

This pamphlet is meant to be a quick reference manual. To ensure that all of your employees understand your requirement and to ensure continuity. It is highly recommended that each producer develop their own written standard operating procedures (SOP) for their specific establishment and operations.

Suggested Personal Hygiene & Employee Conduct Standards for the Sugar House

Simple, easy steps to help keep your sugar house and products safe



Maple Producers Association of Nova Scotia

www.novascotiamaplesyrup.com

Introduction

It is important to remember that as a sugar maker you are making food products for human consumption. It is imperative that you take every step possible to ensure that the food you produce is safe, top quality and fit for human consumption.

One of the largest sources of contamination in the sugar house, and perhaps the easiest and cheapest to rectify are those coming from improper personal hygiene and employee conduct.

By following a few simple procedures the chances of cross contamination of your products from dirty hands, dirty or contaminated clothing and sick or injured employees can be greatly reduced.



In addition we also highly recommend these easy to institute items:

Hairnets

Cheap, easy to use and you don't even know your wearing one after a while. Baseball caps will not provide the same level of protection as a new, clean hairnet. Hairnets should be worn by anyone who enters the sugarhouse, even guests. Hairnets are disposable and should never be re-used.

Disposable Gloves

Your hands can be very dirty. Whenever you are handling raw or unpackaged product it only takes a second to put on a new pair of disposable gloves. Ensure you replace the gloves if you leave and return to what you were doing. Gloves are also not a substitute to clean hands, they are an added protection.

Posted Hand Washing Instructions

It is a great idea to have a simple sign above the sink in the bathroom instructing all employees to wash their hands prior to returning to work. Also by visiting the MPANS website you can find a simple step by step hand washing diagram that can be printed and posted. A designated hand washing sink is also recommended.

For more information please refer to the MPANS website at:
www.novascotiamaplesyrup.com

Or contact the association at:
**Maple Producers Association
of Nova Scotia**

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Hand Washing

When:

- Upon entering the sugar house for the first time.
- Before and after using the bathroom
- Before and after eating.
- After touching any part of your body including your hair.
- Anytime you hands get dirty or soiled.

Proper hand washing technique:

1. Wet your hands, using hot water.
2. Apply soap and scrub vigorously, including between your fingers and under nails, for at least 15 seconds.
3. Rinse well and dry with a single use towel.
4. Use a clean paper towel to turn the water off and, if necessary, to open the door.

Jewelry

Removal of Jewelry:

1. Remove rings, necklaces and earrings prior to entering the sugar house or whenever working with raw or unpackaged finished product.
2. Wedding bands are allowed but must be covered with an appropriate, clean glove.
3. Only replace jewelry after leaving the sugar house with no intention of returning until your next shift.

Reporting of Illness

When:

- If anyone working in the operation believes they are suffering from an illness which could cause a possible microbiological contamination of food, food packaging materials, and food contact surfaces, they are instructed to report to the producer or supervisor. The producer or supervisor then makes a case-by-case decision about the potential of food contamination. Any worker in the sugar camp who represent a risk will be sent home or reassigned to non-food contact jobs if appropriate.

Use of Restrooms

Proper Restroom Procedure:

1. Remove any apron or overcoat which is used while handling food and place on supplied hook.
2. Immediately after using the restroom thoroughly wash & dry your hands following the hand washing instructions.
3. Replace any apron or overcoat which is used while handling food only after exiting the restroom.

Treatment of Injuries

When:

- If you have injured yourself in such a manner as to cause contamination of food, food packaging materials, and food contact surfaces.
- If you have any open cuts, sores or scrapes.
- If you have injured yourself in such a manner that you cannot perform your prescribed duties or are in substantial pain.

Treating Injuries:

Immediately upon injuring yourself, report the injury to the manager. Take necessary steps to alleviate the injury. In the case of open wounds, cuts or scrapes immediately stop working with any food or packaging and seek the necessary treatment. Do not continue working with food or packaging again until you have treated the injury sufficiently and are capable of handling food, packaging and any food contact surfaces without the possibility of contamination.

Visitors

It is important that visitors to the sugarhouse adhere to the same cleanliness and hygiene standards as those working in the area.

Clothing

1. Long sleeve shirts, long pants and only footwear designated for the prescribed task must be worn.
2. Short sleeved shirts, tank tops, shorts, coats and ripped articles of clothing should not be worn in the sugar house.
3. Do not go outdoors for extended periods of time while wearing clothing that you wear in the sugar house.
4. Clothing & footwear used in other agricultural activates should never be worn in the sugar house.

Food and Drink

Food borne allergies and cross-contamination from other foods in the sugar house pose a substantial threat to the finished product.

1. Eating and smoking are not permitted in areas of the sugar house where processing, storage or packaging of food is taking place.
2. There should be a designated area in the sugar house, away from all processing and storage, where employees can eat.
3. Water in covered containers should be the only drink allowed near any processing or storage operation.