

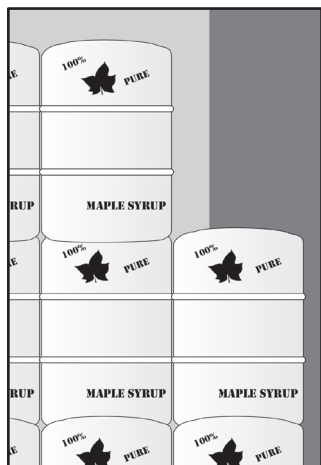
A Sweet Heist



Maple syrup is big business in Canada. It makes most of the world's maple syrup. There are many maple farms in Canada. Most farmers are part of one group. It is called the Federation of Quebec Maple Syrup Producers. Farmers sell their syrup to the Federation. The Federation sells the syrup to stores.

Maple syrup is made from tree sap. It is very expensive. It takes 39 gallons of sap to make one gallon of maple syrup.

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The Federation keeps the syrup in barrels. The barrels are stored in warehouses. Warehouses are large buildings used for storing things. Most of the Federation's warehouses are in Quebec. Every year, the Federation sends an accountant to each warehouse. The accountant's job is to count all barrels.

Each barrel of syrup weighs 600 pounds. The barrels are piled in stacks that are six barrels high. The accountant has to climb the stacks to count the barrels.

In 2012, an accountant entered a warehouse in Quebec. He began to climb the barrels. He climbed one, two, three, four, five... and then almost fell to his death. The top barrel was empty. It did not support his weight. It went flying to the ground below him.

Did someone forget to fill one of the barrels? Or was it more than that?

The accountant started to investigate. What he discovered was astounding. Someone had stolen \$18 million worth of maple syrup.

This warehouse usually held \$30 million worth of maple syrup. But there was no security. No one guarded the warehouse. There were no security cameras. There was only one tiny lock on the door. No one ever thought that someone might try to steal maple syrup.



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Stealing so many barrels of maple syrup isn't easy. It isn't a one-person job. After all, each barrel weighs 600 pounds. A heist of this size needed a lot of people working together. The thieves needed a place to store the stolen barrels, too.

The police got involved and investigated. They heard reports of delivery trucks coming and going at weird hours. Soon, they had some leads and started arresting suspects. In all, police arrested 26 people. Of these, only 2 people admitted to being guilty. The rest of the people who were arrested said they were innocent. The ringleader, the person in charge of the heist, went to jail for eight years. He had to pay millions of dollars in fines.

