



# Canada's Agriculture, Food and Beverage INDUSTRY

## ● ● ● Canada's Maple Syrup Industry

Canada produces about 85 per cent of the world's maple syrup. It is the world leader in exports, selling more than 28,685 tonnes valued at \$144.9 million to more than 30 countries in 2002. In Canada, the maple syrup industry is surpassed only by frozen French fries in single commodity exports.

Consumption of maple products increased from 110 grams per person in 1991 to 160 grams per person in 2001. Marketing has evolved from selling to traditional markets to more value-added markets such as blends with other products (cereals, yogurt, etc.). This industry contributes to Canada's value-added exports, since more than 60 per cent of maple exports are now shipped in pre-packaged containers.

In the early 1970s, science helped rejuvenate this industry by giving farmers new methods of production. Researchers looked at gathering sap with tubing, using vacuum pumps, reverse osmosis, and various types of evaporators, and addressing basic questions about how to make the industry more efficient. Today, Canadian production has some of the most innovative systems in maple technology.

The Canadian Food Inspection Agency monitors the safety and quality of maple syrup and ensures producers meet federal standards. These standards include three grades of maple syrup with 5 different classes of color: Canada No. 1 (extra light, light, medium), Canada No. 2 (amber) and Canada No. 3 (dark).

During the growing season, maple trees accumulate starch. With the spring thaw, enzymes change this starch into sugar, which mixes with the water absorbed through the roots, imparting a slightly sweet taste. Maple sap contains water (about 97 per cent), minerals, organic acids and maple taste precursors. In early March, the sap starts to run for about six to eight weeks and gives energy to the tree to make it grow. All trees produce sap but maple trees produce more and sweeter sap than other trees.



Producers take great care to ensure long-term survival of their maple sugar bush. While collecting sap does rob a tree of some of its nourishment, no harm is done to the tree because less than one tenth of a tree's sugar is removed during tapping.

### Additional information

There are more than 10,300 maple syrup producers in Canada exploiting more than 33,680,000 taps, mostly in Quebec, with the rest in Ontario, New Brunswick and Nova Scotia.

The main syrup producing trees are sugar maples, red maples and silver maples. During the maple sugaring season, an average tree yields between 35 to 50 litres of sap, which will produce between one to 1.5 litres of maple syrup. It takes on average, 40 litres of sap to make 1 litre of syrup.

A 50 ml serving of maple syrup contains 167 calories, 43 grams of sugar, 117 mg of potassium, 7 mg of sodium and no fat. It provides 6 per cent of the recommended daily intake of calcium and thiamin and 2 per cent of magnesium and riboflavin.

In 2002, Canada produced 34,761 tonnes of maple products with an estimated farm gate value of \$164 million. Exports have increased from \$42 million to \$145 million in the last 10 years. Canada's largest export market is the United States, with about 81 per cent of total, followed by Europe with 12 per cent and Asia with 6 per cent.



## For more detailed information

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Further information on products, suppliers and investment opportunities in the Canadian agri-food industry is available on the Agri-Food Trade Service Web site at: <http://ats.agr.ca>.

## Other links

Agri Réseau Érable  
<http://www.agrireseau.qc.ca/erable/navigation.asp?operateur=sitevoc&sitevoc=Statistiques%5C>

Monographie de l'industrie acéricole au Québec  
(Export strategy in French only)  
<http://www.agr.gouv.qc.ca/ae/filieres/textes/acericol/mono2002.pdf>

Table filière acéricole  
(Export strategy in French only)  
<http://www.agr.gouv.qc.ca/ae/filieres/acericol/faplans.htm>

Maplemark  
<http://www.maplemark.com/>

Québec Maple Syrup Producers Federation  
<http://www.maple-erable.qc.ca/>

Ontario Maple Syrup Producers' Association  
<http://www.ontariomaple.com/>

Canadian Food Inspection Agency—Maple regulations  
<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/C-0.4/>

C.R.C.-c.289/index.html  
Institut québécois de l'érable Inc.  
(Generic information in English)  
<http://www.erable.org/eindex.htm>

Canada's food and beverage industry is recognized internationally as being among the best in the world, both in terms of ensuring food safety and quality, and in providing a trade friendly environment. Consumers are more aware of food security, safety and quality, and are demanding more information about how their food is produced. More than ever, consumers want to know that their food is safe and that it has been produced in an environmentally responsible manner.

Canada's objective is to be the world leader in food safety, innovation, and environmentally responsible production and to be the best at meeting the needs of consumers at home and abroad.

