

Maple Syrup Quick Reference Quality Checklist

Applicable to syrup produced for sale

Facility and Equipment

1. A sugar house does not have to meet the standards of a commercial kitchen as it produces a singular boiled product. However, **during the sugaring season** (about 8 weeks) it is clean and sanitary throughout, while **during the offseason**, when sanitation is less critical and it may be used for storage of other related equipment (e.g., buckets), all essential equipment (e.g., evaporator) is clean and protected from the elements.
2. Boiling area, during the season, is free of unrelated materials, tables and counter tops, etc. are clean and free of maple spillage, floor is swept clean.
3. Evaporator and related equipment are clean and protected from the elements and are thoroughly cleaned at end of season. Evaporator is covered when not in use.
4. Sap buckets, tubing lines, gathering pails, storage tanks, etc are food grade, clean, inside and out, and thoroughly cleaned at end of season.
5. Empty syrup containers (drums, 5 gallon barrels, quarts, pints, etc.) in storage prior to filling are clean and stored in sanitary conditions or as shipped by manufacturers.

Processing and controls

6. Sap is filtered with clean filters at least once before it enters the evaporator.
7. Devices to check syrup density (minimum 66 Brix) are readily available, calibrated, clean and properly used. Options include: Hydrometer, refractometer and temperature read out to verify + 7.5 degrees above water boiling point.
8. Syrup filtering mechanisms (filter media, filter press, etc.) are clean, in operable condition and used in a sanitary environment.
9. If syrup is graded; it is done using a current, official grading kit.
10. Syrup packaging devices are clean and provide a heat source with a temperature read out to allow for "hot packing" of between 180 and 200 degrees.
11. Syrup containers are packed "hot" and filled to the specified contents level, tipped on side to sterilize neck and properly sealed with tamper evident cap.
12. Filled syrup containers are coded to enable positive lot identification with corresponding records maintained.
13. Filled containers awaiting sale are properly labeled (producers name, address, lot identification) and stored in a clean and dry place.

NOTE: *Most all of the foregoing was sourced from the Connecticut Maple Syrup Producers Manual, published in 2002 by MAPAC and available by contacting MSPAC*