Granulated Maple Sugar is the most versatile product that is made from maple syrup. This product is totally shelf stable, it will not separate or mold. It can be stored indefinitely at room temperature and with proper packaging and moisture control will not lose its granular nature. It can be used in recipes as a replacement for brown or white sugar to create some great flavors. It can be reconstituted into maple syrup or converted into any of the other maple confections. It can be an easier product for home cooks, chefs or restaurants to use because of its storability and versatility. It can also be used as a topping or used anywhere other sugar would be used to add flavor or sweetness. The flavor of many products is enhanced by using maple sugar in place of white sugar and is especially noted by many consumers for its natural and sustainable origin. The packaging for maple sugar should be air tight such as a glass jar or re-sealable plastic.

Granulated maple sugar is made by heating pure maple syrup until the temperature is 50° to 60° F above the boiling point of water. Following cooking, the syrup is stirred immediately until granulation is achieved. Stirring can be done by hand or by using a mechanical stirring machine. Stirring continues until all moisture is essentially removed from the cooked syrup and crumbly, granulated sugar remains. The sugar is sifted to make a uniform product. A quart of syrup will yield about 2 pounds of granulated sugar.

Packaging/Storing maple sugar when the moisture content is still too high is the primary reason for the sugar to harden later. Maple granulated sugar hardens when water evaporates from the sugar when the packaging is not properly closed or has allowed moisture to escape. Storing maple sugar in a way that allows the product to retain its natural moisture in its original airtight container helps maple sugar stay moist.

Using granulated maple sugar is the most straight forward approach to getting this natural sugar into most common recipes. You simply replace one cup of cane sugar with one cup of granulated maple sugar. Here you gain the extra flavors and natural character from maple while the sweetness and liquid in the recipe stay in balance. To replace one cup of loose brown sugar you use 3/4 cup of maple sugar. To replace one cup of packed brown sugar you add one cup and one half ounce (one tablespoon) of maple sugar. The influence of the maple flavor on the recipe is most closely related to the color of the syrup used to make the sugar. Sugar from light or medium amber syrups will add a mild maple flavor while sugar made from dark or extra dark syrup will add the most robust maple flavor. These recommendations are based on average weights for various sugar products. Granulated and brown sugars vary in grain and moisture content and can result in some variation in how your recipes turn out. An all time favorite is to use maple sugar in place of white or brown sugar when making an apple pie or apple crisp.

If maple sugar hardens, let it stand overnight in a sealed jar with a damp paper towel. For a quick fix, heat the needed amount in a 250° F oven for a few minutes or in a microwave oven on low for 1-2 minutes per cup. The softened maple sugar should be used immediately. The clumps of sugar can also be broken up in a blender.

Converting Maple Sugar To Maple Syrup
You can make maple syrup from maple sugar by adding water to the maple sugar. The blend rate for the usual density of maple syrup is to add 7 tablespoons or 3.7 ounces of water to one packed cup of maple sugar and the result will be one cup of maple syrup. For a bigger batch add 7 ounces, or just under one cup of water, to two packed cups of maple sugar. For a single serve add one tablespoon of water to two full tablespoons of sugar. The mix of sugar and water should be heated and stirred until all the sugar is in solution then used like any maple syrup. You can easily make thicker syrup if you like by just adding less water, however, thicker syrup should not be stored for an extended time as it will re-crystallize. Why would you want to make maple syrup from maple sugar? Sugar is easier to store, in glass or plastic. It does not need refrigeration and there is no threat of it molding or spoiling if not used for an extended time. The sugar is easier and cheaper to ship as it is lighter and leakage is not nearly the threat compared to shipping a liquid.
Maple Cheesecake

8 oz. cream cheese-softened
8 oz. whipped topping
1/2 cup Maple Sugar
1 pre-made graham cracker pie crust

Mix all ingredients together and pour into the pie crust. Let chill overnight. Sprinkle top with Maple Sugar before serving.

For other great recipes see:
http://maple.dnr.comell.edu/recipes.htm
http://nysmaple.comimapleJecipes.html