

Developing a Marketing Perspective (Module 3)

Making decisions for how you will market your syrup

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This matrix is designed to help start to determine your potential marketing strategy - a basis for your marketing plan - your target market. Please circle all that apply to your situation and make notes in the open spaces or in the margins.

Distribution Type	Market Location (example)	Advantages	Disadvantages	Final Price Notes	Additional Comments
DIRECT					
	Farmers Market	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sell what you have; no minimums -Can provide info for market expansion (taste, preferences, etc.) -Limited marketing expenses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Time intensive -Requires good face-to-face communication skills -You provide labor and transportation -Schedule is seasonal, and dependent on local market hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Can provide the highest margin -Need to factor in the appropriate markup 	List of farmers markets available with state dept. of agriculture; list of festivals often with local or state tourism agencies
	Roadside stand/self-serve	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Sell what you have; no minimums -Flexible schedule 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Honor system for payment -Product spoilage -Location/traffic 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Requires monitoring and cash management -Margin can be high if priced correctly 	Note: local regulations

INTERMEDIARY					
	Retail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Brand exposure and more markets -Range of outlet size and supply needs -Opportunity to increase consumer awareness about real maple syrup 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Buyer demands may include changes to packaging, labeling and delivery -Displayed with competitors -Lack of buyer and consumer awareness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Requires market information knowledge -Needs good communication with retailers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Increase in inspection and processing regulations
	Wholesale (bottled)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Potential to move syrup -Increased market presence -Save on transport labor and costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Need good relations with buyers -Little choice in bottle style or size 		
	Wholesale (bulk)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Reduced packaging and labeling costs -Potential to efficiently move large volumes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Lower margins -May have stringent buyer requirements such as grade 		

Based in part on the following resources:

Heusher, Annie. 2022. Marketing Community Food Agriculture Coalition of Missoula County. Planning for on-farm success: A workbook for Montana's beginning farmers and ranchers. USDA Montana. Dec. 28, 2022 found at <https://www.farmlinkmontana.org/resources/planning-for-on-farm-success/>

Minnesota Institute for Sustainable Agriculture. 2003. Building a Sustainable Business: a guide to developing a business plan for farms and rural business. Heusher, Annie (editor) College Park, MD. Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education (SARE). USDA

Perry, Jeffery and Stephen Childs. 2012. Beginning or Expanding Maple Syrup Operations as a Profitable Business!. College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Cornell University. 40 pages.

Thomas, Helen. 2022. Study Suggests Promising Ways to Market Maple. Maple Syrup Digest Vol. 61, No. 4 p. 14-18.