Sensory Evaluation of Flavors

Perfecting Your Flavor

Developing **the best flavor system** for your product is challenging. Choosing just the right flavor, in just the right amount, to make the most appealing product possible **takes a combination of patience, artistry, and science.**

While everyone's tastes are different, and choosing the "best" flavor can be a largely subjective process, there are **methods to bring some objectivity** to your decision.

At Weber Flavors, we can help your decision-making process by **providing sensory data** when needed: **Discrimination** (Triangle) Testing to determine if a flavor is an acceptable alternative to an existing item; **Paired Preference** and Hedonic Ratings to determine if one flavor is preferred over another; and **Descriptive Analysis** to get to the heart of what makes a flavor the best one for you.

Tasting Guidelines

When formal sensory testing isn't required, there are still some **general guidelines** to follow when screening flavors, either alone or in a roundtable format.

Planning Ahead:

- **Establish your desired outcome**. Should the item taste 'exactly' like something else? Close, but not exactly? Should it be preferred over something else? Simply "good" or "excellent"?
- Plan to taste in a **calm, quiet**, climate-controlled environment, free from ouside distractions and odors. **Focusing in** on what you're tasting is key to detecting nuances and preferences.

- Develop a common language. **Have a list of descriptors** that correspond to the flavors you're tasting so that everyone is able to describe flavor notes in a similar way. We all "know what I like," but being able to describe that to others is key.
- **Refrain** from drinking coffee or other strong beverages, smoking, wearing scented products, or using strong toothpastes or mouthwashes for a suitable time before tasting.

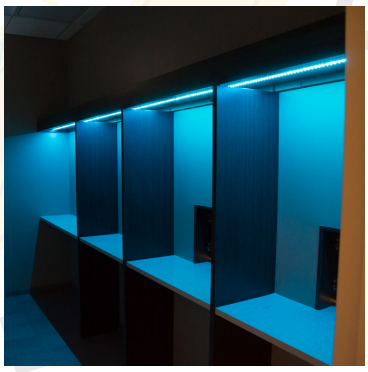
- It is best to **taste a flavor in the product** in which it will be used, and at the appropriate usage level. The base formulation can have a dramatic effect on how a flavor is perceived. If that is not possible, a solution of sweetened water (5% sucrose, 0.1% citric acid if desired) can be used.

During Tasting:

- When **tasting with others**, take a moment to **make notes** of your own first impressions so that others' opinions and descriptions don't supersede your own. Further, **note the degree** to which a specific flavor note or sensation is experienced (ie, weak, moderate, strong).
- **Assessing the aroma** should be done by either waving just the cap lightly under your nose, or **by dipping a paper blotter** into the flavor and lightly smelling that. NEVER taste a flavor neat (undiluted) or try to smell a flavor directly from the bottle.
- When **tasting multiple samples in one sitting,** observe several general protocols:
  - Decide the **order of tasting** in advance, putting lighter or more subtle flavors (ex: vanilla, strawberry) at the beginning, and saving stronger flavors (ex: coffee, garlic, ginger, mint) for the end of your session.
  - **Drink water** before tasting each sample. Swishing and spitting into a cup is also acceptable.
  - **Cleanse your palate** with a small bite of unsalted soda cracker between samples.
  - When tasting with others, be sure to **give each person time** to note their own impressions before sharing your own.

If you come, we will build it...

Visit us and experience our new Test Kitchen and Sensory Testing facilities. When time is of the essence, there's no faster way to build a flavor system than to have you come directly to us. **Work one-on-one with our flavorists and applications technologists**, and in just a day or two, we can test and revise a flavor system many times under your guidance.



*Price targets and estimated annual volumes are required to utilize our R&D resources.

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