

Best Production Practices for Safe, Quality Maple Syrup

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Infosheet

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Protect your business and the industry's reputation by producing safe, high-quality maple syrup and by ensuring that your products do not become contaminated.

The following are practices selected to help you reduce the risk of lead contamination in sap and maple syrup.

1. Collecting Sap:

- Replace lead-bearing or corroded metal spouts with stainless steel or food-grade plastic.
- Replace any metal buckets or gathering equipment containing lead or lead solder with stainless steel, food-grade plastic or aluminum.
- Gather sap from buckets daily.
- Replace bronze gear pumps with stainless steel pumps or vacuum systems.
- Use food-grade polyethylene tubing.
- Fittings coming into contact with sap should be food-grade plastic or stainless steel.

2. Storing Sap:

- Immediately discard galvanized and other tanks that are corroded or damaged.
- Use only stainless steel, glass lined, or food-grade plastic storage tanks.

3. Boiling Sap:

- Use lead-free pre-heaters.
- Use lead-free soldered and stainless steel evaporator pans.
- Replace brass or bronze fittings with food grade plastic or stainless steel.
- Minimize the time that sap resides in the evaporator.
- Flush pans with water to ensure removal of cleaning residues/dirt and/or sugar sand.
- Make sure any repairs are done with lead-free solder or TIG or MIG welding.

4. Filtering Syrup:

- Proper syrup filtering is critical.
- Filter syrup into food-grade containers. Never filter syrup into old milk cans.
- Use Orlon®/felt filters and/or a filter press.
- Use filters in good condition. Discard worn or damaged filters.
- Use clean, unscented filters.
- Use filters with a small micron size (e.g. 5µ).

5. Storing Bulk Syrup:

- Ensure that each day's syrup production is batch-coded.
- Never store syrup in corroded containers/drums.
- Never use containers/drums that have been repaired or painted with unknown or potentially hazardous substances or that have been used to store materials other than food.
- Ensure that containers/drums are clean and free of odours.
- Use stainless steel, glass lined, or food-grade plastic containers. Never store syrup in old containers such as milk cans.

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