

MUSCOOT MONTHLY

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A NEW YEAR AHEAD

Snow is falling, the ice pond is frozen, and many animals are tucked away for the winter. All may seem quiet on the farm, but our staff is as busy as ever because January marks the start of maple season! At Muscoot Farm, our mission is to provide an educational experience to all who visit, and our staff accomplishes this by offering a diverse range of farm animals, historical buildings with informative signage, and countless educational programs for the public.

With the start of maple sugaring comes many maple-related programs. We started sugaring season with multiple Backyard Sugarin' tours where participants learned how to identify and tap sugar maple trees in their own backyard!

They then learned how to store the collected sap and boil it down to sweet, homemade maple syrup. Folks can also register for one of our Tree Tapping tours where you will tap one of our trees on the farm!

With temperature fluctuations and an ever-changing climate, new strategies to maple tapping are being developed. We are very excited to announce that for the first time in Muscoot Farm history, we are setting up maple tubing lines! We would like to thank the Friends of Muscoot Farm, our non-profit organization, for the funding. Maple tubing lines are blue, plastic tubes which connect tapped sugar maples to one main lateral line which then feeds to a single collection point with the help of gravity. This makes sap collection easier, more efficient, and

allows us to produce much more maple syrup!

With a new year ahead, Muscoot Farm aims to continue innovating and improving its programs and practices. Remember that all would not be possible without your help! Community involvement and donations fuel the education that Muscoot Farm provides. Thank you and happy sugaring!

-Brian Halper, Educator

WINTER SOW JUGS PROGRAM

What is winter sowing? Winter sowing is a simple, sustainable way to start seeds outdoors during the cold months for those eager for spring! Instead of growing under lights, seeds are planted in clear recycled containers and left outside to experience natural winter weather.

What are the positive environmental impacts? By using recyclables, we keep plastics out of landfills, save energy by skipping indoor setups, and facilitate the growth of native plants that support pollinators and local ecosystems.

Why should you learn to winter sow? There are many motivators to learning this gardening trick! First, it is inexpensive and simple. It does not require grow lights or a greenhouse, which in turn makes your seedlings stronger by growing in real conditions. Overall, it is a fun, hands-on project that is inclusive of all gardening skill levels and benefits our environment!

Join us on Saturday, January 24th, from 1:30-3:00pm at Muscoot Farm to learn all about winter sowing and take part in a hands-on workshop. Bring your own clean recyclables (ex. milk jugs, take-out containers, or any clear plastic you can repurpose). We will provide a limited amount of seeds and soil to help you begin your very own winter sowing journey! Registration can be found on our website's event calendar.

-Jen Campbell, Educator/Camp Director



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