

Back To Basics: How To Make Sugar At Home

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One of the best bartering products when SHTF is undoubtedly going to be sugar.

It will also be a great product to have in order to make treats that boost morale and lend a sense of normalcy to life, which will be crucial to survival.

The problem is that storing large quantities of sugar is a challenge. It's bulky, takes up a ton of space, and is a bug magnet.

Even if you stockpile the sweetness, you will still eventually run out, but what if you knew how to make your own? It's really not that difficult and there are a couple of ways that you can do it. For that matter, as part of your homesteading way of life, you could make your own just so that you know where it's coming from.

Today we're going to tell you how to make sugar at home. As a matter of fact, we're going to teach you about two types, based on what our ancestors used to make.

[Old Days. Old Ways. But The Food Never Tasted Better.](#)

Unless you're fortunate enough to live in a tropical climate and have a ton of expensive equipment, you won't be able to grow sugar cane, the crop that yields about 70% of table sugar in the US. You can, however, grow sugar beets, which is used to produce the other 30% of the sugar that you buy.

You can also make maple sugar from maple syrup.

How to Make Beet Sugar

Not surprisingly, beet sugar is made from sugar beets. These aren't the same as the red or white bulbous beets that you've eaten as a dinner side or with pickled eggs; sugar beets actually look more like a parsnip or daikon than they do their sister beets. They're elongated and have a similar coloring to white potatoes and sugar beets grow well in a variety of climates just like all beets do.

Sugar beets were originally grown to feed livestock but aren't really fit for human consumption. Here's one of our favorite things about sugar beets – after you make the sugar, you can still use the leftover meat of the beet as a hot or cold mash for your livestock. No waste!



Beet sugar is super-easy to make, too. No special equipment is required and it doesn't take a long time to do it.

1. Scrub your beets to get all dirt and debris off of them.
2. Thinly slice, dice or shred the beets and place them in a pot.
3. Add just enough water to cover the beets.
4. Heat to a boil then simmer long enough for the beets to become tender and soft.
5. Remove from heat and strain the beet pulp out of the juice using cheesecloth.
6. Return the syrup to the pot.
7. Hold the cheesecloth full of pulp over the pot and squeeze as much water as possible out.
8. Simmer until it becomes thick, honey-like syrup, stirring frequently, then remove from heat.
9. Place in a storage container and allow to cool.
10. As it cools, the sugar will crystalize. Remove crystals and smash into a powder with your fingers so that it looks like table sugar.
11. Store and use just like you would regular sugar.

See how easy it is to make beet sugar at home?

Just FYI, you can expect to get about 17% of your original beet weight in sugar. To do the math for you, you'll need about 10 pounds of beets to yield 1.7 pounds of sugar.

How to Make Maple Sugar at Home

Maple sugar is deliciously reminiscent of the syrup that it's made from; it has that beautiful, sort of smoky maple flavor. Chances are that you've had maple sugar at least once in your life. It's frequently

sold as candy in the shape of maple leaves.

Maple sugar is great for baking, eating, or just adding to your tea. Once you try it, you'll be hooked. You don't need anything too specialized but you will need a candy thermometer and a heavy-bottomed pan.

1. Start with about 3 gallons of pure, organic maple syrup.
2. Heat on medium high until the syrup reaches 290-300 degrees, which is between soft crack and hard crack stages. If the syrup starts to overflow, just reduce heat a bit then turn it back up after the foam settles.
3. Remove from heat and stir vigorously for about 5 minutes.
4. Pour into a heat-resistant container; it's going to be extremely hot!
5. Allow to cool completely.
6. Break into chunks and grate into a powder.
7. Store as you would standard sugar.

One quart of syrup will yield about 2 pounds of granulated sugar. If you live in an area with maple trees, you can draw the sap directly from the trees and make your own syrup. Making maple sugar is a great skill to have for survival because it's easy and requires very little specialized equipment other than a tap for the tree.

Just FYI, darker maple syrups tend to yield a moister sugar than lighter-colored syrups do. Since maple trees are tapped in the spring when the sap is running, you need a tremendous amount of sap, about 40 gallons, just to make 1 gallon of good syrup. Just to give you an idea, an average tree yields about 3-4 gallons per day and a little over 13 gallons per season, total.

Because you can tap the tree without seriously damaging it, maple syrup and maple sugar are both wonderfully sustainable foods that can be used in a number of ways by a survivalist. It's also delicious to eat even when things are going wonderfully!

It's easy to make both beet sugar and maple sugar at home and they both have their uses. Maple sugar does taste differently so you may wish to use it when you're looking specifically for that flavor profile. Beet sugar tastes just like plain white sugar so you can use it just as you would cane sugar.

When SHTF, sugar is going to be a primo product because of the luxury of the crop. Those who have it or, even better, know how to make it, will certainly benefit from both the time and effort. Plus, you won't have to worry about drinking your tea unsweetened no matter how bad things get.

In post-disaster times, a little bit of comfort or luxury may very well go a long way.



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