

Maple Syrup and Tapping Information

Why do trees produce sap?

- Sap is a mixture of water and sugars produced by the tree. Trees get their energy from sap. During the winter sap is stored in the roots of the tree.

When does the sap run?

- Trees will begin moving their sap from their roots to their branches when they sense warm daytime temperatures. The movement of the sap is called a “run.” A series of warm days and cool nights will cause the sap to run.

How long does the sap run?

- How long the sap runs is completely dictated by nature and weather conditions. Runs can last as long as a week or be as short as one day. Trees can have several runs in one maple syruping season.

How will I know if the sap is running?

- A series of warm days and cold nights will cause the sap to run. You can check your buckets to see if they are filling any time during daylight hours. Asbury Woods will be posting updates to the Asbury Woods Facebook page about conditions.

When should I take the sap home?

- You can take the sap home any time there is sap in your buckets. Be sure to properly store the sap until it is boiled.

How should I transport the sap?

- The sap should be transported home in a clean food grade container that can be sealed. The type of container you use is up to you. Gallon milk jugs or similar containers work well. Please bring your own funnel to help transfer the sap from the bucket to your container. You can also bring a filter (a stack of multiple coffee filters will work) to remove any debris from your sap that may have collected in the bucket.
- You may be transporting up to 20 gallons of sap if the run has been strong
- You do not have to take all of the sap at the same time, but sap left in the bucket can spoil

How do I store the sap once I get it home?

- Sap should be stored at a temperature of 38 degrees F or colder. Sap can be stored in a refrigerator, freezer, or outside in the shade if the conditions are cold enough. Sap should be boiled within 7 days of being collected to avoid spoilage or bacteria growth.

How much sap do I need to start the boiling process?

- At least 10 gallons of sap is recommended to start the boiling process. One batch of syrup should be made at a time. Adding more sap to partially boiled sap will greatly increase the boiling time.

What equipment do I need to boil at home?

- The initial boiling process should be done outdoors. Boiling the sap produces a large amount of steam that can cause damage to kitchen cabinets, walls, etc. To start the boiling process you can use:
 - A large pot on a grill
 - A turkey fryer
 - Enamel coated cookware
- Additional equipment needed includes:
 - A candy thermometer or metal spoon
 - Pint or quart sized canning jars or lids
 - Long handled wooden spoon

How do I know if my sap has gone bad in the bucket or at home?

- Sap can no longer be used if any of the following have occurred:
 - The sap has been stored above 38 degrees F
 - The tree the sap was collected from has spring buds (this only applies to sap in the buckets at the time, not previously collected sap from this tree)
 - If the sap has noticeably yellowed
 - If the sap has a rotten smell

How long does maple syrup last?

- Fresh maple syrup should be used within one week
- Canned maple syrup can be stored in the refrigerator for one year
- Canned maple syrup can be stored in the freezer indefinitely

Where can I find more information about maple syrup production?

- The following websites are great for additional information
 - <https://tapmytrees.com/>
 - <https://extension.psu.edu/maple-syrup-production-for-the-beginner>
 - <http://ouroneacrefarm.com/make-maple-syrup-ii-boiling-filtering-canning/>