

## **Le grand cirque gastronomique de l'érable: from Innovative Research to Innovative Dishes**

**Longueuil, February 3, 2015** – As part of the 2015 *Maple Festival*, the Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers (FPAQ) celebrated the launch of the new season with *Le grand cirque gastronomique de l'érable*, a themed evening showcasing the latest culinary creations from 20 Maple Masters. The event, which took place at Cirque Éloize, was a tribute to maple, whose complex character combines authenticity and innovation. This year, innovation takes the form of a new research program in partnership with the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Nature et technologies, a new partnership with the Fédération québécoise des sports cyclistes and the unveiling of the results of recent surveys among local and international consumers. The evening kicks off a scintillating 2015 season, with a multitude of projects and activities planned that will increase awareness of the many different aspects of Quebec maple products.

### **100 Maple Masters add year-round innovation to their popular menus**

As a true feast for the senses, maple is a creative inspiration for many local artisans and chefs, the best of which are chosen to be part of the select club of 100 Maple Masters. The 2015 Maple Masters include culinary artists carefully chosen by the FPAQ from some of the greatest chefs of the culinary world. A Maple Master's distinguishing characteristic is an unconditional love for top-quality local products. They constantly hone their talent and keep a special place in their menus for maple, one of our most delicious natural resources. Maple Masters ensure that maple is enjoyed year-round and in all its forms.

Taking centre stage for the evening, Maple Masters from all four corners of Quebec presented their latest creations for 2015. Among the culinary delights served during the evening and offered throughout the year in their respective establishments were Duck Liver Mousse Parfait with Maple Jelly, Besnier Farm Rabbit with Maple Syrup and Endives, St-Canut Farms Pork with Sortilège, Maple Water-Poached Lobster, and Maple-Caramelized Pear Crisp.

### **A Maple Masters first: a maple-flavoured cheese**

In 2015, the Maple Masters are extending their influence in Quebec's culinary landscape by welcoming the fine cheesemaker Au Gré des Champs and their subtle maple-flavoured products. Their *Mishtan* is a cow's milk cheese, aged for three months and washed with boreal forest spice-macerated maple syrup. With this new member, a new product category has been added to the vast range of current Maple Master specialities, *Local Cheese and Maple*, giving hope that we could see other Quebec cheesemakers joining their ranks in the near future. In addition, five other artisans and chefs have been added to the Maple Masters program.

### **Maple under the magnifying glass of food researchers**

Serge Beaulieu, President of the FPAQ, underlines maple's character as an innovative, unique, 100% natural product, whose beneficial effects on health and sports performance are becoming increasingly well known: "We do not yet know all the qualities of maple. This local product still has many surprises for us to discover. Maple products have fascinating food properties and great potential for harmonizing with flavours from the world's cuisines. That is why the FPAQ is proud to announce the launch of the new Research Program on the Food Science Behind Maple in partnership with the Fonds de recherche du Québec - Nature et technologies (FRQNT), a \$1.4 million research program spread out over five years, which will study maple in all its food applications."

Geneviève C. Béland, Director of Promotion, Innovation and Market Development at the FPAQ, adds, "As well as its pleasant flavour, its many uses in cooking and benefits for sports performance, maple is a complex product, rich in flavour and texture, and produces fascinating reactions with other foods, which deserves to be explored thoroughly. The knowledge gained from this new research program in partnership with the FRQNT could lead to the creation of a professional course on maple gastronomy. By defining how maple harmonizes with international cuisine flavours and exploring maple culinary techniques, we will also be better equipped to increase awareness, visibility, value and sales of Quebec maple products in our various markets."

### **Les Produits d'érable du Québec to become the official energy source of the FQSC**

2015 will also be the first year of a new partnership with the Fédération québécoise des sports cyclistes (FQSC) as Les Produits d'érable du Québec becomes their official energy source, the first such agreement in the history of the FQSC. This unique affiliation affirms maple's value as an entirely natural energy food that benefits athletic performance.

"This new agreement with the FQSC is part of our vision, put forward by our *Fueled by nature™* program, which introduces athletes to the many attributes and benefits of maple," explains Genevieve C. Béland. "The wealth of nutrients found in maple syrup makes it a very attractive choice for sports nutrition."

As FQSC CEO Louis Barbeau explains, the choice to partner with Les Produits d'érable du Québec was a natural one, "Cyclists need a healthy energy source for their sport. Maple syrup is a 100% natural energy source in the form of simple sugars that metabolize quickly into glucose and act as fuel during exercise. It is an excellent sugar replacement because it is unprocessed and contains vitamins, minerals and polyphenols that promote recovery. Consuming maple boosts energy before, during and after training, which is essential for all cyclists!"

### **Surveys: The FPAQ studied maple consumption habits in various markets**

Recent surveys conducted by the FPAQ show that maple is a very popular sweetener in Quebec as well as in the United States and Japan.

Here are some key findings by market:



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**Quebec**

**95%** of Quebecers consume maple syrup more than once a week, as a topping, for dessert, in dishes, in salad dressings, in marinades or in beverages.

**73%** of Quebecers regularly used maple syrup as a substitute for other sweeteners like sugar, honey and agave syrup .

Over the last 10 years, maple syrup grocery sales in Quebec have increased by **365%**, or **15.4 million pounds** (including farm sales).

Survey conducted in 2013 by TKO Marketing and Ad Hoc Research among 2,000 participants.

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**United States**

**52%** of the US population are maple syrup lovers. They love its taste and enjoy its health benefits.

Among these consumers:

**94%** like its excellent taste

**89%** like that it is completely natural

**82%** find that it enhances flavours

**81%** consume or serve it for the pleasure it brings

**73%** consider it a sweetening agent

Survey conducted in 2014 by JRS Consulting among 2,012 participants.

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**Japan****A superior-quality gift, a gift of nature**

This is how the Japanese regard Quebec maple syrup.

Their motives for buying it include:

- They like that maple syrup has fewer calories than sugar and honey.
- They appreciate its mineral, vitamin and polyphenol content.

Survey conducted in 2012 by Macromil among 1,032 participants.

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## About the FPAQ and Les Produits d'érable du Québec

The Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers was founded in 1966 with the mission of defending the economic, social and moral interests of 7,300 maple businesses, as well as promoting the maple industry and developing initiatives to collectively market maple products. The quality work of these maple producers has made Quebec the proud source of 71% of the world's maple syrup. Les Produits d'érable du Québec is the brand the FPAQ has developed to promote authentic maple products from Quebec.

[siropderable.ca](http://siropderable.ca)

[siropcool.ca](http://siropcool.ca)

[ilovemaple.ca](http://ilovemaple.ca)

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