Basics of Judging Processed Meats

- **External Appearance**
  - 15% of the points

- **Internal Appearance**
  - 35% of the points

- **Edibility**
  - 55% of the points
### SUMMER SAUSAGE - COOKED

#### 1. EXTERNAL APPEARANCE
- **Uniformity of Color** (75)
- **Uniformity of Shape** (75)
- **Lack of Defects** (100)

1. **EXTERNAL APPEARANCE**
   - non-uniform color
   - too pale
   - too dark
   - non-uniform diameter
   - wrinkled surface
   - streaks or water spots
   - fat, gelatin or air pockets
   - dirty smoke stick marks
   - other

#### 2. INTERNAL APPEARANCE
- **Uniformity of Texture** (50)
- **Uniformity of Color** (75)
- **Fat to Lean Ratio** (50)
- **Lack of Defects** (100)

2. **INTERNAL APPEARANCE**
   - non-uniform cured color
   - pale cured color
   - particle uniformity/definition
   - fat, gelatin or air pockets
   - crumbly texture
   - case hardening
   - excess fat
   - excessive gristle/connect tissue
   - other

#### 3. EDIBILITY
- **Aroma** (75)
- **Taste** (300)
- **Texture/Mouth Feel** (100)

3. **AROMA/FLAVOR/EDIBILITY**
   - spice too strong
   - too salty
   - too bland
   - too greasy
   - rancid fat
   - unidentified off-flavor
   - tough or rubbery
   - poor mouth feel
   - very desirable flavor
   - desirable flavor
   - acceptable flavor
   - unacceptable flavor (not covered above)
   - other

#### TOTAL (1000)
External Appearance

All classes should be evaluated as soon as possible

Uncontrollable Factors

- Light
- Air movement
- Room temperature
External Appearance

- **Color**
  - Should be a mahogany color

- **Defects**
  - Non-uniform color
  - Too pale
  - Too dark
External Color
External Appearance

Workmanship / Lack of Defects

- Defects
  - Smoke steaks or water spots
  - Dirty smoke stick marks
  - Un-cut ends on casings
  - Air pockets / fat caps
  - Scoring (Bacon)
Workmanship

Variety of shapes and sizes available
Workmanship

Removal of netting
External Appearance

Uniformity of Shape

- Defects
  - Non-uniform diameter
  - Wrinkled surface
  - Straight / Curves
  - Poor trimming (ham)
  - Shank length (ham)
Uniformity of Shape

Wrinkled surface
Uniformity of Shape

Curved sausage
Uniformity of Shape

- Trimming
- Shank removal
Uniformity of Shape

Casing differences
- Cellulose vs. Natural vs. Collagen
Internal Appearance

- All products within each class should be cut the same
  - Same person
  - Same method
  - Same location
  - Same utensil

- Evaluate product as soon as the product is cut
Internal Appearance

- Uniformity of Texture
Internal Appearance

- Particle definition
Internal Appearance

- Particle definition
  - Variation in production methods
Internal Appearance

- Uniformity of Color
  - Variation in meat component used
Internal Appearance

- Lack of Defects
  - Poor distribution of ingredients
Internal Appearance

- Lack of Defects
  - Air pockets
  - Blood splash
Internal Appearance

Lack of Defects
- Uncured spots
Internal Appearance

Lack of Defects
Internal Appearance

Lack of Defects
Edibility

All products within each class should be evaluated the same

- Same person doing the heating (if necessary)
- Same method
  - Time
  - Cooking
  - Same size of piece
Edibility

Aroma

- Unidentifiable off-odor
- Rancid fat
- Over-powering smoke
Edibility

Texture / Mouth Feel

- Mealy
- Tough / rubbery
- Tough casing
- Greasy
- Dry
- Too moist (Jerky, Snack Sticks, Dried Beef)
- Too coarse
Edibility

Taste
- Too spicy
- Too bland
- Too salty
- Unidentifiable off-flavor
- Too smokey
- Rancid fat
- Unacceptable flavor
Conclusion

How can you become a judge or a better judge

• Practice
  • Get involved at state meat association conventions

• Learn from your professors
  • Ask questions

• Understand processed meat production
Conclusion

Cured meat judging is very subjective to personal preferences

Every judge evaluates products differently
  • No right way or wrong way, there are just better ways than others

Processed meat products are region specific around the country