

Crop Production

Maple syrup production ranks highest since 1964

MICHIGAN maple syrup production was estimated at 100,000 gallons for the 2008 season, according to the USDA National Agricultural Statistics Service, Michigan Field Office.

The production was 40,000 gallons above 2007 and the highest on record since 1964, when 110,000 gallons were produced. The tapping season was relatively short with most producers starting later than usual. However, good weather salvaged the season with cold nights and warmer days.

Producers reported the syrup was better than average, with high sugar content throughout the season. The length of the season was 23 days, compared to 20 days in 2007 and 21 in 2006. The industry defines the season length as the average number of days sap was collected. The survey indicated that 13% of syrup producers believed the temperatures were too cool, 9% too warm and 78% favorable during the tapping season. The survey also indicated 50% of the

Key Points

- Prime weather conditions salvaged the season.
- Syrup has better-than-average quality, with high sugar content.
- Michigan ranks sixth in maple syrup production for 2008.

syrup produced was medium in color, down from 61% in 2007.

Like 2007, Michigan ranked sixth in maple syrup production this year. It produced 6% of the total U.S. production. Total taps were 405,000, and yield was 0.247 gallons per tap.

In 2007, state producers sold 55% of their syrup retail, 25% wholesale and 20% bulk. The average price per gallon for 2007 was \$41.60 compared with \$37 in 2006. The value of production for 2007 was \$2.496 million, falling from \$2.886 million in 2006.

National production climbs

The 2008 U.S. maple syrup production totaled 1.64 million gallons, up 30% from 2007.

The number of taps was estimated at 7.46 million, up about 2% from the 2007 total of 7.29 million. Yield per tap was estimated to be 0.219 gallons, up 27% from the previous season.

Vermont led all states in production with 500,000 gallons, up 11% from 2007. Production in New York, at 322,000 gallons, increased 44% from last season. Production in Maine, at 215,000 gallons, is 4% below 2007. Production in Ohio, at 118,000 gallons, is up 57% from last year. This is the highest production on record since 1959 when production was estimated at 127,000 gallons.

Production in Pennsylvania, at 95,000 gallons, is 86% above 2007. This is tied with 1992 as the highest on record since 1975 when 97,000 gallons were produced. Production in Massachusetts, at 55,000 gallons, is up 83% a year ago. This is the highest production on record since 1944.

In Connecticut, production is estimated to be 15,000 gallons, the highest on record

Did You Know?

Tomato world's most popular fruit

YES, just like the eggplant and the pumpkin, botanically speaking, the tomato is a fruit, not a vegetable. More than 60 million tons of tomatoes are produced per year, 16 million tons more than the second most popular fruit, the banana. Apples are the third most popular (36 million tons), then oranges (34 million tons) and watermelons (22 million tons).

Tomatoes were first cultivated in 700 by Aztecs and Incas. Explorers returning from Mexico introduced the tomato into Europe, where it was first mentioned in 1556. The French called it "the apple of love"; the Germans, "the apple of paradise."

Tomatoes are rich in vitamins A and C and fiber, and are cholesterol free. An average-size tomato (5 ounces) boasts only 35 calories. Furthermore, new medical research suggests that the consumption of lycopene — what makes tomatoes red — may prevent cancer. Lycopene is part of the family of pigments called carotenoids, which are natural compounds that create the colors of fruits and vegetables. For example, beta carotene is the orange pigment in carrots. As with essential amino acids, they are not produced by the human body. Lycopene is the most powerful antioxidant in the carotenoid family and, with vitamins C and E, protect humans from the free radicals that degrade many parts of the body.



since estimates began in 1992. Production also increased in New Hampshire and Wisconsin. Yields increased in all states except Maine, contributing to the increase in production.

The 2007 U.S. average price

per gallon was \$33.20, up \$1.90 from the 2006. The U.S. value of production, at \$41.7 million for 2007, was down 8% from 2006. Value of production decreased in all states except Ohio.

Source: NASS

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