

Giving an OHvation for maple

Lanark County is the Maple Syrup Capital of Ontario, and now it is home to a number of maple businesses that have been designated as customer service leaders in the region.

Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization's OHvation Customer Service Designation Program gives businesses an opportunity to make a commitment to providing excellent customer service. Earlier this year, 13 local maple businesses achieved the designation.

"Customer service plays an integral role in building a competitive tourism industry, and OHTO is committed to improving the quality of service delivery across the region," explains Stephanie Hessel, OHTO's tourism development and industry relations coordinator.

Lanark County is within one of six regions that make up Ontario's Highlands which, in turn, is one of 13 regional tourism organizations created by the provincial government as a way to increase tourism to Ontario. OHTO covers a large part of eastern Ontario, including the counties of Frontenac, Haliburton, Hastings, Lanark, Lennox and Addington, and Renfrew.

"OHvation gives participants a framework to build a culture of service excellence into their businesses and become designated and recognized as a customer service leader," Ms. Hessel explained.

The program provides training and access to helpful resources, includes a self-evaluation tool and gives the opportunity for designation through a mystery shop evaluation.

The maple businesses earning the OHvation designation include Balderson Fine Foods, Coutts Country Flavours, Dorian Heights Maple Products, Fortune Farms Maple Sugar Bush, Ottawa Valley Fudge (The Cheddar Stop), Paul's Maple Products, Providence Point Maple Syrup, Stead's Maple Syrup, Stone Cellar, Swallowtail Farm & Pottery, Thompsonstown Maple Products, Village Treats, and Wheelers Pancake House and Sugar Camp.

"Achieving the OHvation designation is just one more way our local maple producers and retailers can enhance the wonderful experiences our visitors to Lanark County already receive," says Marie White, Lanark County Tourism manager. "We extend our congratulations to these businesses and thank them for their commitment to customer service."

Tourism-related businesses interested in the OHvation program can apply online at <http://ohto.ca/initiatives/ohvation/> to receive a resource kit and, if interested, a complimentary mystery shop.

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For more information, contact:

Stephanie Hessel
Tourism Development & Industry Relations Coordinator
Ontario's Highlands Tourism Organization
1-855-629-OHTO, ext. 204

Marie White
Tourism Manager
Lanark County
1-888-4-LANARK