Identification and selection of descriptors for establishing a sensory profile for “Requeijão”

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Abstract
This poster describes the steps taken for the identification and selection of descriptive terms for establishing a sensory profile for “requeijão” (curd cheese) in Portuguese. The developed profile will be used to create an assessment grid for the sensory evaluation of a traditional curd cheese produced in centre region of Portugal: “Requeijão Serra da Estrela”.

Material and Methods
All the evaluations were performed in the sensory laboratory located at Escola Superior Agrária de Coimbra (ESAC). This laboratory is built and equipped according to Portuguese standard NP 4258:1993, and has three main sections:
- A test kitchen for sample storage and preparation.
- A test room equipped with 5 booths (Fig. 1), for testing and scoring for external and internal panellists (Fig. 1).
- Panel members were selected among ESAC personnel with previous experience on descriptive evaluation of traditional Portuguese Cheeses.

Results
In the first step of the identification of descriptors for Requeijão a total of 582 terms was obtained after eliminating all the hedonic, quantitative and irrelevant terms.
Due to the large amount of terms obtained, only the ones used for more than one Requeijão and proposed by more than one panel member were considered. Gender and plural variations were also discarded. After this preliminary screening a total of 249 descriptors was considered for the next phases (Table 1).

Table 1 – Number of descriptors for “Requeijão” obtained in the identification and after reduction phases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Initial</th>
<th>1st screen</th>
<th>Statistic Reduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exterior</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paste</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Texture</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taste</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After taste</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>582</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the present study and after all the selection procedures a panel of 23 members (13 males; 10 females) was used. The panel screening was based on the results of a battery of sensory tests (taste and odour, identification, triangular tests, ranking tests, use of scales and descriptive ability). Panel members were also ranked according to their punctuality, interest and performance (NP ISO 8586-1:2001, Mellegaard et al., 1991).

Future Work
- Choice of reference products and substances
- Training the panel in the reduced descriptive list
- Validation of the obtained list
- Establishment of a sensory profile for “Requeijão Serra da Estrela”
- Development of a sensory grid for the evaluation of “Requeijão Serra da Estrela”

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References

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