, costs are specifically identified into four categories and accounts will be charged only to the extent that an employee receives, or in the case of health care is eligible to receive, those benefits. The categories are:

1. MSU retirement (10% of base salary or per labor contract) *if the employee is eligible AND participates*. If they don't participate, they won't be charged.

2. FICA at **7.65 with a salary cap: 6.2%** up to salary cap of \$128,790 (FY 2017/2018) + **1.45% of all salary**.

3. Other/miscellaneous category (1.4%) for small items like life insurance, workers compensation, unemployment compensation, long term disability, vacation payouts, etc.

4. Health, dental & prescriptions using a flat dollar amount if employee is *eligible* for health benefits. Since federal HIPAA regulations prevent employment discrimination based on health care costs, we are prevented from charging different amounts depending on if one is signed up for single, family or waived coverage. This amount for FY 2017 -2018 is \$14,180 for regular employees and includes ~\$3,338 for the costs of retirees (i.e. retiree health, dental and prescription costs), and \$7,031 for Research Associates.

All of the costs identified above will be distributed to the employee's **base** salary. All other payroll types, summer school, overtime, medical service plan monthly and quarterly will only be charged FICA as appropriate.

Travel: Domestic travel (years 1 and 2) for the Academic specialist to travel to various maple syrup producing regions and capture regionally specific maple production techniques on film to be used in the video modules per the chapter of the manual. The travel includes vehicle rental, lodging, and extra miles above the allocated allotment. Rates are based off of current MSU small vehicle rental rates and lodging is estimated at 130 dollars per night / 26 nights in year 1 and year 2. \$3000 dollars is requested in each of years 1 and 2 to cover 6,000 extra miles (\$0.50/mile) above the 1000 / month that comes with the rental vehicle.

Other: Materials and Supplies – in year 1 & 2. \$3,500 is requested per year for the purchase of video memory cards, backup video storage, misc camera additions needed to deal with high temperature and high humidity environments of sugar houses and low temperature winter conditions in the timber. \$10,000 is requested in year 3 to supply the maple community nationally with video modules and extra footage of maple production on a small pin drive. It includes the pin drive and mailing should individuals not have access to a downloadable server like Google Drive.

Indirect Costs: The proposed amount of \$90,611 is based on 36% MTDC of \$251,697.

The F&A rate is applied using a Modified Total Direct Cost (MTDC) basis. MTDC basis means that equipment, graduate tuition & fees, participant support costs, capital expenditures, charges for patient care, space rental costs for off-site facilities, scholarships, and fellowships as well as the portion of each subaward and subcontract in excess of \$25,000 **shall be excluded** from the total direct costs when determining the applicable basis amount.

The Facilities and Administrative (F&A) rates for the period beginning July 1, 2015 and ending June 30, 2019 have been negotiated with the Department of Health & Human Services (DHHS), under an agreement dated June 26, 2015.

*Abbreviated Vitae***Jesse A. Randall**

Director, Forest Biomass Innovation Center and Adjunct Associate Professor
 Department of Forestry.
 6005 J Rd
 Escanaba, MI
 Michigan State University

Education

Ph. D. Forestry (2006) Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI

Advisor Michael B. Walters

Dissertation: Deer and Sedge Effects on Seedling Regeneration Dynamics in Northern Temperate Forests.

B. Sc. (with Honors) Natural Resources, (1999) Cornell University, Ithaca, NY

Work Experience

Director and Extension Forester, (August 2018); Extension (40%), Administration (30%), Research (30%)

Michigan State University Department of Forestry, Forest Biomass Innovation Center

Associate Professor, (July 2013 – August 2018); Extension (75%), Research (15%), Service (10%)

Iowa State University, Ames, IA, Natural Resource Ecology & Management Department

- Extension Forestry Specialist, ISU Extension and Outreach
- Ag Engineering & Natural Resources Plan of Work Co-Leader (2013-2015)
- Natural Resources Plan of Work Leader (2015- present)

Assistant Professor, (February 2007 – June 2013); Extension (75%), Research (20%), Service (5%)

Iowa State University, Ames, IA, Natural Resource Ecology & Management Department

- Extension Forestry Specialist, ISU Extension and Outreach

Graduate Research Assistant (June 1999 – Dec 2006)

Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI., Department of Forestry

Awards

Iowa State University (ISU) Early Achievement in Extension Award (2011)

ISU College of Ag & Life Science – Early Achievement in Extension Award (2010)

American Forest Foundation: National Tree Farm Leadership Award (2010)

Extension-Related Contracts & Grants

\$783,639 – Total Extension Funds

\$773,639 – Randall PI Total-

\$35,000 – Pending

Summary of Extension Events

<i>Type of Presentation</i>	<i>07-12*</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Field Days</i> ¹	64	10	11	11	13	16	3	128
<i>Workshops</i> ²	36	12	15	13	13	6	7	103
<i>Invited Presentations</i> ³								
- <i>Regional</i>	10	4	4	2	1	2	1	24
- <i>Local</i>	74	4	12	14	11	20	9	143
<i>Regional Conferences</i> ⁴	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	9
<i>Forestry Short Courses</i> ⁵	7	2	1	1	1	1		13

Summary of Extension Publications and Electronic Media

<i>Type of Pub/Media</i>	<i>07-12*</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Publications / Fact sheets</i>	31	9	7	7	7	4		68
<i>Videos</i>			9	7	2	18	4	40
<i>Learning Modules from Conferences (VoPP)</i>	72	19	21	56	11	10	15	204
<i>Misc (Pods, radio, TV, Newspaper)</i>		12	13	13	17	11		66

Research (15%) Contracts & Grants

\$543,954 – Total Research Funds
\$265,424 – Randall PI Total-
\$60,000 - Pending

Areas of Expertise

- Chloroactemide herbicide impacts on seedling development, growth, and survival,
- Non-timber forest products (ginseng, maple syrup.),
- Sweet tree maple enhancement – the physiological/ecological cost/benefit of enhanced sugar sap sweetness as silvicultural components in riparian areas and in marginal / fallow fields
- Silvicultural management practices that promote diverse native understory community compositions and system functioning (fire, residual basal area thinning, etc.),
- Techniques to moderate high density ungulate herbivory impacts on forest regeneration,

Scholarly products

Peer reviewed research publications

- 5 published
- 9 in prep

Posters & published proceedings – 14

Mentorship- 12 graduate students, 29 undergraduates

Teaching (No Teaching Appointment)

Instructor of record FOR 302, Silviculture (two 3 hr lectures, one 3 hr lab per week)

88 guest lectures in 14 different classes & labs,

2 study abroad trips (China, Costa Rica)

Facilitated 4 S130-190 trainings for 100 students

Facilitated and Lead 6 chainsaw safety and use classes

Professional Service

National & Regional Meetings Facilitated – 14 meetings 5000 participants

Technical Reviewer - 11

Invited National Committees - 11

Invited State Committees - 12

University Timber Sales Administered – \$172,078

INTERIM PERFORMANCE REPORT

An Interim Performance Report must be received within 90 days after the end of the first year of the date of the signed grant agreement and 90 days after the end of each subsequent year until the expiration date of the grant period. Interim Performance Reports must illustrate the progress made toward the completion of each project within the grant agreement.

GRANT INFORMATION

AGREEMENT

AMS Agreement Number:	USDA AMS - AM180100XXXXG153		
Project Title	Moving the maple syrup producers manual into the modern world with an online module based platform of accessible, updateable videos and trainings that replaces the currently out of date manual.		
Period of Performance:	Start Date:	10/1/2018	End Date: 9/30/2021
Award Amount:	249,747.27		
Match Amount (if applicable):	Enter Non-Federal Matching Amount (\$).		

RECIPIENT

Recipient Organization Name:	Michigan State University
Recipient's Project Contact	
Name:	Jesse Randall
Phone:	906 786 1575
Email:	Randal35@msu.edu

REPORT

Interim Report Type:	Interim 1		
Reporting Period:	Start Date:	10/1/2018	End Date: 10/1/2019

PERFORMANCE NARRATIVE

ACTIVITIES PERFORMED

Address the below sections as they relate to this reporting period.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

List your accomplishments for this reporting period and indicate how these accomplishments assist in the fulfillment of your project's objective(s), outcome(s), and/or indicator(s). This listing should identify your project's partners and their contributions.

#	Accomplishment	Relevance to Objective, Outcome, and/or Indicator
1	Advertised, recruited and hired a videographer/editor for the project. Mr. Antonio Sanchez was hired in winter 2018 - 2019 and moved to the Upper Peninsula of MI from Dallas	The videographer was the critical first step and once the University hiring protocols were followed he began the process of turning the manual into video scripts

#	Accomplishment	Relevance to Objective, Outcome, and/or Indicator
	Texas to start the position in June. Antonio has 13 years experience with NBC and Telemundo. He also owns victory video and photography.	
2	Mr. Sanchez worked with Dr. Randall to create working scripts for chapters 1-9 from the second edition of the maple manual. We focused most of the initial work on detailing those chapters identified by UVM personnel as needing only minor edits or new photos (8 of 13 chapters receiving little to know content change as part of their USDA AMS ACER Funded grant).	Woodlot management, value added products, design and layout of sugarbush are the first three chapters that are being updated. Antonio has shot B roll for those chapters and is assembling the video segments. Through late winter and spring 2019 Antonio is traveling the maple region to obtain B roll pertaining to all the chapters and the regional variation in maple production and cultures.
3		
4		

CHALLENGES AND DEVELOPMENTS

Provide any challenges to the completion of your project or any positive developments outside of the project's original intent that you experienced during this reporting period. If those challenges or developments resulted or will result in corrective actions and/or changes to the project, include those in the space below.

#	Challenges or Developments	Corrective Action and/or Project Change(s)
1	UVM Proctor personnel have not been easy to work with and have withheld all chapter drafts (minor edits, new and/or substantial edits. They placed demands that MSU and this PI felt are unreasonable and told this PI to postpone the project until late summer 2020.	We have discussed this with the Grant administrator at AMS and have decided to work off the version 2 manual and update the chapters undergoing major revisions by UVM since it is not rocket science (working directly with Koelling and Heiligmann). Given the small community that works with maple we have independently reached out to maple experts and have been working with them to make substantive changes and are working them into the videos. We are also coordinating with those individuals to be the "expert" that we highlight in the video segments for the respective new chapters. To cover the technology advancements portion we have reach out to the industry reps and owners that manufacture the equipment and are the ones that do the R&D. This decision was made to get a forward looking perspective on the technology of sap refinement and concentration. It will translate into videos having a longer shelf life upfront.
2	Following university hiring protocols delayed the start of the videographer. Instead of January it was June when he officially came on board	This was a challenge and more to do with the budget and we will if needed ask for a 6 month extension as the grant nears the end date of 2021.
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4		

OUTCOME AND INDICATOR RESULTS TO DATE

Quantify the overall progress on the outcomes and indicators of your project.

#	Outcome/Indicator	Quantifiable Results
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1	The three chapters currently in production are still on schedule for late spring / summer 2020 release. At that point we will begin to quantify use (downloads, watch time, etc) and roll out a dissemination plan through MSUs existing platforms as well as each of the state maple associations and the NAMSC sites.	
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DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

If necessary, include further explanation of the quantifiable results to date.

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UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Provide a description of the activities that you are planning to complete during the next reporting period.

#	Activity	Anticipated Completion
1	Antonio will hit the road and collect video segments from across the maple region capturing all sizes of producers (hobby to industrial, as well as educational maple events, association meetings. Following the spring 2020 maple season Antonio will review, segment clips into appropriate chapter folders and identify any gaps that are needed during the 2021 season. We will also focus the remaining work on subject matter experts (think Steve Childs and Peter Smallidge from Cornell, Kathy Hopkins from Maine, and Navindra Seeram from Rhode Island) and capture their content when they are available.	
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PROJECT EXPENDITURES TO DATE

EXPENDITURES

Cost Category	Federal Funds Budget (FEDERAL PORTION ONLY)		Matching Budget (IF APPLICABLE)	
	Approved	Actual	Approved	Actual
Personnel	20000	15776.00		
Fringe Benefits	10748	7238.77		
Travel	9200	3630		
Equipment				
Supplies				
Contractual				
Other				
Direct Costs Sub-Total		23046.07		
Indirect Costs		5991.76		
Total				

PROGRAM INCOME (IF APPLICABLE)

Source/Nature (i.e., registration fees)	Amount Approved in Budget	Actual Amount Earned
NA		
Total Program Income Earned		

Use of Program Income

Describe how the earned program income was used to further the objectives of this project.

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INTERIM PERFORMANCE REPORT

An Interim Performance Report must be received within 90 days after the end of the first year of the date of the signed grant agreement and 90 days after the end of each subsequent year until the expiration date of the grant period. Interim Performance Reports must illustrate the progress made toward the completion of each project within the grant agreement.

GRANT INFORMATION

AGREEMENT

AMS Agreement Number:	USDA AMS - AM180100XXXXG153		
Project Title	Moving the maple syrup producers manual into the modern world with an online module based platform of accessible, updateable videos and trainings that replaces the currently out of date manual.		
Period of Performance:	Start Date:	10/1/2018	End Date: 9/30/2021
Award Amount:	249,747.27		
Match Amount (if applicable):	Enter Non-Federal Matching Amount (\$).		

RECIPIENT

Recipient Organization Name:	Michigan State University
Recipient's Project Contact	
Name:	Jesse Randall
Phone:	906 786 1575
Email:	Randal35@msu.edu

REPORT

Interim Report Type:	Interim 2		
Reporting Period:	Start Date:	10/1/2019	End Date: 10/1/2020

PERFORMANCE NARRATIVE

ACTIVITIES PERFORMED

Address the below sections as they relate to this reporting period.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

List your accomplishments for this reporting period and indicate how these accomplishments assist in the fulfillment of your project's objective(s), outcome(s), and/or indicator(s). This listing should identify your project's partners and their contributions.

#	Accomplishment	Relevance to Objective, Outcome, and/or Indicator
1	Videographer traveled to 5 states and visited with/recorded content from 16 producers. Antonio recorded 100+ hours of B roll to start	

#	Accomplishment	Relevance to Objective, Outcome, and/or Indicator
	editing work on 7 chapters from the second edition manual.	
2	Mr. Sanchez worked with Dr. Randall to finalize working scripts for chapters 1-9 from the second edition of the maple manual. We focused most of the initial work on detailing those chapters identified by UVM personnel as needing only minor edits or new photos (8 of 13 chapters receiving little to no content change as part of their USDA AMS ACER Funded grant).	Woodlot management, value added products, design and layout of sugarbush are the first three chapters that are being updated. Antonio has shot B roll for those chapters and is assembling the video segments. Through late winter and spring 2020 Antonio traveled the maple region to obtain B roll pertaining to all the chapters and the regional variation in maple production and cultures. Covid cut short his plans in the NE and Canada Closed the border so we will have to wait until 2021 for that content collection (hopefully)
3	We hired a professional voice over person to narrate the content and he has completed 6 chapters of narrations.	
4	7 chapters have had first editions completed and those have been sent to outside reviewers for content and delivery review. Chapter 1 = 5:27 minutes, Chapter 2 = 9:38 minutes Chapter 3 = 9:00 minutes Chapter 4 = 15:32 minutes Chapter 5 = Scheduled to record winter of 2020-2021 pending travel permissions (pandemic related delay) Chapter 6 = 41:32 (will be segmented into 3 ten minute videos) Chapter 7 = 40+ (will be segmented into 4 ten minute videos)	

CHALLENGES AND DEVELOPMENTS

Provide any challenges to the completion of your project or any positive developments outside of the project's original intent that you experienced during this reporting period. If those challenges or developments resulted or will result in corrective actions and/or changes to the project, include those in the space below.

#	Challenges or Developments	Corrective Action and/or Project Change(s)
1	UVM Proctor personnel have not been easy to work with and have withheld all chapter drafts (minor edits, new and/or substantial edits. They placed demands that MSU and this PI felt were unreasonable and told this PI to postpone the project until they are done.	We have discussed this with the Grant administrator at AMS and have decided to work off the version 2 manual and update the chapters undergoing major revisions by UVM since it is not rocket science (working directly with Koelling and Heiligmann). Given the small community that works with maple we have independently reached out to maple experts and have been working with them to make substantive changes and are working them into the videos. We are also coordinating with those individuals to be the "expert" that we highlight in the video segments for the respective new chapters. To cover the technology advancements portion we have reach

#	Challenges or Developments	Corrective Action and/or Project Change(s)
		out to the industry reps and owners that manufacture the equipment and are the ones that do the R&D. This decision was made to get a forward looking perspective on the technology of sap refinement and concentration. It will translate into videos having a longer shelf life upfront.
2	Covid Pandemic has greatly curtailed travel making filming impossible both in the US and Canada where the major equipment manufacturers are located and the major research facilities are for maple.	Our hope is to get a travel waiver to travel for 2021 maple season.
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OUTCOME AND INDICATOR RESULTS TO DATE

Quantify the overall progress on the outcomes and indicators of your project.

#	Outcome/Indicator	Quantifiable Results
1	The 7 chapters currently in production are under external content review and should be released winter 2020-2021 prior to the 2021 maple season. At that point we will begin to quantify use (downloads, watch time, etc.) and roll out a dissemination plan through MSUs existing platforms as well as each of the state maple associations and the NAMSC sites.	
2		
3		
4		

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

If necessary, include further explanation of the quantifiable results to date.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Provide a description of the activities that you are planning to complete during the next reporting period.

#	Activity	Anticipated Completion
1	We are requesting a travel waiver from the university to capture content from Steve Childs and Peter Smallidge at Cornell, Kathy Hopkins from Maine, and Navindra Seeram from Rhode Island. In doing so this would complete 4 more chapters and then we would focus the 2021 maple season on NH, Maine, and research facilities as well as the maple equipment manufacturing process.	
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PROJECT EXPENDITURES TO DATE

EXPENDITURES

Cost Category	Federal Funds Budget (FEDERAL PORTION ONLY)		Matching Budget (IF APPLICABLE)	
	Approved	Actual	Approved	Actual
Personnel	103,636.01	41,995.84		
Fringe Benefits	58,970.33	19,308.82		
Travel	18,400.00	3,389.45		
Equipment				
Supplies	7,205.79	673.49		
Contractual				
Other	10,000.00	0.00		
Direct Costs Sub-Total	198,212.13	65,367.60		
Indirect Costs	51,535.14	16,985.70		
Total	249,747.27	82,353.30		

PROGRAM INCOME (IF APPLICABLE)

Source/Nature (i.e., registration fees)	Amount Approved in Budget	Actual Amount Earned
NA		
Total Program Income Earned		

Use of Program Income

Describe how the earned program income was used to further the objectives of this project.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

14 July 2021

Martin Rosier
National Program Manager

RE: AM180100XXXXG153 NCE Request

Dear Mr. Rosier,

I write to request a no-cost extension for award number AM180100XXXXG153 titled, "Moving the maple syrup producer's manual into the modern world with an online module-based platform of accessible, updateable videos and trainings that replaces the currently out of date manual". MSU is requesting a 1 year no-cost extension with a new proposed end date of 30 September 2022.

Given Covid travel restrictions over the past 14-16 months and the border closure with Canada we have been unable to get into certain equipment manufacturing facilities and major maple packers (the video content we are missing will be used in several chapters).



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for.m

We have moved ahead on several chapters and have 10 chapters produced with voice over narration and have included video place holders for the remaining video content that is left to be captured in the spring of 2022 maple season. Several chapters reference equipment manufacturing which has been curtailed due to covid. Those that are opening back up are still restricting non-employees (our videographer).

There is roughly \$130,000 remaining. Remaining funds will again cover the videographer, travel to capture video, supplies related to videography capture and storage, Randall salary, narration/translation costs.

If border with Canada opens in fall, we will capture equipment manufacturing segments from all willing manufacturers. insert segments into the 10 existing chapters. Finalize and capture the remaining 4 chapters and capture content in spring of 2022. Begin roll out of finished chapters in early summer 2022. Promote content to all state ite final reports to USDA in Sept 2022.

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(b) (6)

Contract and Grant Administrator
MSU Contract & Grant Administration
Awards@cga.msu.edu