

Sensory Characterisation and Evaluation of Traditional Portuguese Cheeses

Correia, AC ¹; Jordão, AM ¹; Noronha, JF ²

¹Escola Superior Agrária de Viseu ²Escola Superior Agrária de Coimbra

Escola Superior Agrária de Coimbra, Bencanta, 3040-316 Coimbra, Portugal
noronha@mail.esac.pt Fax +351 239 802 979 Phone +351 239 802 276

Abstract

This poster presents an on-going project in which the principal aim is the selection and training of sensory panels for studying and characterizing traditional Portuguese cheeses. Two separate sensory panels are being trained, the first for discriminative studies and the second for descriptive studies. The results of this project will enable the creation of assessment grids for the sensory evaluation of two traditional products (PDO) produced in the centre region of Portugal: "Queijo Serra da Estrela Velho" (a semi-hard cheese subjected to a long maturation period), and "Requeijão Serra da Estrela" (whey cheese).



Aims

Sensory analysis is a fundamental tool for characterizing traditional food products, being an important tool for the protection against industrial fraud, optimization of products and processes and quality control.

Project **Agro 243 "Sensory characterization of traditional cheeses produced in the centre region of Portugal"** (2002-2005) aims at selecting, training and maintaining sensory panels that will allow reaching those goals in the future and that will represent an important tool for research on Portuguese traditional cheeses (Fig 1).

Two different sensory panels were developed:

- A panel for discriminative sensory tests
- A panel trained for descriptive analysis.

After appropriate training, panels will be used for the sensory characterization of two products officially classified as PDO in recent times:

- Queijo Serra da Estrela Velho – a semi-hard to hard cheese produced from ewe's milk subjected to a long maturation process (> 120 days)
- Requeijão Serra da Estrela – whey cheese



Tasks

Discriminative panel

- Selection of panel members through several tests (elementary tasting, odour, colour and texture foods).
- Comparison tests with several sheep traditional cheeses and whey cheeses

Descriptive panel

- Selection and training of panel members
- Identification and selection of descriptors for establishing a sensory profile
 - Sensory descriptors for traditional Portuguese cheeses (Ewe and goat milk)
 - Sensory descriptors for Requeijão (whey cheese)

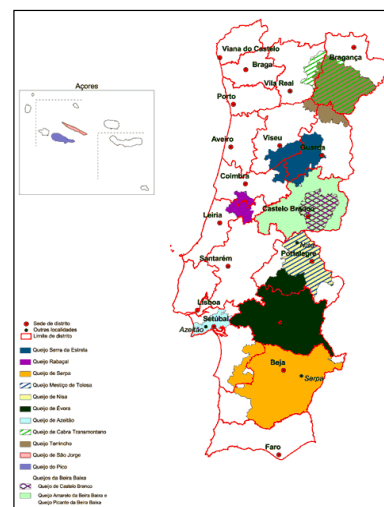


Figure 1 Distribution of Portuguese traditional cheeses (PDO and PGI).

Partnership

- Escola Superior Agrária de Coimbra/Instituto Politécnico de Coimbra
- Escola Superior Agrária de Viseu/Instituto Politécnico de Coimbra
- Associação Nacional de Criadores de Ovinos da Serra da Estrela

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