



THE GLOBAL LEADER IN GMO IDENTIFICATION

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TASTE EVALUATION TEST

In early 2003, one of Genetic ID Inc. subsidiaries, Genetic ID Japan, initiated R&D for the “Taste Evaluation Testing” service. Based on extensive scientific research, joint work with outside laboratories and its own R&D analysis, Genetic ID Japan launched its first Taste Evaluation Test for rice in October, 2003.

Since then, we have successfully standardized taste evaluation for such foods as rice, wheat flour, soy, fruit juice, and many other Japanese traditional foods. This list includes tofu, rice crackers, snacks, boiled marine products and other fish products, fresh, frozen, or processed meat such as chicken, pork, beef or fried chicken, various fruits, and other fresh and frozen products. Clients of Genetic ID who use these taste evaluations include major retail supermarkets, convenience stores, consumer cooperatives, food manufacturers, grower cooperatives, and importers.

Genetic ID Japan has been providing this test mainly for the Japanese local market, but due to increasing global interest, we have started offering this unique service for overseas suppliers through a joint effort that utilizes Genetic ID’s world-wide network.

WHAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU

The four principal quality factors in foods are the following:

1. *Appearance*—comprised of color, shape, size, and gloss— uses the optical sense.
2. *Flavor*—comprised of taste (perceived on the tongue) and odor (perceived in the olfactory center in the nose)—uses the chemical senses and the oral and nasal cavities to chemical stimuli.
3. *Texture*—comprised of contact between some part of the body and the food—uses the tactile senses to physical stimuli.
4. *Nutrition*—comprised of major nutrients (carbohydrates, fat, and protein) and minor nutrients (mineral, vitamins, fiber).

Genetic ID’s Taste Evaluation Testing is based on comprehensive testing. Our basic scheme is to organize various testing based on optical analysis, chemical analysis, mechanical (texture) analysis and smell/fragrance analysis. For example, “delicious taste” consists of various elements from optical

(appearance), chemical (taste), mechanical (texture) factors and smell/fragrance. In some food categories, chemical components such as the “UMAMI (good taste) element”, as it’s referenced in Japan, might be most important, but others categories might emphasize texture. Scientific analysis focuses on various components which contribute positively or negatively to the TASTE. By comparing such analytical data, one can easily evaluate and compare two products from the “TASTE profile” aspect.

Anticipating consumer acceptance in advance provides our clients with the ability to reduce risk in rolling out a new product or enhances the market share of an existing product. Clients who wish to plan Taste Evaluation Testing can simply forward their inquiries to Genetic ID. We would then evaluate their food category and propose a testing matrix with support/verification information. Our Taste Evaluation Testing program provides customized testing for every product evaluated. Each client can customize the testing parameters to meet the needs at hand. Taste is a matrix of parameters comprised of smell, color (visual appearance), texture, taste, and preference of taste by age, region, sex or even generation. The parameters may depend on the application of testing. The results could be for internal R&D, product presentation, a sales and marketing tool or a combination of these. For example, if a company wishes to evaluate “soy” taste quality, we would provide chemical testing such as sweetness (sugar profile) and UMAMI (good taste/flavor) elements based on free amino acid analysis. Exclusive rights to the Taste Evaluation Testing for pork and beef have been sold to a multinational food company. All other products are as yet not under exclusive contract.

VERIFIED VALUE

Exporters to the Japanese market may have heard this typical phrase from Japanese buyers: “Japanese consumers have different TASTE and we need to ask you to adjust the TASTE quality of your product to fit the Japanese market.” But how can you identify “Japanese TASTE?”

Major national retail companies face more and more demand to establish systematic product selection. As a result, they have standardized various specifications or purchasing procedures. Taste quality confirmation is included in those specifications but in most cases, it has been determined by an internal sensory test panel executed by a retailer’s own employee or contracted housewives group. Therefore, this “Taste” component is difficult to standardize.

To increase efficiency of such food purchasing and marketing, a “scientific data” oriented evaluation is now in demand. Although the sensory test panel still plays an important role, scientific analytical data can support or verify taste quality as determined by the panel.

Scientific data provides a “standard language” between the exporter and Japanese buyers. If a company can determine the “TASTE QUALITY PROFILE” of their products based on scientific data, then they can confidently identify the quality of their products without uncertainty.

Recently, retailers and restaurant operators have recognized a new signal from the market. These days, consumers have started paying more attention to quality again. Continuous food contamination incidents or fraud labeling scandals damaged consumer confidence in food suppliers. Also, the “cheap/low price” became common for the consumer and therefore, lost its fascination. Retailers are very sensitive to the changing trend of consumers and they have started to demand “verified value” of the product.

To win the sales battle in the Japanese marketplace, it is becoming more and more important for exporters to differentiate the superior quality of their products over their competitors.

For more information about the Genetic ID Taste Evaluation Test, call +1-641-472-9979 ext. 146 or email at taste-test@genetic-id.com.