

Highland County Maple Festival Sugar Tours

1. Sugar Tree Country Store & Sugar House

Located near the center of McDowell, this operation employs a modern reverse osmosis concentrator and oil-fired evaporator. Antique maple producing tools are on display. Enjoy a selection of country store merchandise, pottery, maple products, and jams. Brunswick Stew, maple doughnuts, and other foods will be available during Maple Festival. Tour buses can park across the road in the parking lot. Guided tours. *(Closed on Sundays.)*

2. Eagle Sugar Camp

Follow signs to Eagle Sugar Camp, located north of McDowell off Rt. 654 (Jack Mountain Road) in Doe Hill. Syrup producers for more than 200 years, the Eagles still use open pan wood-fired evaporators as the latest advanced computerized oil-fired evaporators. Observe sugar water collected in buckets. Local honey, maple products, buckwheat, cornmeal & baked goods are available during Maple Festival, along with home-cooked food, maple doughnuts, and local arts & crafts. Guided tours. Tour buses are welcome.

3. Puffenbarger's Sugar Orchard

On Route 637 (Maple Sugar Road), southwest of Blue Grass is the Puffenbarger Sugar Orchard. The Puffenbargers have rebuilt their sugar camp following the devastating fire in 2008. A vacuum pump is still used to increase the flow of sugar water and miles of plastic tubing make it easier to gather. The process of maple syrup-making is started by reverse osmosis and finished by oil-fired evaporators. Maple doughnuts and other foods are available.

4. Rexrode's Sugar Orchard

Located north of Hightown on Route 637 (Maple Sugar Road), Rexrode's Sugar Orchard features a stand of maple trees over 200 years old. The Rexrodes use the old-fashioned "open pan" system of evaporation as well as the newer wood-fired evaporation method with miles of plastic tubing to gather the sugar water. Baked country ham, chili dogs, BBQ sandwiches and other foods are served during Maple Festival. Guided tours. Tour buses are welcome.

5. Southernmost Maple Products

Located 15 miles south of Monterey on Route 607 (Big Valley Road), off US 220 at Bolar, Southernmost Maple Products funnels sugar water into the only piggy-back evaporator to be found in the southern states. A rustic country store offers a variety of maple products, flour, honey, jellies and baked goods. Maple pit-cooked BBQ, pork skins and maple doughnuts are available during Maple Festival. Handicapped accessible. Guided tours. Tour buses are welcome. *(Closed on Sundays.)*

6. Duff's Sugar House

Located southwest of Monterey (3 mi. south on U.S. 220 and 3 mi. west on Route 84), Duff's Sugar House is a small, family-run sugar house where the trees are still "opened" by hand and the sugar water collected in buckets. Cooking is done in a wood-fired open pan and finished in an iron kettle. Hands-on participation is encouraged. Tours all day.

