

Spring Sweetness

One sure sign of spring is when the sugar shacks open for fresh maple syrup. It takes about 40 litres of sap to make one litre of delicious syrup.

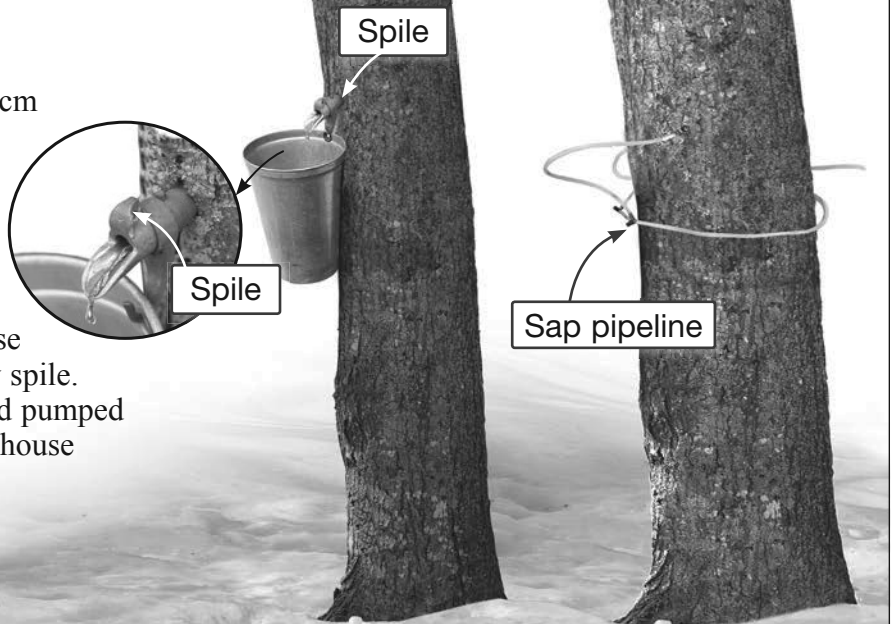
How It's Made

1 The right trees

- Sugar maples and black maples have the highest sugar content.
- A tree is at least 40 years old and 30 cm in diameter before it's tapped.
- Warm days (5 °C) and frosty nights (-5 °C) get the sap running.
- Mid-February to early April is the season for maple syrup. March is when the most sap is collected.

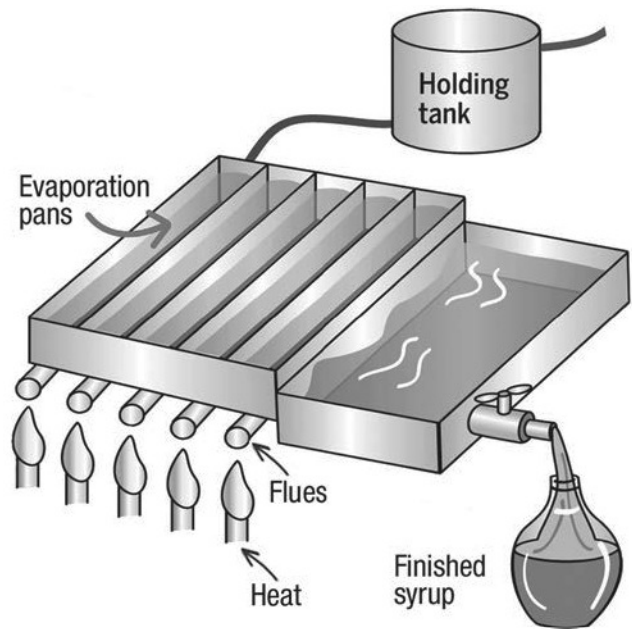
2 Collection

- A hole 1.3 cm in diameter and 6 cm to 8 cm deep is drilled into the trunk of the tree.
- A hollow spike, called a spile, is inserted into the hole and a collecting bucket is hung from it.
- Large-scale maple syrup farms use plastic tubing to connect to every spile. Sap is automatically collected and pumped through the pipeline to the sugar house for processing.



3 Evaporation

- Sap continuously enters from the holding tank to stainless steel pans.
- Pans are heated over wood- or oil-fuelled fire to evaporate the water.
- Finished syrup is strained then bottled.
- Maple syrup is boiled even further to produce maple cream, sugar and candy.



Maple Syrup Producing Areas

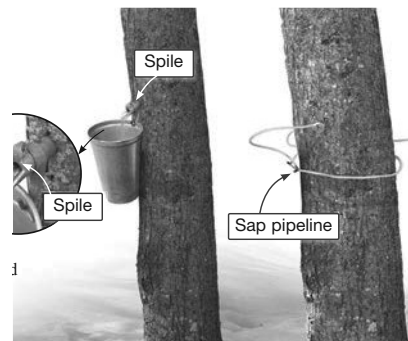
Most maple syrup producers are located in Quebec, Ontario, New York, Vermont and New Hampshire.

- Main syrup-producing region
- Native range of sugar maple

Maple Facts

- Tapping doesn't hurt the tree. Only about 10% of its sap is collected per year.
- The harvest season ends with the arrival of warm spring nights and bud development in the trees.
- Quebec accounts for 70% of worldwide maple syrup production.

Spring Sweetness



1 When selecting a tree to tap for maple syrup, you should consider both the diameter of the trunk and the

- age of the tree.
- height of the tree.
- colour of the tree.
- location of the tree.

2 What makes maple candy different from maple syrup?

- Maple candy is bottled.
- Maple syrup starts as sap.
- Maple syrup takes longer to make.
- Maple candy needs more processing.

3 What does the word “flues” refer to?

- tubes used to heat the sap
- tubes used to collect the syrup
- dividers in the evaporation pan
- spiles from which the sap flows

4 How does the graphic “Maple Syrup Producing Areas” help the reader?

- It describes the process of collecting sap.
- It shows the time of year sap is collected.
- It indicates the size of the maple syrup farms.
- It identifies locations with maple syrup farms.

5 Choose one of the graphic images and explain how it helps the reader understand the process of making maple syrup. Use details from the text to support your answer.

6 Explain how the information in “Spring Sweetness” would be useful to someone who is starting a maple syrup farm. Use examples from the text to support your answer.

