

Future Generations University is pleased to share a free resource kit for West Virginia Maple Syrup Producers to share across social media to promote Mountain State Maple Days 2024. If you have any questions, contact Lindsay Kazarick, Appalachia Program communications associate, Lindsay.kazarick@future.edu, 304-358-2000 x 120.

In this kit, you will find:

1. General overview of marketing best practices
2. Easy-to-follow posting instructions for computer and mobile
3. Sample posts and hashtags appropriate for Facebook, Instagram, and X/Twitter
4. Graphics in multiple file formats, sized for social media purposes
 - o (JPG, PNG, PDF) and in three sizes: square (“sq”), vertical (“portrait”), and horizontal (“landscape”)

1. MARKETING OVERVIEW

Marketing efforts can be broken down into four components, or “Four P’s:” Product, Place, Promotion, Price.

- What products will you offer and how are they unique?
- “The most important marketing consideration is to simply understand your **product** and its **place** in the marketplace.”
- “Early on, it’s important to define your product. Developing your value-proposition can communicate the main reasons a customer should buy your product and how it solves a problem or need they may have and improves their life. The value-proposition “promise” also communicates why your customer should buy your product instead of the competition’s. This promise describes your product’s benefits to bring new customers to your business and helps to retain existing ones.”



[Worksheet for Marketing your maple syrup products.docx - Google Docs](#)

- Fill out this worksheet to identify your 4 P’s, target markets, target customers and begin your marketing strategy.

SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING

Over half the world's population is on social media – it is essential for businesses, big and small, to have an online presence. To effectively market using social media, there are five key steps to take:

1. Goal-setting and Plan
2. Consistency
3. Interesting Content
4. Engage your Audience
5. Measure your Success

1. Set a Goal and Form a Plan

Different social media platforms perform better for different audiences. The three platforms this kit addresses are: Facebook, Instagram, and X/Twitter.

- Who is your target audience (per platform)?
- What messages are you trying to push?
- What content works best (per platform)?

Create a goal for your social media platforms – what do you want to say, how often do you want to say it, and what types of content (pictures, videos, surveys, testimonials, information, links) do you want to share. Come up with a plan for when and how you will share your posts, or who will be in charge of posting to your account(s).

2. Consistent Communication

It may be helpful to create a calendar so you can keep track of how often to post on each platform. Post content regularly so that it stays in front of your audience as they scroll.

According to Hootsuite, a popular social media scheduling software, summarized recent findings on optimal post schedule across different platforms:

- **Instagram:** Post between **3 and 5 times per week.**
- **Instagram Stories:** Post **2 times per day.**
- **Twitter:** Post between **2 and 3 times per day.**
- **Facebook:** Post between **1 to 2 times per day.**
- **LinkedIn:** Post between **1 to 2 times per day.**
- **TikTok:** Post between **3 and 5 times per week.**
- **Pinterest:** Post at least **1 time per week.**
- **Google My Business:** Post at least **1 time per week.**

3. Content that Captures Interest

Share content that is **noteworthy, visually engaging, tells a story.**

Newsworthiness

- Anything that is considered newsworthy is a good idea to generate content around. The pillars of newsworthiness are timeliness, proximity, conflict and controversy, human interest, and relevance.

Media

- Static images should have a clear visual and not include a lot of words (that is what the caption is for).
- Using gifs or videos is excellent – the movement attracts the audience’s attention and is more interesting to look at than just an image.
- Include your staff! It is a great way for your audience to get to know the faces behind the brand.

Storytelling

- Use storytelling to engage the audience and develop a brand voice.
- It is a creative way to convey your message without seeming like you are trying to sell a product.

4. Engage with your Audience

One of the biggest factors that helps get your business or event in front of more people organically (i.e. not relying on paid advertising), is to engage with your audience after you post. Ask a question or share a survey, and respond to each person who participates. Replying directly to any comments usually “tags” the person, which sends them a notification – and can also be seen by their friends across their social media presence. Part of your goal-setting and planning can include pre-written “thank you” messages or answers to common questions, such as easy directions to your sugar bush or event site, dates, times, contact information.

5. Measure your Success

The simplest way to measure your efforts is by watching the number of fans you get on your social media pages. But that’s not always a good indicator. What’s more important is the volume and quality of interactions on your sites—comments, likes, shares, etc. This is a good sign you are attracting the right kind of fans—people whom you can convert into customers.

Check Facebook Page Performance:

You can check your Facebook Page on a computer or a mobile device.

1. Go to your business Page and select **Insights (or Insights icon if on your phone)**. *Note: Insights may be under the More tab. The tab you see depends on what features you use on your Page.*
2. The Overview tab shows your **Page Summary**. This summary gives you a high-level look at all the metrics on your Page. Click into each box for a deeper look into specific metrics.

Check Instagram Page Performance:

Insights are only available for Instagram Business or Creator accounts. You can check your Instagram Page only on a mobile device.

1. Go to your profile.
2. Tap the Insights action button.
3. Tap the metrics under the Overview section or specific content you shared for a more detailed breakdown.

Check X/Twitter Account Performance:

1. Log in to twitter.com with your X username and password to turn analytics on for your account.
2. On a desktop or laptop computer, visit twitter.com and click on posts. In the X app for iOS or Android on your phone, tap the **analytics icon** visible in your posts. Or, visit <https://analytics.twitter.com/> once you've logged in to view your monthly stats.

2. HOW-TO POST OVERVIEW

FACEBOOK

Posts on Facebook have the most flexibility. Posts can be long (up to 63K characters), Videos will post up to 10GB, and videos can be as long as 240 minutes. You can post up to 80 images, or up to 1000 in a Facebook photo album. Facebook Live videos may be 1 sec – 8 hours.

1. Open your Facebook page (desktop) or app (phone) and login if needed. Go to your page.
2. At the top of your posts feed, look for the prompt that reads, “What’s on your mind?”
3. Click the text box and a pop-up appears, where you can write your post and add photos or videos. You can also:
 - a.  [Add a photo](#) or [video](#).
 - b.  [Add a location](#).
 - c.  [Tag friends](#).
 - d.  [Add how you're feeling or what you're doing](#).
 - e. Choose another option to add to your post (example: a GIF or a Live Video).
4. Click the [audience selector](#) at the top (example: ) to select who you'd like to share your post to.
5. Click **Post**.

INSTAGRAM

Posts on Instagram must have an image or video. You can post up to 10 images on each Instagram post. All images need to be the same size per post. Captions can be up to 2,200 characters. (An ideal length is under 125 characters.) There is a limit of 30 hashtags per post. Video posts need to be between 3 sec – 60 minutes. Reels may be 15 sec – 90 sec. Stories may be 1 sec – 60 seconds. Instagram Live videos may be 1 sec – 4 hours.

1. Open the Instagram page at www.instagram.com (computer) or app (phone) and login if needed.
2. Click the “+” button.
 - o DESKTOP: “+” button is on the left-side navigation, located below the heart symbol. A pop-up will appear after you click where you can choose “Post” or “Live Video.”

- MOBILE: “+” button is on the bottom navigation, located in the center.
- 3. Select the imagery for your post.
 - DESKTOP: For a “Post,” drop-and-drag images or videos, or click the button that reads, “Select from computer” to upload photos or videos.
 - MOBILE: At the bottom of your screen, you’ll see four choices: POST, STORY, REEL, LIVE. For a “Post,” choose from your camera library. For multiple images (up to 10), select the icon that shows two squares on top of each other. To take a picture or video, select the camera icon. Then hit “Next” on the top right of your screen.
- 4. Edit your images as needed (crop, zoom, filter)
- 5. Add a caption, location, alt text, and/or tags.
- 6. Click “Share”

X/TWITTER

Posts must be 280 characters or less. Post up to four pictures. Pictures may be of variable sizes. Post up to one GIF or one video. Videos may be 140 seconds in length, maximum file size 512 MB.

1. Open your X/Twitter page (desktop) or app (phone) and login if needed. Go to your account.
2. Type your content.
 - DESKTOP: At the top of your posts feed, look for the prompt that reads, “**What is happening?!**” or click the “+ feather” icon on the left-side navigation and a text box will pop up.
 - MOBILE: On the bottom right of your screen, a blue “+” icon sits above the bottom navigation. Click it and a new screen pops-up with the prompt, “**What’s happening?**”
3. Add photo(s), video, or GIF.
4. Click “Post”

3. MOUNTAIN STATE MAPLE DAYS – SAMPLE POSTS

January and Early February:

Mark your calendars! Mountain State Maple Days returns in 2024 on February 17 and March 16. Join us and our fellow WV maple makers as we open our sugar shacks for tours, demonstrations and syrup sampling! For more info, go to: <https://wvmspa.org/mountain-state-maple-days/>

Maple Season is fast approaching and we look forward to having you at our open houses! Visit us Saturday, February 17 and Saturday, March 16 for Mountain State Maple Days. Check back often for more details. Learn more at www.wvmspa.org.

We are excited to announce that thanks to the [WV Maple Syrup Producers Association](#) we are now a part of [Mountain State Maple Days!](#)

On Saturday February 17th and Saturday March 16th from [your schedule – for example, 10:00 am – 4:00 pm], visit us for [your event – for example, tastings; see syrup being made; food menu; kids activities; etc].

Questions? Please send us a direct message, call or text us at [your number], or shoot us an email at [your email].

February 3, 2024

TWO WEEKS AWAY! Visit us for February's Mountain State Maple Day, February 17, 2024.

[Pertinent messaging about your business or event]

February 7, 2024

10 DAYS AWAY! You are invited to our farm on Mountain State Maple Day, February 17, 2024.

[Pertinent messaging about your business or event]

February 10, 2024

ONE WEEK AWAY! Join us February 17, 2024, for Mountain State Maple Day and experience [your event information]

February 14, 2024

Nothing says love like sweet maple syrup. Join us this weekend, Saturday, February 17, 2024, for Mountain State Maple Day with your sweetheart for [your event information].

** Post every day between February 15 – 17 to promote your business/event.

February 18, 2024

Thank you to everyone who came out for February's Mountain State Maple Day! We are so glad you joined us. Come back again March 16, 2024, for the final Maple Day event, and tag us in your photos and videos from this weekend!

Late February/Early March:

We're in the thick of maple syrup season! Join us Saturday, March 16, 2024 for the final Mountain State Maple Day to see behind-the-scenes and learn more about how syrup is made. Bring your family and friends for a sweet day in the heart of West Virginia!

Don't forget to mark your calendars for Mountain State Maple Day – March 16, 2024. We are open [your event information].

Will we see you Saturday, March 16, 2024? It's Mountain State Maple Day and we are [your event information.]

March 2, 2024

TWO WEEKS AWAY! Visit us for February's Mountain State Maple Day, March 16, 2024.

[Pertinent messaging about your business or event]

March 6, 2024

10 DAYS AWAY! You are invited to our farm on Mountain State Maple Day, March 16, 2024.

[Pertinent messaging about your business or event]

March 9, 2024

ONE WEEK AWAY! Join us March 16, 2024, for Mountain State Maple Day and experience [your event information]

** Post every day between March 13 – 16 to promote your business/event.

Week of March 17, 2024

THANK YOU to everyone who supported us for Mountain State Maple Days 2024! We appreciate sharing our [home/farm/space] and our syrup with you. Please visit us again [insert normal visiting hours or link]. We look forward to seeing you for 2025's Maple Days next year!

HASHTAGS

[#mountainstatemapledays](#) [#futureappalachia](#) [#mtnstatemaple](#) [#maple](#) [#maplesyrup](#)
[#maplesyrupseason](#) [#livelearnappalachia](#)

TAGS

Facebook:

@mountainstatemaple <https://www.facebook.com/MountainStateMaple>

@future.appalachia <https://www.facebook.com/futureappalachia>

@wvmaplesyrup <https://www.facebook.com/wvmaplesyrup>

Instagram:

@future_appalachia https://www.instagram.com/future_appalachia/

@wv_maple_syrup_association https://www.instagram.com/wv_maple_syrup_association/

X/Twitter

@FutureGenU <https://twitter.com/FutureGenU>

@wVMapleSyrup <https://twitter.com/WVMapleSyrup>

4. MOUNTAIN STATE MAPLE DAYS GRAPHICS

Graphics are available in three sizes:

1. Square
2. Vertical (“Portrait”)
3. Horizontal (“Landscape”)

Graphics are available in three file formats:

1. JPG (good for documents, posters, social media posts)
2. PNG (good for social media posts, websites, newsletters)
3. PDF (good for printing, emailing)

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MOUNTAIN STATE MAPLE DAYS 2024

SOCIAL MEDIA KICKSTARTER KIT FOR WV SYRUP PRODUCERS