

## **Biography of a Seventh Generation Maple Farmer Arnold Coombs**

One hundred percent pure maple has been a way of life for seventh generation farmer Arnold Coombs practically since the day he was born. On the way home from the hospital, his mother stopped in so newborn Arnold could meet his father, Robert Jr., who was busy sugaring during peak maple season. At the age of three, he started riding behind the tractor while his dad and granddad, Robert Sr., tapped trees. As a shy ten year-old, he came out of his shell giving maple tours to out of towners. Now, Arnold's teaching his own boys, Max (16) and Addison (15) what was passed down to him.

That's part of what it means to be a seventh generation maple farmer. From Thomas to Jethro, Asa, Fred, Robert Sr., Robert Jr., and now Arnold, one hundred percent pure maple has been a way of life for the Coombs Family since 1840.

Arnold maintains that key to longevity and sustainability at Coombs Family Farms is environmental stewardship. Arnold takes seriously his commitment to the maple industry, small independent farmers, and above all, the forest. His grandfather, Robert Sr., always said, "There are no shortcuts to creating pure maple syrup—do right by the forest and it'll do right by you."

To this day, Coombs Family Farms still works with many of the same maple trees Arnold's great, great-grandparents once tapped. Some of the trees are now more than 300 years old, one nearly 20 feet in circumference. As Coombs Family Farms has grown over the years, the family has taken pride and satisfaction in maintaining its connection with these ancient maple trees.

As General Manager of Coombs Family Farms and Bascom Farms, Arnold is a champion for small family farms and advocate for the maple industry. Arnold currently serves as the chairman of the Vermont Maple Industry Council. He is a member and past director of the Vermont Maple Sugar Makers Association, and a member of the Organic Trade Association. Arnold graduated from Champlain College with a degree in Business.

"There are no shortcuts to producing pure maple syrup. Maple farming is not just our livelihood, but also our way of life. I'm proud to support other small maple farmers who share the Coombs commitment to quality, environmental stewardship, and sustainable forestry. It's not just the right thing to do—it's what has to be done." --Arnold Coombs, Seventh Generation Maple Farmer, General Manager of Coombs Family Farms and Bascom Farms

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