



## **ASBC Method Highlight: Sensory Analysis-14**

### **How is this Method Beneficial to your Brewery?**

Sensory Analysis-14 is a great way to evaluate the aromas and flavors of any malts your brewery might want to implement to the brewing process. This method is very affordable, practical, and rapid. The method uses inexpensive equipment and follows a typical mash protocol to mimic brewhouse performance and results can be evaluated in about an hour.

This method is not only great for evaluating malts your brewery is considering implementing in the brewing process, but it can also be used to evaluate malts currently being used. Your brewery can use this method to test and compare the same malts that may be from different lots or truck shipments filling your silos.

### **How do you Ensure your Sample is Pure?**

The type of grinders that are going to be used for this method can be used for many different applications. They are mostly used to grind whole coffee beans and spices. Because of this, it's very important to ensure the grinder is clean and free from foreign debris that might interfere with the flavor of the malt before proceeding with the method.

The best way to do this is to wipe the chamber with a damp paper towel to remove any large foreign particles. After that, fill the grinding chamber with 50g of the malt you are performing the method on. Grind this into a fine powder. Discard the powder, then wipe the chamber with a dry paper towel and fill and grind 25g of malt into a fine powder again. Discard the powder and proceed with the method as normal.



This figure shows the difference of appearance between the fine powder created when cleaning the chamber (left) and what the course flour used for evaluation in the method looks like (right).

### **Getting the Most Flavor out of your Malt Sample:**

Sensory evaluation of malt is dependent on making sure the samples' flavors and aromas are pure and easily detectable. The following are some tips to make sure the sample produced is the best sample for evaluation.

- Follow the method and use distilled water. Tap water has too many variables (mineral concentrations change with seasons, chlorinated water changes flavors and aromas, etc.) that can affect the perceived flavors and aromas.
- Calibrate the thermometer to ensure the temperatures reported are reading correctly. A quick way to do this is to place the thermometer in ice water and observe how close the readout is to 0 °C. Use this correction factor as needed.
- Mimic the mashing process as close as possible. Heat the distilled water to 70 °C so when mixed with the grain, it will rest at 65 °C for 15 minutes. This will be dependent on individual settings so adjust temperature accordingly.
- If more than one malt will be tested around the same time, use a water bath to keep your distilled water at a steady temperature. This saves time and provides consistency.
- Try not to eat or drink anything with aggressive flavors and aromas before performing sensory on the samples.
- Evaluate the samples just before lunch or a meal in general. This will ensure your senses are heightened and will provide a better assessment of flavors in the samples.
- Chew on an oyster cracker and rinse your mouth with water and have coffee beans or something similar on hand to “reset” your olfactory nerves. This will help detect the nuances in the aromas and flavors among samples.