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Enriching Maple in Appalachia

Advancing profitable maple enterprises throughout Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia

Franklin, West Virginia: Future Generations University received notification of funding on September 5th from the USDA's Agricultural Marketing Service's ACER Access Program. Future Generations Appalachian program will receive **\$500,000** over the next three years to enhance the production and profitability of maple enterprises throughout Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. The project will enable research, natural resource management, and education programs to be developed and implemented across the multi-state region.

"This project brings together a multi-state partnership of research and education institutions, producer associations, agricultural service providers, as well as Departments of Agriculture across Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia. These states are seeing a resurgence in their maple industries as more people focus on the economic potential that our maple trees represent." says Luke Taylor-Ide, Vice President of Community Engagement at Future Generations University. "Future Generations University has been working very closely with the West Virginia Department of Agriculture and the West Virginia Maple Syrup Producers Association since 2016. We look forward to having the opportunity to continue those efforts, while also expanding more deeply into Maryland and Virginia with support from our project partners Appalachian Sustainable Development and Western Maryland Food Council."

"This project will help current and new maple farmers to learn how to best manage their businesses, to maximize both profit potential as well as health of their woodlots for the future." says Melissa Bolyard, Agriculture Business Specialist, Garrett County, Maryland Department of Business Development. "Being a part of such an important and impactful project for the agriculture sector solidifies a brighter future for these farmers and we are excited to partner with each outside agency to help make this happen."

'Enriching Maple in Appalachia' will

- Increase maple syrup production through the adoption of high sap production technologies to the Appalachian region
- Encourage woodland management practices that increase sap yield and sweetness, while maintaining forest health
- Ensure the financial viability of maple syrup enterprises using data-based decisions and business planning.

About Future Generations University: Together with the University's global community of partner organizations, Future Generations gathers practitioners, students, academics, and community leaders to advance the well-being of people and the planet. The University promotes research, learning, and action toward inclusive and sustainable change worldwide. Headquartered in the heart of Appalachia, Future Generations scenic campus is located on top of North Fork Mountain in West Virginia at the headwaters of the Potomac river.

The USDA's Acer Access and Development Program falls under its Agricultural Marketing Division to support the efforts of states, tribal governments and research institutions to promote the domestic maple syrup industry. Acer supports Market Development and Promotion projects to improve consumer knowledge, awareness and understanding of the maple syrup industry and its products. Acer also supports the Producer and Landowner Education project to advance producer knowledge, awareness and understanding of research, educational resources, or natural resource sustainability practices affecting the maple syrup industry and its products.

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