New Hampshire
Department of Agriculture, Markets & Food

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For Immediate Release

Maple Grades Have Changed
By
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In the US, maple syrup is usually sold by grade and color classification. For example, Grade A Medium Amber. Color is used because it has some general relation to the intensity of maple. However, inconsistencies between the grading systems used in each of the maple producing states, as well as Canada, caused some confusion.

About 12 years ago, the International Maple Syrup Institute, which is a voluntary organization, whose members include maple syrup stakeholders both from the US and Canada, established a committee to review existing regulations for pure maple syrup. The committee recommended establishing a more simplified and uniform description of grade names and nomenclature for pure maple syrup in the US and Canada. The two key objectives were to eliminate inconsistent grade names, and to emphasize the taste of the syrup by including flavor descriptors.

In 2013, the NH Maple Producers Association voted to adopt the proposed grade changes. As a result, in 2014, the NH Department of Agriculture, Markets and Food went through the rulemaking process and adopted the new grading system this past December.

The NH Maple Products Law and Rules provide NH maple producers a one year transition period to apply the new grading system. Meaning, in 2015 when purchasing maple syrup consumers may see the old grading system, or the new grading system on containers. By January 1, 2016, all maple syrup produced in NH must be labeled with the new grading system.

To assist the maple producers with informing the consumers of the new grading system, the Department worked with a local marketing company to create promotional items to be used at the point of sale.

For more information about the new NH Maple Grading System, contact Jennifer Gornnert, Division of Regulatory Service, NH Dept. of Agriculture, Markets & Food at 271-2753 or Jennifer.gornnert@agr.nh.gov.

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