



# Quebec Maple, A Natural, Nutritional Ingredient

A Culinary Curriculum

Developed by Daniel LaGarde, CEC

Executive Chef, *Do More With Maple!*

American Culinary Federation  
Continuing Education Program  
ACF 2007 National Conference

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# Class Objective

- Understand origin and processes of Maple Syrup and maple products
- Discover Maple Syrup as one of the many wonders of the world, the viscous amber liquid with its characteristic earthy sweet taste
- Identify real Maple Syrup from table syrup- taste and nutritional value
- Understand the difference between grades through a maple tasting
- Discover maple depth and complexity as a natural and nutritional culinary ingredient and to “think outside the pancake box” for creative recipe applications

## Maple~ Where in the world is it?

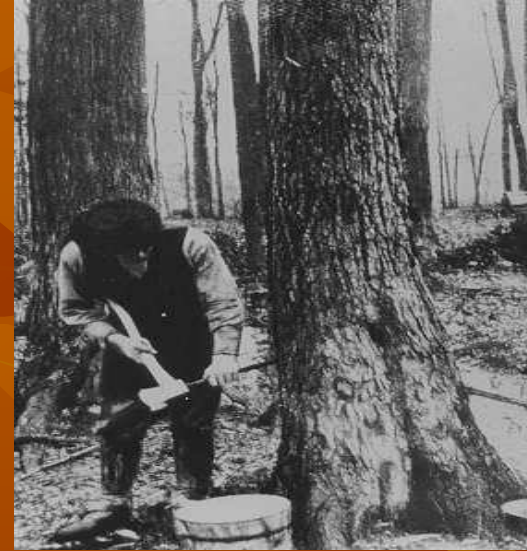
- North America is the only part of the world where Maple Syrup is produced.
- Quebec is the largest producer of Maple Syrup in the world, responsible for 93% of Canadian maple production (Ontario 5%, New Brunswick 2%) and 85% of the planet's Maple Syrup production
- In 1984, Quebec produced 21 millions pounds of Maple Syrup, in 2003, 86 millions pounds.
- Quebec is the number one world exporter of Maple Syrup. Quebec Maple Syrup is sent to some 30 countries, of which the USA is the largest importer.

# Quebec, where maple is King

## History of the Maple Syrup

- The tradition surrounding maple syrup was passed from the Native Americans of North America to the European settlers. Amerindians used their tomahawk, channeling the maple water (sap) towards a bark container, they boiled the sap in clay pots to obtain maple syrup
- Well before the arrival of the European settlers, First Nations peoples knew about and savoured the sap from maple trees and used this “sugared water” to cook game. Much later, in 1702, when war between France and England prevented many basics, including sugar, from being delivered to New France, Agathe de Saint-Père, wife of Pierre Legardeur de Repentigny, of Montréal, initiated the production of maple syrup. When spring came, she and her French and First Nations neighbours tapped the maples and produced sugar from the sap they obtained. Within a few years, Agathe de Saint-Père reported to the King of France that the Montréal colony annually produced 13,600 kg of maple sugar.
- Production in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the spout was made of cedar wood, it was called a “reed”. Even though horses were used more often than in the previous century, the syrup maker still had to put on his snowshoes to gather the maple water in buckets. When enough water was collected, it was brought to the “sugar house” for boiling.
- From the 20<sup>th</sup> century to today, wooden buckets were replaced with aluminum ones. The sugar house of the time was also transformed, the heavy kettle was replaced by the evaporator that contains a thermometer, a float to control the level and input of maple water and a hood to evacuate the steam.
- In the mid 70’s, technology was introduced into the maple syrup industry with the invention of sap-collection systems. These blue plastic tubes replaced buckets, barrels, horses and tractors. With a vacuum pump, the maple water goes directly from the tree to the maple syrup storage tank. Every spout is connected to this system and the gathering process is automatically activated when the temperature rises enough for the sap to flow.
- In Quebec, the process has become part of the culture. City people often go to Cabanes a Sucre in early spring where lavish meals are served with maple syrup accompaniments. Tire sur la neige is a seasonal treat of thick hot syrup (boiled at 234oF) poured into fresh snow then eaten off sticks as it quickly cools.

# History of the Maple Syrup



# History of the Maple Syrup



# Quebec, where maple is King

## The Tree Defined

- There are four varieties of Sugar Maple Trees. They thrive on steep, rich soils and long, bitter winters. The other types of maple trees, namely the Red Maple and Silver Maple, are also used for maple syrup production although their sap has a lower sugar concentration.
- The main maple producing tree is known as the Sugar Maple or Hard Maple which provides the best and highest quality sap. It grows as tall as 100 feet.
- Sap flows naturally when spring comes. Maple syrup making starts from the natural phenomenon. During spring time, when nights are still cold (below freezing), the water from the soil is sucked into the tree via a natural absorption phenomena. During the day time, warmer temperatures create pressure in the tree. The pressure pushes back the water to the bottom of the tree which allows one to collect a part of the sap flowing down.
- To collect maple water from a maple tree, the tree must first be tapped. Any maple tree measuring 10-17 inches in diameter or more may be tapped. Trees 18-24 inches in diameter can have no more than two taps. Larger trees over 25 inches may have a maximum of three taps. Tapping should not be done when the bark and wood is frozen.
- Once tapped, the tree releases maple water. Tapping the tree does no permanent damage to the tree.
- Tapholes which are 1-2 inches measured inside bark and 7/16" diameter are deep enough to ensure good sap yields.



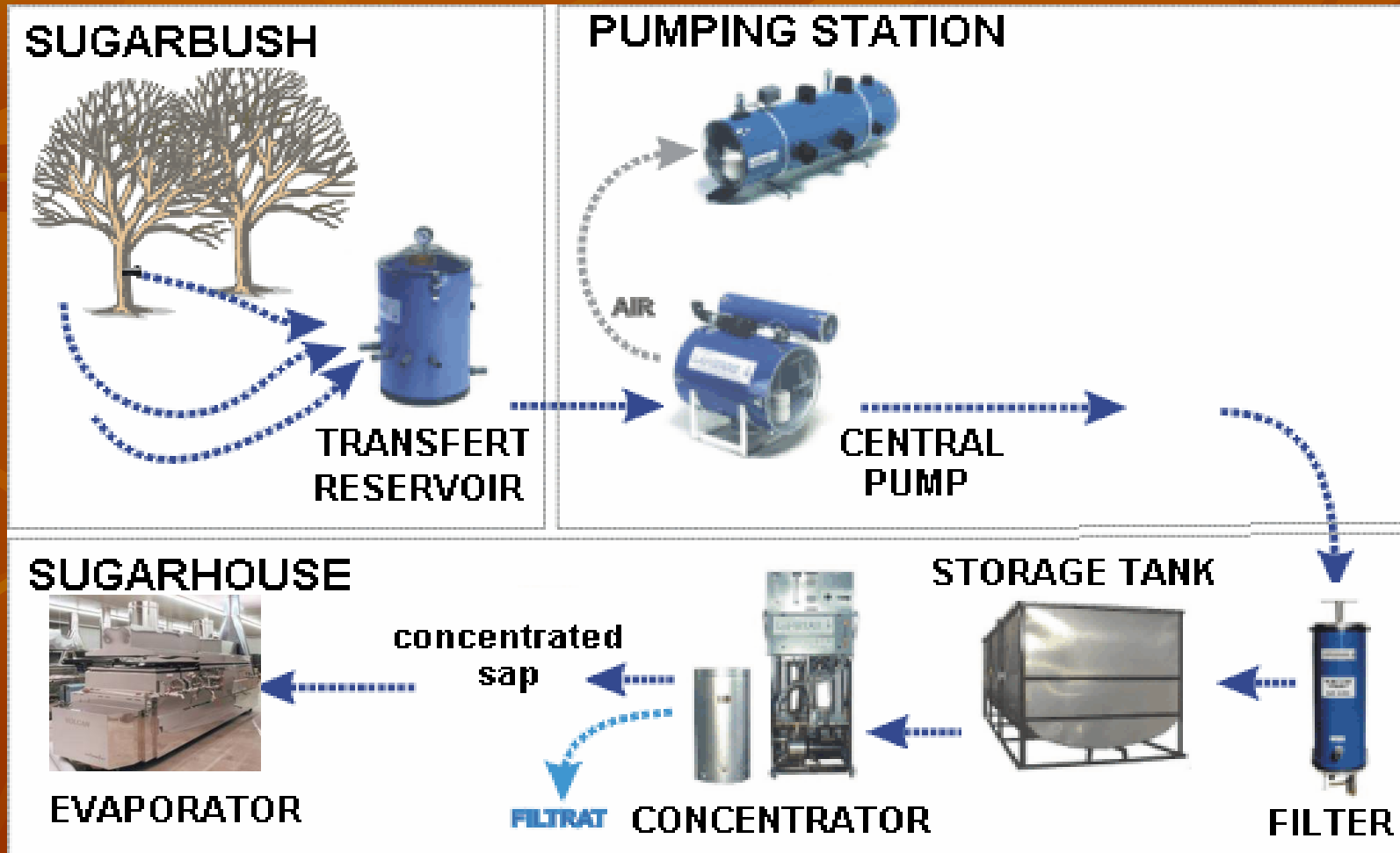
# Sugar Maple Tree



# Production Process, From Tree to Bottle

- The production is between March and April, Sap is collected over approximately 15 to 20 days, depending on the daily frost and defrost. The sugar content of sap averages 2.5%
- The maple tree will give, drop by drop, about 12 quarts of sap on a warm spring day. An average maple tree will yield between 35-40 quarts of sap (per season), which will produce between 1 -1.5 quarts of pure Maple Syrup, per season
- Maple water is evaporated to produce Maple Syrup
  - The Maple Syrup is ready when it reaches a temperature of  $\pm 219.2^{\circ}$  F
  - It takes 32 to 40 gallons of sap to make one gallon of Maple Syrup
  - To produce other maple products such as butter, taffy, soft sugar, hard or crystallized sugar, a maple syrup producer boils the maple in an evaporator to the temperature that is required for each type of desired product.
  - Maple syrup should be packed hot at a temperature of 180oF. After the container is full, the cap is placed on it and the container should be placed on its side in order to sterilize the neck and cap. To prevent an off-flavor call “stack burn”, the containers should not be stacked close together until they are cool.
- Variation in color and taste is a natural phenomenon; the color and taste of Maple Syrup vary throughout the harvest season because of the natural composition. Also, the thermal treatment which the maple water undergoes in its transformation into Maple Syrup influences the color and taste of the finished product. Maple Syrup made from maple water tapped at the beginning of the season is generally clearer and lighter in taste. As seasons advance, the Maple Syrup becomes darker and more caramelized in flavor. The sugar content of Maple Syrup averages 66.5 BRIX. (Note: Agriculture Canada defines maple syrup at 66.5 BRIX)

# Pumping Process



# Evaporator Modern Techniques

There are many ways Maple Syrup producers save energy, hence money, in the evaporation process we will discuss the most common methods used these days.

- Reverse osmosis is probably the process used most by the bigger producers. This method consists of physically removing the water from the sap before passing it thru the evaporator. This saves a lot of energy in heating the excess water to be boiled off. Reverse osmosis is achieved by forcing the sap thru a filter whose pores are big enough to let the water molecules pass but too small for the sugar and other organic materials into the sap. This process can be repeated numerous times until the sap has a high sugar content. Usually, we are able to remove up to 75% of the water, thereby saving much fuel in the heating process.
- Another method which can be used in conjunction with reverse osmosis is preheating. This uses the excess generated heat in the final stage of the evaporator to preheat the incoming sap. This method can save up to 15% of total fuel cost for a sugar bush producer and is quite simple to put into practice.
- A much newer method consists of vapor compression technique similar to the one used for the desalinization of salt water. In the vapor compression process the water in maple sap is evaporated, but unlike open pan evaporators, the heat energy in the steam produced from the evaporating sap is captured and repeatedly reused. Evaporation takes place in an evaporation chamber in which hot sap is sprayed onto an even hotter surface. The result is a vaporization of some of the water molecules which are then pulled out of the chamber under negative pressure. This vapor is compressed, raising its temperature, and is reused to reheat the evaporating surface. Sap is recycled until the desired density is achieved. To increase efficiency, sap is preheated with heat exchangers which absorb heat from the evaporation chamber and finished syrup. External heat energy is required to start the evaporating process but only intermittently thereafter to maintain it.

# MAPLE SYRUP

## Grades/classification



EXTRA LIGHT

LIGHT

MEDIUM

AMBER

DARK

## Introduction of Maple Syrup/Explanation of the different grades, color, flavor Quality Standards, Canada/Quebec Classification

There exists two types of classifications for Maple Syrup in Canada. The classification of the Canadian Federal Government and that of the Quebec Provincial Government. Quebec sugar makers have the choice to conform to one or another of the regulations in force.

### ■ CANADA FEDERAL GRADES

- Canada No. 1 (extra clear, clear, medium)
- Canada No. 2 (amber)
- Canada No. 3 (Dark and any of grades above that have a slight taste of bud, sap and caramel)
- Canadian Maple Syrup classification is based on color and authenticity of the maple flavor. As such, maple syrup is categorized and graded according to its color, clearness, density and the strength of its maple flavor.

### ■ QUEBEC PROVINCIAL GRADES

- Extra Light (AA)
- Light (A)
- Medium (B)
- Amber (C)
- Dark amber (D)



# USDA Grade

- *Grade A Light Amber/Fancy*, (Canada No. 1 Extra Light/Quebec Grade AA): Light transmittance over 75%
- *Grade A Medium Amber*, (Canada No. 1 Light /Quebec Grade A): Light transmittance 61-74%
- *Grade A Dark Amber*, (Canada No. 1 Medium /Quebec Grade B): Light transmittance 44-60%
- *Grade B*, (Canada No. 2 Amber/Quebec Grade C):  
light transmittance 27-43%  
(Canada No. 3 Dark/Quebec Grade D):  
Light transmittance 0-26%

# Maple Products & Storage

## ■ Maple Products

- Soft Maple candy- Maple sugar is heated to approximately 244 degrees F, cooled to 155 degrees F, stirred until crystallization starts, and then poured into molds
- Hard Maple Candy- Maple Syrup is approximately 255 degrees F, it is stirred immediately until crystals form and then poured into molds
- Maple Butter-Maple Syrup is heated to approximately 236 degrees F, it is cooled rapidly to about 70 degrees F and stirred rapidly to whip air into it also called Maple spread
- Maple taffy- Maple Syrup is heated to 234 degrees F. The hot syrup is poured into strips on well packed snow and picked up with a fork or stick, crushed ice may be used in place of snow
- Granulated Maple sugar-Maple Syrup is heated to approximately 238 degrees F and stirred hot, producing a coarse textured sugar

## ■ Storage ~ to enjoy freshness of maple syrup

- Unopened syrup stores easily, unrefrigerated. However, prolonged storage may cause the color of maple syrup to darken and the flavor to deteriorate. It is recommended to store maple syrup in the freezer, Maple Syrup won't freeze.
- After opening, store in an air tight container. It should be kept in a refrigerator or freezer, it will slow down the crystallization process brought on by the evaporation of Maple Syrup. After opening and when storing for extended periods (one to three months), it is recommended to store Maple Syrup in the freezer. With the exception of the Bag in the box which can be store at room temperature at all times.



# Maple Syrup's Nutritional Value compared with other Sweeteners ( Sugar, Honey, Brown Sugar)

Are all the sugars created equal?

**NOT REALLY**, the table below shows the contribution of various sweeteners to the daily Value (DV\*) of various nutrients. No doubt that maple syrup is well ahead of its competitor

\* Per 60 ml (1/4 cup, en % DV<sub>1</sub>)

**DV<sub>1</sub>**: Daily value is the intake of a given nutrient deemed as to fulfill the daily nutritional needs of most individuals

	Maple Syrup*	Honey	White Sugar	Brown Sugar
Manganese	100	3	0	9
RiboFlavine	34	2	1	0
Zinc	11	1	0	1
Magnesium	5	0	0	7
Calcium	6	1	0	5
Potassium	5	1	0	6

## FIVE HEALTH BENEFITS

- **100% NATURAL** The Maple Syrup from which we make taffy, sugar and butter (which doesn't really contain any butter!) is obtained through the concentration of sap of some varieties of maple trees. It contains no coloring agents, artificial flavorings, preservatives or other additives.
- **ESSENTIAL VITAMINS AND MINERALS.** Maple Syrup products are a significant source of several nutrients. For example, on average, a 4 Tbsp serving of Maple Syrup supplies more than 100% of our daily intake of manganese, 37% of riboflavin, 18% of zinc, 7% of magnesium and 5% of calcium and potassium. What other sweetener can beat that!
- **OTHER BENEFICIAL COMPOUNDS.** In addition to carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals, Maple Syrup and its products also contain phenolic compounds which are found in sap.
- **LOW ON THE GLYCEMIC INDEX.** The Glycemic Index (GI) is a scale that ranks foods on how they affect blood glucose levels. By consuming foods with a low GI rating (55 or lower), we can prevent or control heart disease, diabetes and obesity. Maple Syrup (GI 54) compares well with other sweetening products such as sugar (GI58) and honey (GI87).
- **MAPLE PRODUCTS: PARTNERS IN HEALTHY EATING.** In its latest report on dietary reference intakes, Health Canada concluded that current scientific data on the correlation between sugar consumption and the risk of diseases (obesity, cancer, hyperlipidemia and others) did not justify a reduction of sugar intake. There is a difference between foods that have been sweetened which supply nutrients (flavored milk and yogurt, fruit desserts and others) and those (such as pop drinks, candy and pastries) which do not supply much other than calories. In short, Maple Syrup products are completely compatible with a healthy diet.

# Health Benefits

Maple syrup is sweet - and we're not just talking flavor.

Maple syrup, as an excellent source of manganese and a good source of zinc, can also be sweet for your health.

- **Sweeten Your Antioxidant Defenses**

The trace mineral manganese is an essential cofactor in a number of enzymes important in energy production and antioxidant defenses. For example, the key oxidative enzyme *superoxide dismutase*, which disarms free radicals produced within the mitochondria (the energy production factories within our cells), requires manganese. One ounce of maple syrup supplies 22.0% of the daily value for this very important trace mineral.

- **Be Sweet to Your Heart with Maple Syrup**

Maple syrup is a good sweetener to use if you are trying to protect the health of your heart. The zinc supplied by maple syrup, in addition to acting as an antioxidant, has other functions that can decrease the progression of atherosclerosis. Zinc is needed for the proper function of *endothelial* cells and helps to prevent the *endothelial* damage caused by oxidized LDL cholesterol and other oxidized fats. (The *endothelium* is the inner lining of blood vessels.) *Endothelial* membranes low in zinc are much more prone to injury. Additionally, studies have found that in adults deficient in manganese, the other trace mineral amply supplied in maple syrup, the level of HDL (the "good" cholesterol) is decreased.

- **Sweet Support for Your Immune System**

Zinc and manganese are important allies in the immune system. Many types of immune cells appear to depend upon zinc for optimal function. Particularly in children, researchers have studied the effects of zinc deficiency (and zinc supplementation) on their immune response and their number of white blood cells, including specific studies on T lymphocytes, macrophages, and B cells (all types of white blood cells important for immune defenses). In these studies, zinc deficiency has been shown to compromise numbers of white blood cell and immune response, while zinc supplementation has been shown to restore conditions to normal. In addition to the role played by zinc, the manganese in maple syrup is important since, as a component of the antioxidant SOD, it helps lessen inflammation, thus supporting healing. In addition, manganese may also act as an immunostimulant.

- **Real Healthy Men Use Maple Syrup**

Maple syrup may help to support reproductive health and provides special benefits for men. Zinc is concentrated more highly in the prostate than in any other human tissue, and low levels of zinc in this gland relate to a higher risk for prostate cancer. In fact, zinc is a mineral used therapeutically by healthcare practitioners to help reduce prostate size. Manganese may also play a role in supporting men's health since, as a catalyst in the synthesis of fatty acids and cholesterol, it also participates in the production of sex hormones, thus helping to maintain reproductive health.

- **Safety:** Maple syrup in its natural state is not a commonly allergenic food and is not known to contain measurable amounts of goitrogens, oxalates, or purines.

- Source: Asako Aramaki, R.D.

# Values of Manganese/Zinc

## *What can high-manganese foods do for you?*

- Help your body utilize several key nutrients such as biotin, thiamin, ascorbic acid, and choline
- Keep your bones strong and healthy
- Help your body synthesize fatty acids and cholesterol
- Maintain normal blood sugar levels
- Promote optimal function of your thyroid gland
- Maintain the health of your nerves
- Protect your cells from free-radical damage
  
- Source: Asako Aramaki, R.D.

## *What can high-zinc foods do for you?*

- Help balance blood sugar
- Stabilize your metabolic rate
- Prevent a weakened immune system
- Support an optimal sense of smell and taste

## Maple Products available

- Maple Syrup
- Maple Butter (maple spread)
- Maple Sugar
- Maple Jelly
- Maple Flakes
- Maple Candy
- Maple Gift Sets
- Flavored Maple Syrup
- Maple Mustard
- Maple Dressing
- Maple Vinegar
- Maple Chocolate
- Maple Peanut Brittle
- Maple Frosted Almonds
- Maple Concentrate

# Tasting Maple Syrup

- Although professional tasters require extensive training, you can sharpen your tasting skills by following these steps:
  - First, smell the syrup by taking three quick sniffs. Make a mental note of your impression. Next, take a small sip of the syrup and swirl it around in your mouth. It is a good idea to spit it out if you can. Take about a minute to concentrate on the full range of flavors.
  - Try to associate the flavor with your own experience (for example, the aroma from a bag of marshmallows).
  - If possible, share your reaction with others, as this often helps trigger memory association. Once you have identified what you think characterizes the taste, memorize the sensation and the name for it (for example, vanilla).
  - Finally, try to assess the degree of intensity (e.g.: mild, medium or strong).

# Maple Tasting-Sensory Profile Vocabulary

## Dominant Flavors

- **Roasted**
  - Light- Golden Sugar, Chicory, Toast
  - Medium-Cooked Sugar-caramelized, Burnt wood, Ground brown coffee, brown coffee bean, Chocolate
  - Strong- Burnt Sugar, Ground Black Coffee, Black Coffee Bean, Smoke
- **Confectionery**
  - Light- White Sugar
  - Medium- Corn Syrup, Light brown sugar
  - Strong- Dark brown sugar, molasses, sponge toffee
- **Maple\***
  - Maple, Roasted dandelion root

## Variable as a dominant flavor

- **Woody**
  - Firewood, Wet wood, Softwood (pine, fir, larch, juniper, cedar, etc)
- **Vanilla**
  - Marshmallow
  - Vanilla Pod

### \*Important Note:

During production, Maple Syrup is often blended in an effort to obtain perfection of the flavor most often demanded by consumers...that of the flavor of Maple.

## Minor Flavors

- **Herbal**
  - Fresh Herbs- Stem, Grassy, Shoot, Bud
  - Dry Herbs- Crushed leaves, Nutshells, Dry herbs, Hay
  - Fermented Herbs- Silage
- **Plants, Humus, Forest, Cereals**
  - Humus, Forest- Mushroom, Mould, Potato
  - Cereals-Malt, Oat, Wheat, Rye
- **Fruity**
  - Nuts- Bitter Almond, Hazelnut, Nuts
  - Peach, fruits with pits or seeds
- **Milky**
  - Fresh- Butter, Cream, Milk
  - Heated- Butter, Milk
- **Floral**
  - Flowers
  - Honey
- **Spicy**
  - Cloves
  - Cinnamon
  - Anis-Black Licorice

## MAPLE SYRUP TASTE TEST

SAP

EXTRA  
CLEAR

CLEAR

MEDIUM

AMBER

DARK



# Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers

- **Federation of Québec Maple Syrup Producers** represents 7,000 syrup maker producers from Québec. Québec produces over 80 percent of the world's Maple Syrup, equal to 93 percent of Canadian production. Its mandate is to create a common resource and provide suitable tools to control the quantity and the preservation of maple products. Since February 28, 2002, the Federation of Québec Maple Syrup Producers has acted as the exclusive sales agency of syrup makers; receiving and marketing maple syrup sold in large containers of more than 5 liters. Through its promotional activities and market development, the Federation of Québec Maple Syrup Producers contributes to the development, knowledge, and consumption of maple products in Québec and around the world.



# CITADELLE

- **Citadelle Maple Syrup Producers' Cooperative**

In existence for three-quarters of a century, Citadelle Maple Syrup Producers' Cooperative - the corporate name of the Cooperative since 1996 - has some 2,700 members, or nearly one-third of all Quebec Maple Syrup producers. The Cooperative does business with over 2,000 non-member producers through its division and three subsidiaries in Quebec and New Brunswick.



[www.citadelle-camp.com](http://www.citadelle-camp.com)

[www.shadymaple.ca](http://www.shadymaple.ca)

[www.mapledelights.com](http://www.mapledelights.com)

# DECACER

- **Decacer**

In business for over 6 years, Decacer is a Quebec company with two production centers, one in Saint-Antoine-de-Tilly near Quebec City and another in Dégelis in the Lower St. Lawrence region. Its primary activity is Maple Syrup bottling. Equinox Organic Maple Flakes and Organic Cranberry Maple Flakes are Decacer's latest innovation. These natural sweeteners make healthful eating a lot more flavorful.



[www.decacer.com](http://www.decacer.com)

# Heritage Yamaska

- **Heritage Yamaska**

(La Coulée d'Abbotsford) By 1876, Jean-Baptiste Chagnon was selling his Maple Syrup and sugar products at regional public markets. Through the years, five generations of his descendants have followed in his footsteps, developing a much sought-after expertise in the production of maple products. La Coulee d'Abbotsford was named "Maitre Sucrier" or master sugar maker by the Quebec Department of Agriculture. This prestigious distinction is awarded to the best maple producer and is the hallmark of products of exceptional quality.



# Lapierre Maple Farm

- **Lapierre Maple Farm**

Lapierre Maple Farm is principally located in Milan, Canada and taps roughly 150,000 sugar maple trees each season. About 90% of Lapierre's sugar bush is made up of sugar maples and 10% are a mixture of silver and red maple. In 2002, we provided Metro Inc. stores' with 100% pure Maple Syrup that identified the specific growing region (terroir) or sugar bush, the only producer to do so. We believe that much like wine and olive oil, the flavor profile of maple varies with each growing region. The Canadian Counsel of Food Distribution honored Metro Inc. and Lapierre Maple Farm at the Canadian Grand Prix with a new product award in 2004 for the exceptional quality of their Maple Syrup Sirobec<sup>TM</sup> product.

Lapierre is committed to selling only 100% pure Maple Syrup and to never compromising its quality and the unique flavor identity (terroir) of the maple products derived from our sugarbush.

Savor and discover 100 % pure Lapierre Maple Syrup ! A unique gift of nature....shared with you...from our sugarbush to your table!

[www.maplesyrupusa.com](http://www.maplesyrupusa.com)



# Cooking Tips

- **Use as a sugar substitute**

In general, Maple Syrup can be substituted for granular sugar in baked goods by following these rules of thumb:

For each cup of granulated sugar, use 1-1/2 cups of Maple Syrup.

Reduce other liquids in the recipe by about one-half.

Add 1/4 teaspoon baking soda for each cup of Maple Syrup.

Decrease oven temperature by 25 degrees F.

## A Few Quick Serving Ideas

- Maple syrup, used in place of table sugar as a sweetener, gives tea and coffee a unique taste.
- Pour some maple syrup on oatmeal topped with walnuts and raisins.
- Add maple syrup and cinnamon to puréed cooked sweet potatoes.
- Combine maple syrup with orange juice and tamari and use as a marinade for baked tofu.
- Spread peanut butter on a piece of whole wheat toast, top with sliced bananas and then drizzle maple syrup on top for a sweet treat.

# MAPLE RECIPES

- For Delicious Maple Recipes visit:  
<http://www.domorewithmaple.com/maplesyruprecipes.html>

Bon appétit!

- If you have any questions on the recipes or the curriculum, please contact Chef LaGarde via email at [cheflagarde@domorewithmaple.com](mailto:cheflagarde@domorewithmaple.com)

# References

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- Agriculture & Agri-Food Canada
- Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers
- The Maple Syrup book (Janet Eagleson & Rosemary Hasner)
- A taste of Maple Book (Micheline Mongrain-Dontigny)