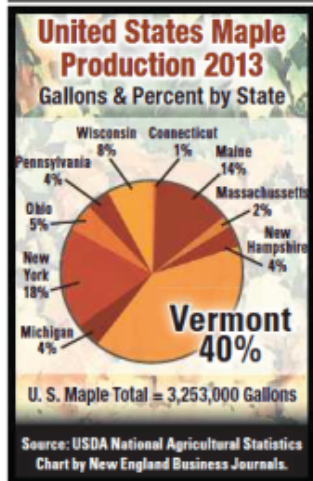


**By the numbers**



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# BATTENKILL BUSINESS JOURNAL

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## Golden delicious

### Vermont maple producers to begin using new universal grading system

By **JOYCE L. CARROLL**

Vermont consumers will begin seeing new labeling on maple syrup this year, as the country's number-one producer of maple syrup begins implementation of a universal grading system. The year is a transitional one, meaning some retailers will continue to sell product with the familiar Grade A Fancy label, while others may begin offering that same grade under the new label Grade A Golden/Delicate Taste.

A labeling change has been under discussion for a number of years, said Matt Gordon, executive director of the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association. The new model, he added, was the result of collaboration with the International Maple Syrup Institute along with input coming from consumer surveys.

According to the law as stipulated through the Vermont Secretary of Agriculture, Food and Markets, a transition period for using existing grade labeling will extend until January 1, 2015. In addition, producers producing or selling their syrup within the state of Vermont may use the existing grade terminology in addition to the new



**A maple syrup sample is inspected to check for light transparency. The new grading system will be based on flavor variations rather than color, as in the past.**

PROVIDED

## Battenkill Valley Health Center opens

By **MARY MILLER LEE**

Bennington County now has a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) with the recent opening of the Battenkill Valley Health Center (BVHC) in Arlington. Bennington County was the only county in Vermont without a FQHC prior to the opening. Work on this project began in 2010 with the formation of the BVHC Board, led by Arlington resident Mary Ann Carlson, and Dr. Michael Welther, Arlington Family Practice solo practitioner.

According to Carlson, the BVHC Board and Dr. Welther concluded "the premise of a single primary-care physician was no longer viable in the area." Rising costs and cuts in Medicare reimbursements were cited as the key contributors to the problem. After researching options, it was determined that the best alternative was to go the route of creating a community health center and pursue FQHC status.

After much hard work, the BVHC was successful in achieving FQHC status in 2013, after their application had been denied twice due to lack of available federal funds. "The break came when

BVHC: 16

## Mack Molding wins contract to produce tools for law enforcement

By **TRICIA N. HAYES**

New jobs and enhanced safety for officers and offenders are benefits of the Aegis Industries (Aegis) AXeos ESW Waveform Recorder/Analyzer. The product measures the output of Electroshock (ESWs) when law enforcement personnel deploy Tasers.

Aegis has contracted with Mack Molding in Arlington to be the sole maker of the product. In the future, Aegis personnel believe the device will be required in police departments across the country.

Aegis founder/CEO Kenneth J. Stethem was on hand at Mack Molding recently to explain and demonstrate how the system analyzes and tests Tasers to ensure compliance with manufacturers' specifications. The Aegis accurately measures the force of the shock. The public would be protected from faulty equipment that could cause cardiac arrest; police officers would be guaranteed the use of sound equipment and municipalities would avoid potential litigation where Tasers were used in subduing suspects.

Currently legislation is pending in the Vermont Legislature as part of H.225. According to Representative Anne Mook of Bennington and a member of the House Committee on Government Operations, testimony began last year on the need for measurement of the ESWs. Included in the legislation is a requirement for the measurement and development of performance standards and training.

According to ex-Navy SEAL and counter terrorism

Mack: 12



PROVIDED

**Aegis founder and CEO Kenneth Stethem (second from left) demonstrates the working of the Aegis system to measure Taser output to (l to r) legislators Mary Morrissey and Ann Mook and NEBJ publisher Deborah Morse.**

## Mack

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Continued from 1

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expert Stethem, there are currently “no standards for ESW performance. The causes are myriad: manufacturing, faulty components, poor maintenance, damage due to operational exposure and expired life-cycle.”

The Aegis system would resolve the performance issues. It also brings vitality to the southern Vermont manufacturing market. Jeff Somple, president of Northern Operations for Mack, said it could bring 30 – 60 jobs to the Arlington facility. The volume of business depends on the demand created for the testing device. Mack, as the only manufacturer of the Aegis in the country, has the capability of ramping up production based on demand said Bryan Campbell, headquarters plant manager at Mack.

Already municipalities across the country and Canada are lining up as potential buyers. Interestingly, Vermont may be the first state to enact the legislation requiring the testing and measurement of Tasers. While concerns for the measurement and verification of electrical energy have long been recognized, there was no simple, cost-effective solution available. The Aegis system will be sold for “under \$10,000” said Stethem.

Law enforcement agencies point to the effectiveness of having a viable method/equipment for measurement. The Hamilton County Association of Chiefs of Police (NY) said “making sure that the ESWs are functioning properly is critical to the safety of both the officer and the offender.”

In June 2012, 39-year-old Macadam Mason of Thetford suffered “sudden cardiac death due to ESW discharge” when he failed to follow the orders of the Vermont State Police. The fatality was blamed on the use of a Taser that did not adequately meet the manufacturer’s specifications. With the Aegis system, the verifiable results would identify any problems with the operation of the Taser before it was put into action in the field.

Mack Molding, founded in 1920, is a custom plastics molder and supplier of contract manufacturing services. The company specializes in plastics design, prototyping, molding, sheet metal fabrication, full-services machining and medical device manufacturing. Of its 11 facilities worldwide and seven locations in the eastern U.S., three are located in Vermont. ♦