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The color of cider: Cider color preference and cider consumption

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French cider is a slightly alcoholic beverage resulting from the fermentation of cider apples. Identify cider sensory drivers of preference is full of interest for professionals who try to find new consumers to increase cider market and would like to better segment it. Among the sensory characteristics such as sweetness, sourness, astringency and bitterness, the color of cider is understudied. It runs from a pale yellow to an orange and brownish cider but can also runs from orange to rosé when red flesh apple are used for a new range of ciders.

Two experimental designs were used in order to assess the impact of hue (h) and saturation (c) on the cider consumers' liking face with a large set of colors presented in small bottles and representative of the cider color space. One set was composed with yellow and brown ciders and on second explored the new rosé cider concepts. Two hundred and fourty four consumers were recruited in three towns in France.

Orange color (h = 85°-90° and c = 31-42) is a consensual color accepted by all consumers. Some consumers do not appreciate the rosé cider concept. However, the segmentation of consumers is mainly based on color saturation, in the tested condition. This segmentation appears to be cider consumption dependant. For regular consumers, ciders with higher saturation were preferred when for low frequency consumers, their preference was more for lighter products. We hypothesize that this result is due to the range of products the consumers are familiar with.

Keywords: Cider, Color liking, Familiarity