

The granulated maple sugar trials I wrote about two weeks ago continue. We have made several more batches of sugar from our supply of syrup from last March. We have discovered that the grade of syrup seems to determine the color of the finished sugar. That is, of course, logical, and it does not affect the quality of the sugar. So, we have some that is nearly as light as white sugar, some that is more like brown sugar, and some that is in between those two colors. It is all good.

There are some "crumbles" left after sifting the sugar. If we wanted to use a wooden spoon or some other tool, we could push them through the sieve and add them to the granulated sugar. But, those crumbles are tasty in other ways. We have been enjoying our daily morning meal of whole grain toast with our butter--churned last summer from Effie and Buttercup's cream--and maple crumbles. Even Fly, the old border collie, stands by the table, waiting for her share.

I made two kinds of cookies using the granulated maple sugar. One recipe came to us along with our Christmas maple products from our cousins in Shepherd. The other was in my Swedish baking book, *Sju Sorters Kakor*. Both recipes worked equally well as with commercial white sugar. And, this morning, I experimented again. This time, I made Norwegian *krumkaker* with granulated maple sugar instead of the usual white. I put just a dab of dough on the iron for most of the cookies, so they were about the diameter of a Mason jar top, but I made some the full size of the iron. Those, I rolled into cones. We have eaten several, and they are fully as good as those made with the usual ingredients. There is no more than a hint of maple flavor in them, and the addition of another flavoring--such as almond or vanilla, would work just as well.

I have made apple pie, apple crisp, cinnamon rolls, and these cookies--all with maple sugar instead of white. This way, we have the means to use organically produced sugar instead of the refined, usually chemically produced sugar from sugar beets or cane. There is organic sugar on the market, of course, but it is much more economical for us to make our own, now that we know that we can do this easily.

And, we will continue to use our maple syrup in the same way that we have always done. To flavor beans, add a bit of sweetness to bread,

or as a topping for waffles or pancakes, there is no need to go to the extra work of making granulated maple sugar. The syrup is perfect for much of our cooking and baking.

So, we will go on with our experiments until our 2016 syrup supply is exhausted. And, maybe we will put in a few more taps this next spring.

I don't usually write about politics in these essays, but this week we have a momentous choice in this country. Do we want a person of bigotry, racism, misogyny, narcissism, and possibly psychopathy to occupy the White House and infect even more of our country's population? I don't think so. Please cast that Presidential vote tomorrow for a seasoned stateswoman who is experienced in dealing with foreign leaders and who wants equitable health care for Americans, solutions for dealing with the desperate conditions of our environment, and peace for all of us here on this small, unique planet. Vote for Clinton/Kaine tomorrow.