

BUFFALO DISTRICT OFFICE NEWS

JUNE 2011

DISTRICT DIRECTOR'S CORNER



Franklin J. Sciortino
District Director

100 Years and Counting Sweet Payoff for Merle Maple Farm

Maple syrup producers Lyle and Dottie Merle have a long history of producing maple products in New York State. The fourth generation business has picked up a lot of production lately. The Merles operate their Merle Maple Farms in Attica, New York. Their strongest production is their newest client Wegmans and the new equipment purchased with the assistance of Five Star Bank and the U.S. Small Business Administration.

For over a century, the Merle family has produced maple products, eggs, and raised dairy livestock, but not until recently have they invested in their 16,000 tap operation where they not only produce pure maple syrup, but from the syrup they make maple sugar candy, granulated maple sugar, maple spreads – traditional cinnamon, raspberry, and robust, hot and sweet maple mustards, maple garlic pepper, and maple apple butter.

The sweet sap starts running in late January and early February at the Attica farm, which produces between 4,000 and 5,000 gallons of pure maple syrup each spring. "But to get the sweet taste, you need to drive through Wyoming County in February and March," said the Merles. "These days, it is rare to see a bucket on a tree in Wyoming County - most producers, including us, use the tubing lines. The percentage of trees tapped in Wyoming County is 15-20%," Lyle said, "and you can visit our maple syrup farm festivals that feature real tap tours, special product tastings, rides and plenty of maple cotton candy!"

In 2011, and with a new corporate account, the farm required new technology and equipment to assist with its mass production of syrup. It was then, that the assistance they needed came from Five Star Bank and SBA. The loan the Merles received was a sweet pay off and their agricultural farm was now an agribusiness venture!



Dottie Merle credits SBA programs and services with helping them become bigger and better!

"Unique in the industry, the Merle's have demonstrated the ability to do more in day because they have ...

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MAY 2011

Lending Reports Available

Reports can be viewed at:
www.sba.gov/ny/buffalo

Helping small businesses
start, grow and succeed.



About the Company



Company:

Merle Maple Farm

Location:

Attica, New York

Owners:

Lyle & Dottie Merle

Phone:

(585) 535-7136

Website:

www.merlemaple.com

Business Type:

Agribusiness

Job Creation: 3

Awards: Merle Maple was awarded four of seven first place ribbons in the maple categories at the New York State Fair in 2007—and Best of Show on maple syrup the fourth time in 7 years.

Merle

equipment to mass produce as evidenced by the farms current success, operational expansion and revenue growth, said John Titus, vice president of Five Star Bank.

“Between the festival and all the activities taking place at Merle Farm, Wyoming County is the place to be during maple season”, Lyle said. He chuckled, “Most sugar houses aren’t burning down; it’s a sugarhouse working its magic.”

For more information on SBA programs and services, please visit SBA at www.sba.gov/ny/buffalo.



Region II Advisory Meeting

The SBA’s Region II Buffalo District Advisory Council met on June 8 the meeting was held at The Mansion in Buffalo, N.Y. The event was and hosted by Michael Taylor, senior vice president, New York Business Development Corporation. Anthony Carroll, advisory council chair and regional business banking executive, HSBC Bank (pictured) opened the meeting and introduced SBA Buffalo Deputy District Director, Victoria Reynolds.

Reynolds discussed district office updates, mid-year lending activity and contracting initiatives. The council also heard from SBA District Director Franklin Sciortino who announced and discussed the upcoming America East 2011 Conference for SBA Lenders, and Michael Taylor, NYBDC, who made a presentation on SBA’s CDC/504 loan program.

Small business leaders representing a balance of industries, associations, federal, state, and local agencies offered unique small business perspectives and reported on issues facing small businesses.



International Trade

The SBA Buffalo district office International Trade Task Force met on June 3. The meeting was held at the Buffalo State College’s Burchfield-Penny Art Center and was hosted by Susan McCartney, Director, Buffalo State College Small Business Development Center. Committee members listened to Tony Maggiotto, e-commerce business advisor, Buffalo State College SBDC (pictured), who addressed the task force on e-commerce and exporting: helping small business owners access the global market. Task force meetings are held quarterly.



SBA Introduces New Mobile Application for Small Business Owners, Entrepreneurs



Smart phone users interested in starting or growing a small business can now find helpful resources at their fingertips via a new SBA mobile application from the U.S. Small Business Administration.

“Increasingly, smart phones are the vehicle through which Americans access information. This is certainly true of many entrepreneurs and small business owners and this new application ensures they will have access to SBA’s resources and programs – literally at their fingertips,” said SBA Administrator

Karen G. Mills. “Greater mobility fits with the new user-focused SBA.gov launched recently, and is another example of the steps we are taking to do a better job of connecting entrepreneurs and small business owners with the tools to help them start or grow their businesses and create jobs.”

Developed and donated as a gift by Palo Alto Software, Inc., the SBA mobile app will make the search for extensive resources more efficient, whether users are starting a new business or taking an existing business to a new level. The app will first be available for the Apple iPhone®, with future versions for other smart phone platforms.

“Palo Alto Software’s mission is to help small businesses succeed. We’ve developed this mobile application for the SBA because we understand the importance of having the right tools and resources when starting or growing a business,” said Sabrina Parsons, CEO of Palo Alto Software. “Ideas can strike entrepreneurs at any moment, and having useful resources available through mobile devices could be the impetus that begins the next big company.”

The mobile app will help users connect with SBA district office staff and SBA-affiliated counselors and mentors who can provide free, personalized small business assistance. The user-friendly format of the app will help answer questions such as: How do I start a business? Where can I go in my area to get free help with writing a business plan? And where do I begin finding funding for my business?

The SBA mobile app also features a built-in startup cost calculator to help estimate the costs associated with getting a business off the ground, plus an SBA partner locator to help users find SBA offices, Small Business Development Centers, Women’s Business Centers and SCORE.

Users will also have mobile access to SBA video content and social media alerts to provide them with tips on the go. This will include live updates from the SBA’s YouTube channel and from SBA’s Twitter feeds. The free mobile app can be downloaded from the SBA’s website at www.sba.gov/content/sba-mobile-app.

District Staff

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Tammi Bennett



**AMERICA
EAST**
Conference for SBA Lenders

The SBA invites you to attend and learn valuable information for small business clients that need capital to expand, opportunities to learn how to maximize your organization’s participation in SBA’s lending programs and networking with small business lenders from 21 states on the Eastern Seaboard, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and Virgin Islands! The Buffalo office of SBA will host the America East 2011 Conference for SBA Lenders from August 15-17 in Niagara Falls and Buffalo, N.Y.

Don’t Miss this Opportunity to grow your SBA Knowledge & Network!

The 2011 theme for America East is “Paving the Road for Growth”, which will connect a day of training in international trade credit and opportunities, a day highlighting SBA initiatives and success stories, and a day focusing on serving underserved small business communities. A series of intensive training programs on SBA Policies and Procedures will be woven into the conference. The overall conference message will be to reinforce the strength of the Small Business Administration’s partnership with lenders and urge participants to accept the charge to empower the small business community for growth.

Register for this annual event is a low \$299.00 and includes all meals and conference material. Each conference day will also offer a key note address and expert panel discussions with the first on August 15 in Niagara Falls on Goat Island!

Visit our online brochure for more details at [America East Conference for SBA Lenders](#) .

