

Sensory Evaluation Procedure

1. Appearance

1. Is the rind dry or wet?
2. Is the rind cracked, indented, or otherwise disturbed?
3. Is the paste (the cheese itself) richly colored or pale?
4. Examine holes in the cheese. Does the cheese texture appear mainly open, or mainly closed?
5. Squeeze a piece of cheese between your fingers. Does it spring back quickly (elastic) or does it remain indented (inelastic)?
6. Bend a piece of cheese. Does it break quickly (brittle), or can you bend it double without resistance (flexible)?
7. Break the cheese and smell it. Is it a strong or weak smell? What are your general impressions of the smell?
8. Record all evaluations and comments on your tasting sheet and score the cheese's overall appearance.

2. Flavor

1. Taste

1. Inhale and hold your breath (especially when starting out, you may also find it useful to hold your nose). Place a piece of cheese in your mouth and chew. This is necessary to differentiate aroma from taste.
2. Record whatever tastes you can detect. The four main tastes (sweet, salty, acid, and bitter) are usually present to some degree.
3. Score the cheese's overall taste.

2. Aroma

1. Aroma is the perception of aromatics directly through the nose, though generally they are experienced in the mouth. To best perceive aroma, place another piece of cheese in your mouth and chew, exhaling through the nose.
2. Try to identify the primary aromas, your strongest impressions, and match them to the general aroma categories on the sheet. Classify each aroma as strong, weak, or medium.
3. If an aroma does not quite fit with the descriptions on the sheet, feel free to consult the aroma wheel or write in your own descriptors.
4. Score the cheese's overall aroma.

3. Texture

1. Place a piece of cheese in your mouth and use your teeth and tongue to break it up. Record your impressions on the tasting sheet along with the cheese's texture score.

4. Aftertaste

1. Classify the general strength of the aftertaste. An aftertaste that lingers in the mouth for less than two seconds is low intensity; more than five, high intensity.
 2. Decide how balanced the aftertaste is -- whether there is one overwhelming note or a variety of tastes.
 3. Note the overwhelming taste sensations in the cheese's aftertaste. Feel free to write in your own if the descriptions provided are inadequate.
 4. Score the cheese's aftertaste.
5. Final
1. Record any final comments or suggestions you may have for the cheesemaker.