

A decorative border of black and white maple leaves surrounds the text. The leaves are arranged in a repeating pattern along the top, bottom, and sides of the page.

Maple Grades

In Vermont, maple syrup comes in 4 different consumer grades. The grades are directly related to color—and color relates directly to how strong the maple flavor is. The grading of syrup is strictly enforced, insuring consistent quality throughout the state. We get more maple syrup questions about grading than anything else!

Fancy: Fancy grade is the lightest colored maple syrup. Its light amber color yields a delicate, mild maple flavor. It's no coincidence that Fancy syrup is made from the maple tree's first sap of the season. Some years Mother Nature produces a lot of Fancy grade—others it is quite scarce. I think Fancy is the finest syrup of the bunch—it milder tasting, yet it's still got a great maple flavor. I love it 'cause you can still taste your pancakes!

I've always had trouble with the classification "Fancy." The grade is really not more fancy pants than the others—it's just different than most maple syrup you find in the stores and also harder to find. You definitely won't find "Fancy Grade" in too many places outside of Vermont.

Grade A Medium Amber: True to form, medium is indeed more "mapley" in flavor and darker in appearance. It's the more middle-of-the-road syrup and you can find it many shops around the country. Medium Amber is typically produced from the middle portion of the sap run—and is typically more plentiful. It's a great all purpose syrup—fantastic on pancakes, for cooking and even baking.

Grade A Dark Amber: As we reach the end of the sap run each year, we transition to a darker and more robust syrup. We call this "Dark Amber" for its deep chocolate color; it also has a strong maple flavor that is a very popular choice for folks that love an "enhanced" maple experience!

Grade B: Finally, Grade B is the strongest and darkest table grade syrup and this deep maple flavor makes it perfect for cooking. It's so dark you can't see through the bottle! And you guessed it; it's the very last sap run of the season. It's considered a poorer grade—hence the Grade B status—but don't let that fool you. There is a die hard group that absolutely swears by this grade. And we sell of ton of it. It's typically less expensive too. Here at the Market we even make our Blueberry Maple pies with Grade B syrup.

Patrick