



Choosing syrup can be sticky

Is “real” maple syrup healthier than “maple-flavored” or “pancake” syrups?

Not really. Although many people prefer the flavor — and the very idea — of real maple syrup over syrups that are primarily made from corn syrup or cane sugar, there’s no reliable evidence to suggest that it’s better for you.

Like other pancake-type syrups, pure maple syrup has about 50 calories and 13 grams of carbohydrates per tablespoon. Reduced-calorie syrups vary, but you can expect to find them with about 25 calories and 7 grams of carbohydrates in a tablespoon. Pancake syrups flavored with butter have about 60 calories and 15 carbohydrates per tablespoon. Whatever you decide to pour over pancakes, it’s always a good idea to take a look at the Nutrition Facts label to know what you’re consuming.

If you’re looking for “real” maple syrup, it’s easy: Just look for the term “maple syrup” or “pure maple syrup” on the label. Products labeled “maple-flavored syrup,” “pancake syrup” or some type of “blend” aren’t the same thing.

When you buy maple syrup, experts recommend immediately storing it in the refrigerator, even if the container is unopened, to keep it fresh as long as possible. An Ohio State University Extension fact sheet on maple syrup suggests buying no more than you would use over the course of a year; its quality could deteriorate if stored longer than that, especially if it’s not under prime

conditions. The fact sheet, “Selecting, Storing and Serving Ohio Maple Syrup,” HYG-5522-09, also suggests that maple syrup can be poured into freezer containers and frozen for longer storage.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has set three designations for Grade A maple syrup, primarily based on color. Not all syrups use these designations, but many do; the OSU Extension fact sheet spells out what they mean:

- Grade A Light Amber is a light golden syrup, with a delicate flavor and smooth texture. The USDA describes it as having a “smoky” taste.

- Grade A Medium Amber has that characteristic “maple” flavor. Consumers have described it as “a medium-bodied golden syrup with a lingering maple flavor,” and most people use either Light or Medium Amber syrups for pancakes, waffles, french toast or on top of ice cream.

- Grade A Dark Amber is a robust maple syrup and, as its name implies, it is the darkest of the three types. Dark Amber is the type most often recommended for cooking and baking, because its more robust flavor will come through in recipes. But some people also like it for everyday use.

For more information and ideas on using maple syrup in cooking, see the OSU Extension fact sheet available free online at <http://ohioline.osu.edu>.

Chow Line is a service of Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. Send questions to Chow Line, c/o Martha Filipic, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH, 43210-1044, or filipic.3@cfaes.osu.edu.



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION

OHIO AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER

For the week of
March 14, 2010

By Martha Filipic

614-292-9833

filipic.3@cfaes.osu.edu

Editor:

This column was reviewed by Julie Shertzer, registered dietitian and program specialist for Ohio State University Extension in the Department of Human Nutrition, in the College of Education and Human Ecology.

Section of Communications
and Technology
News and Media Relations
2021 Coffey Road
Columbus, OH 43210-1044
614-292-2011

208 Research Services
Building
1680 Madison Ave.
Wooster, OH 44691-4096
330-263-3780

Ohio State University Extension embraces human diversity and is committed to ensuring that all research and related educational programs are available to clientele on a nondiscriminatory basis without regard to race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, or veteran status. This statement is in accordance with United States Civil Rights Laws and the USDA. Keith L. Smith, Ph.D., Associate Vice President for Agricultural Administration and Director, Ohio State University Extension TDD No. 800-589-8292 (Ohio only) or 614-292-1868