

Sugar: How is it produced from beet? (Infographic)

Food processing | How are different foods produced? | 07 February 2015

The EU is the world's leading producer of beet sugar. Globally, 20% of sugar is produced from sugar beet; the other 80% is produced from sugar cane.¹

The process varies slightly to produce different types of sugar, for example:

- **BROWN SUGAR:** As sugar produced from sugar beets is naturally white, brown sugar produced from sugar beet is the result of either leaving the white sugar crystals in contact with the brown syrup, or re-adding the brown syrup to the white sugar crystals.
- **ICING SUGAR:** Icing sugar is made by grinding granulated sugar, using a mill (like a coffee grinder).
- **CASTER/CASTOR SUGAR:** Caster or castor sugar (a British term given to sugar fine enough to fit through a sugar "caster" or sprinkler) is made by sieving granulated sugar to give fine sugar crystals which dissolve quickly. Granulated sugar has a mean particle size of 500-600 μ while caster sugar has a mean particle size of 300-500 μ .

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SUGAR

How is it produced from beet?

1



FARMING

Sugar beets are sown in March/April.

2



HARVESTING

Usually begins in September.

3



SLICING

Sugar beets are washed and cut into thin strips.

4



EXTRACTING & PURIFYING

Sliced beets are passed through hot water to extract sugar juice. Limestone is added to the juice to bind proteins and other non-sugars which are then removed by filtration.

5



EVAPORATING & BOILING

Water is evaporated and the juice is then boiled under vacuum to produce a thick, crystal mixture.

6



CENTRIFUGING

Centrifuge separates the white sugar crystals from the brown sugar syrup.

7



DRYING & COOLING

Once dried and cooled, white sugar crystals remain.

Reference

1. [European Commission website, Agriculture and Rural Development section, "Sugar". Last updated 11 February 2014.](#)

For more information

[Sugar - how is it produced from cane?](#)