

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**HEALTH BENEFITS OF MAPLE ABOUND**

*All-Natural Sweetener is Low on Glycemic Index, High on Taste  
Contains Key Minerals and Is Produced Sustainably, Domestically*

**Brattleboro, VT (September 17, 2008)** ô Coombs Family Farms, a seventh generation maple producer and champion of small family farming, today reminds consumers that maple is not only an all-natural and delicious alternative to refined sugar, but also a food that possesses several health benefits.

õWe all know that pure maple is a delicious and all-natural sweetener,õ said Arnold Coombs, seventh generation maple farmer, Chairman of the Vermont Maple Industry Council, and General Manager of Coombs Family Farms. õBut did you know that pure maple has specific health benefits and can be produced sustainably and organically on small family farms here in New England?õ

According to the Proctor Maple Research Center at the University of Vermont, one tablespoon of maple syrup is only 50 calories, about the same as a tablespoon of refined, white cane sugar. However, maple syrup has a low glycemic index value (54), according to the original Glycemic Index of the University of Sydney. A glance at its nutritional composition reveals that it also contains minerals such as manganese (100% DV), riboflavin (37% DV), zinc (18% DV), magnesium (7% DV) and calcium and potassium (5% DV). Brown sugar, corn syrup and honey have higher glycemic indexes and contain more calories than maple.

Pure maple syrup is all-natural, it contains no additives or preservatives, and it can be produced sustainably, organically, domestically, and by using environmentally sound practices.

While American Diabetes Month isn't until November, it is important to be aware year-round that nationwide, 23.6 million people, or 7.8% of our population, have diabetes, 5/7% of whom are undiagnosed. The intake of high glycemic index foods, including processed sugars and sweeteners, is still one of the primary causes of diabetes, as well as heart attack, stroke, and obesity.

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In fact, the childhood obesity epidemic which, according to a survey conducted by the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and published in the May 21, 2008

issue of *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, has hit a plateau in recent months, still affects more than 32% of our country's children and cites the consumption of refined sugars and processed foods as the major culprit.

Maple offers health benefits, but you have to make sure it's 100% pure and/or organically certified," continued Coombs. "There are many products in the mass market today that are positioned as maple syrup that are non-pure products that are simply maple flavored corn syrup with additives and preservatives, as well as a high glycemic index. Plus, pure maple atop pancakes, oatmeal, and yogurt is a motivator to not skip breakfast. And that's another health benefit."

Maple has a long history of being celebrated for its health benefits. The Master Cleanse diet was created by Stanley Burroughs in 1941 and later popularized by Peter Clickman in his book (2005) *Lose Weight, Have More Energy and Be Happier in 10 Days*. The Master Cleanse claims to be a way to cleanse the body of toxins and remove cravings, and involves drinking lemonade with Grade B maple syrup and other ingredients.

Health practitioners may argue about the efficacy and healthfulness of The Master Cleanse Diet; regardless, maple continues to be lauded for various health reasons.

### **About Coombs Family Farms**

Pure maple has been a way of life at Coombs Family Farms for seven generations. Coombs Family Farms has produced 100% pure maple since 1840. Since 1988, Coombs Family Farms has produced certified organic maple syrup. A champion of small family farming, Coombs Family Farms also sources 100% pure organic certified maple from other small, independent farmers who share the Coombs commitment to quality, environmental stewardship, and sustainable forestry management. To learn more about Coombs Family Farms maple, please visit [www.coombsfamilyfarms.com](http://www.coombsfamilyfarms.com).

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