

ABOUT NATHAN BISSELL BISSELL MAPLE FARM



“I always say, ‘Chemistry was my profession. Maple syrup is my passion.’

To be honest, if I didn't have my 12-year professional experience as a chemical engineer, I wouldn't have the knowledge and understanding to develop our unique proprietary process of making maple syrup. Almost like it was meant to be.”

– Nate Bissell

Though he is likely to describe himself as “just a maple farmer,” Nate Bissell, age 35, is much more than that. He's the sixth-generation owner-operator of Bissell Maple Farm, harvesting maple syrup in the heart of Ohio's Ashtabula County like his ancestor Peter Mills Bissell who settled here from Connecticut in the early 1800s. While some of Nate's earliest memories on the farm are of his dad tapping trees with metal sap buckets, today's operation at Bissell Maple Farm is a blend of state-of-the-art technology and old-fashioned ingenuity.

Under Nate's leadership since 2011, the farm still collects its sap drop by drop, as always, but those drops are collected using a complex web of tubing and reverse osmosis equipment to extract the sap in the most clean and efficient means possible. The wood-burning evaporator then removes hundreds of gallons of water from the sap collected each spring to distill it into the farm's pure maple syrup. Available is a variety of grades, each with its own level of flavor intensity, Bissell Maple Farm's Sugar Chalet syrup is the pride of the family and the town of Rock Creek, where it is produced.

“Just a maple farmer?” No. He's also a maple farmer with a vision: he gave his product a brand – Sugar Chalet – and gave his brand a vision. He developed a new product: Bourbon Barrel-Aged Maple Syrup in 2014 and has attracted the notice of chefs, culinary industry pundits, and the media with his latest venture of producing a very limited edition Sugarmaker's Reserve™ Bourbon Barrel-Aged Maple Syrup using 23-year old Pappy Van Winkle Bourbon Barrels.

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The Pappy Van Winkle Bourbon is renowned for being rare and hard to find. The syrup aged for 100 days in their 23-year-old barrels is rarer still. Julian Van Winkle says, "the angels are greedy with our bourbon." After 23 years in a barrel, only 14 out of 53 gallons remain in a barrel. Bissell says, "The Van Winkle's have to worry about the 'Angel's Share'. However, I think we found a clever way to get some of it back."

Nate Bissell, wife Kathy Jo, and their three young sons live just over the Ohio state line in Pennsylvania. The Bissell Maple Farm's Sugar Chalet syrup is sold through fine retailers like Dorothy Lane Market, Market District, Wegman's, and online at www.sugarchalet.com.

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