

Sensory Evaluation

A practical handbook

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Preface

This book is an affordable sensory science textbook focused on the practical aspects of sensory testing on a broad range of products. It is presented in a simple 'how to' style for use by industry and academia as a step-by-step guide on how to carry out a range of sensory tests. It is intended as a companion volume to a larger, more detailed sensory science textbook covering theoretical aspects, advanced techniques and applications of sensory evaluation. The inspiration for this book is the excellent *Laboratory Methods for Sensory Evaluation of Food* by Elizabeth Larmont first published in 1967 and revised in 1977 and 1991 (Poste *et al.*, 1991). It is now out of print; but at the time of publication, it was popular for its practical, easy-to-read style, coupled with good use of examples and illustrations. The authors have fond memories of using the book during their formative years in sensory science.

Between them, the authors have over 50 years of industrial and academic experience in sensory science and have published widely in the field. All three authors are founder committee members of The Institute of Food Science and Technology's Professional Food Sensory Group (IFST PFSG).

There are many good sensory textbooks on the market. The generalist sensory science texts are very comprehensive, but are often written in a research style, or with large sections of unbroken text which renders them unsuitable for use as a simple training/teaching aid or as a quick practical guide. They are also expensive/unaffordable in developing countries and difficult to understand for readers who have English as a second language. In addition, more and more specialised sensory texts are now available which tend to focus on theory and application in a narrow field, rather than general practice. There is a tendency for sensory textbooks to focus on food and beverage applications, often to the exclusion of other product categories.

The objectives of this book are as follows:

- To provide a practical guide and laboratory manual on how to carry out sensory evaluation techniques.

- To reach sensory practitioners, as well as sensory scientists, by using a simple, easy-to-read, easy-to-use format.
- To cover a broad range of product applications, including food, beverages, personal care and household products.
- To be inexpensive and available to a wide audience who would not usually be able to afford to purchase standard sensory textbooks, including students, technicians and practitioners in developing countries.
- To cover the IFST PFSG accreditation scheme at foundation and intermediate levels.

The very simple, practical, easy-to-use style of this book, coupled with its affordability, makes it suitable as a training manual, reference text, teaching aid and course book. Key audiences include sensory practitioners, junior sensory staff, sensory students and sensory trainers. It is applicable across a broad range of industries and to those with limited budgets.

The style of the book is easy-to-follow 'instructions' with simple explanations of how and why to do testing in a particular way, rather than detailed theory and underlying science of techniques. It is laid out in logical sequence. Examples and illustrations are used throughout. Practical tips and hints in the form of dos and don'ts are included in each section.

The book begins with an introductory chapter that gives an overview of sensory evaluation and a second chapter on sensory perception. The third chapter outlines how to plan a sensory project. The fourth chapter focuses on requirements for sensory testing. Important elements of this chapter are professional conduct and good laboratory practice. These often receive scant coverage, but are becoming increasingly important as novel ingredients and processes continue to be developed (e.g. ingredients from genetically modified origin), and as products are increasingly tested in markets with regulations that are different from those in the markets for which they were designed. No matter how informal the sensory assessment is, it is essential that safe and ethical practices are used. The fifth chapter covers sensory test methods. Methods for statistical analysis are given throughout this chapter, rather than as a stand-alone section, to make the translation to practice easier. Case studies are used to illustrate methods. The sixth chapter covers elements necessary to complete a sensory project. Also included are appendices, glossary, references and index.

The authors hope that you enjoy using this book and that it helps bring success in your sensory endeavours.

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