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Perception of vanilla ice creams: does portion size matter?

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In current days, consumers want and expect food products of superior quality that are healthy and tasty. We need to understand how products are perceived and liked by the consumer, and for that we should consider the dynamic consumption journey of the eating experience.

Currently, the food industry is using a few tools to capture the consumer experience during the consumption of a food product. However, present techniques may have limitations. On the one hand, quantitative descriptive analysis captures the sensations at a given moment in time and usually after only one bite / spoon of a food product, which may not reflect the full eating experience. On the other hand, time-intensity or temporal dominance of sensations help capturing the dynamic of the consumer experience in a more holistic way, but such techniques are time consuming and not suitable as fast screening tools with a large number of consumers.

In this context, the aim of our study was to investigate the temporal aspects of sensory / hedonic / emotion assessments with a fast and simple methodology to understand whether assessing products after one spoon is a good approach to capture the overall eating experience. For that matter, participants were recruited and asked to eat two ice cream products varying in sugar content. Part of the participants consumed a single one-bite portion size of both ice creams and assessed liking, sensory and emotional attributes after that single bite. The other part of participants was asked to eat a full standard portion size of both ice creams and to assess the liking, sensory and emotional attributes at three consumption points (start, middle end of consumption). Key highlights of this study will be presented and discussed during the conference.