



Medallion Laboratories

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THE DESCRIPTIVE OFFERING:

“Descriptive analysis is the sensory method by which the attributes of a food or product are identified and quantified using human subjects who have been specifically trained for this purpose”^[1]. It is the most complex and most sensitive of the sensory evaluation tools available. It provides a qualitative, detailed description of the sensory attributes perceived in a product as well as a qualitative measurement of the magnitude or intensity of each attribute detected. Many different types of Descriptive Analysis methods exist. The method of choice for Medallion Laboratories is the Spectrum Method^{[2][3]} and our area of expertise lies in documenting the flavor and texture characteristics of consumer food products.

MEDALLION'S DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OFFERINGS:

Medallion offers Comprehensive or Modified Spectrum Flavor Analysis for all Consumer Food Products and offers Comprehensive or Modified Spectrum Texture Analysis for Solid and Liquid Consumer Food Products.

Medallion's analysis package includes consultation on study design, lexicon development, training/practice session(s), test sample evaluation (1 rep), data interpretation, progress reports as needed, final written report and results presentation. Our experienced staff can handle varied levels of customization requests to meet your specific project needs.

APPROPRIATE APPLICATIONS:

- QC/QA “target” or “standard” product documentation
- Product quality monitoring and/or trouble shooting
- Correlation of instrumental/chemical measurements with sensory measurements
- Competitive product comparison
- Product optimization
- Productivity/cost savings
- Product variability studies
- Shelf-life/stability/storage studies
- Packaging stability studies
- Legal documentation for labeling claims

THE EXPERT PANEL:

- Panel consists of 10 assessors, all female; Minimum of 8 required per study
- Assessors were selected based on high level of sensory acuity, ability to work in a team environment, interest and attitude
 - o All assessors passed a 2 hour sensory acuity screening process that tested their visual and spatial perception (color blindness, scaling), their descriptive ability (identification of basic tastes and aromatics), their discriminatory ability (series of triangle tests and intensity ranking exercises)
 - o All assessors passed a 1 hour group activity screening process that tested their ability to work as part of a team. Activities included team consensus generation for a intensity ranking exercise, a descriptive exercise and an off-flavor identification exercise
 - o All assessors passed a 30 minute personal interview that highlighted their interest in the position, their general attitude and how they deal with feedback
- Assessors have completed 360 hours of Spectrum Method Descriptive Analysis Training for the evaluation of flavor and texture of food products
 - o Flavor training was conducted with consultation by Gail Vance Civile, President Sensory Spectrum, developer of the Spectrum Method for Descriptive Analysis
 - o Initial texture training was conducted by Gail Vance Civile, President Sensory Spectrum
- Panel has been operational since January, 2004
- Assessors utilize a 150 point (0-15) intensity scale is used to measure intensity for each attribute evaluated
- Assessors utilize appropriate attribute character and intensity references for every study
- Assessor and panel performance is monitored on an on-going basis and validated on a quarterly basis.

REFERENCES:

- [1] ASTM Manual Series: MNL 13, Manual on Descriptive Analysis Testing, pp 1, 1992
- [2] ASTM Manual Series: MNL 13, Manual on Descriptive Analysis Testing, pp 22-34, 1992
- [3] Meilgaard et al; Sensory Evaluation Techniques, 4rd Edition, pp 173-253, 2006

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