IMSP Syllabus 2027

International Meat Sensory Program

This syllabus describes the learning pathway, intended competencies, 24 core modules and completion requirements of the International Meat Sensory Program, a continuing professional development programme designed to be undertaken alongside work. You will learn to assess meat quality systematically, describe it precisely and evaluate it professionally using documented data.

Programme details	Core programme 2027
Qualification	International Meat Sensory Professional | IMSP
Scope	216 hours | 24 core modules | 16 in-person training days
Training period	March to November 2027 | eight training months | August break
Provider and course leadership	M.E.A.T. GmbH | Ronny Paulusch
Training hubs	Germany: Grillwerk 63 by Fleischerei Seifert, Eppendorf Austria: Fleischhof Raabtal - Fleischkompetenzzentrum Vulkanland, Kirchberg an der Raab
Participation	Continuing professional development booked through your employer or your own business

Learning outcomes

On successful completion, you will be able to:

- Perceive and describe tenderness, juiciness, flavour, texture and other attributes systematically.
- Distinguish between quality assessment and descriptive analysis as methods and combine them appropriately.
- Use references and repeat samples to calibrate your own judgement.
- Include cut, muscle, age, breed, temperature and ageing in product assessment.
- Document and analyse results in Sensory-ID and identify the limits of your conclusions.
- Communicate sensory findings with clear reasoning in advisory work, professional discussion and teaching.

Learning structure and environment

In-person training, digital learning and independent tasting form a shared learning pathway. The 24 core modules are grouped into six subject areas. Repetition, comparison and application connect these areas across several training blocks.

Learning format	Hours	Role in the learning pathway
In-person training	120 hours	16 days in eight blocks: 40 hours of foundations and 80 hours of guided practice
Digital learning	64 hours	Eight hours per training month for preparation, further study, reflection and assignments
Tastingkiosk	32 hours	One independent session per training month, comprising four hours of tasting and documentation
Total	216 hours	Mandatory core programme; optional country modules are offered separately

Learning with Sensory-ID

Throughout the actual course duration, you will have personal access to Sensory-ID and a provided Training Device. Course content, tasting data, calibration, video assignments and feedback are brought together in the same learning environment.

CUT Atlas, Breed Atlas, AGE-TO-CUT™, DKA Coreflex® and Kaizen Aging™ support the professional interpretation of products. Scored Tastings, descriptor analysis and group overlays support analysis of the results. The Sensory Passport documents personal development.

Independent assessment and shared feedback

During a tasting, you first submit your own judgement. Only then do you compare the results with references and the group. Peer Review, Think-Pair-Share and video meat assessments add professional feedback and reflection to the training.

The exercises in the module descriptions give practical form to the learning objectives. Sample selection and sequence, as well as the design of assignments, are explained within the training blocks. Documentation supports ongoing guidance and preparation for the final assessments.

Teaching and learning framework

The curriculum follows the CONEXXUS® Didaktik Framework developed by Ronny Paulusch. Intended competencies, practical assignments and evidence of achievement are aligned. Insights from his continuing education through the Higher Education Teaching Certificate at the Derek Bok Center for Teaching and Learning, Harvard University, have been incorporated into the independently developed IMSP course concept. M.E.A.T. GmbH is the programme provider and the issuer of the final certificate.

In-person schedule 2027

Eight two-day blocks at the selected training hub. The programme pauses in August. Dates differ by location.

Block	Germany	Austria
1	22.–23.03.	16.–17.03.
2	19.–20.04.	26.–27.04.
3	03.–04.05.	24.–25.05.
4	07.–08.06.	14.–15.06.
5	05.–06.07.	08.–09.07.
6	13.–14.09.*	06.–07.09.
7	04.–05.10.*	11.–12.10.
8	22.–23.11.*	15.–16.11.

Grillwerk 63 by Fleischerei Seifert · Eppendorf
Fleischhof Raabtal · Kirchberg an der Raab

* German autumn dates are provisional and will be expressly confirmed. All eight Austrian blocks are confirmed. Germany: Monday and Tuesday. Austria: Tuesday and Wednesday in March, Thursday and Friday in July; otherwise Monday and Tuesday.

Learning between blocks

Prepare the digital learning content before each in-person block. Practical tastings and feedback follow at the hub. Each training month also includes eight hours of digital learning and four hours of independent Tasting Kiosk work. Record results, sample conditions and reflections in Sensory-ID and revisit them in the next block.

Recurring training formats

Blind duplicate samples, sequence-effect experiments, comparisons of positions within a ribeye or striploin, and temperature, roasting-aroma and ageing trials recur throughout the programme and connect its six core areas.

Assessment and completion

Eligibility for final assessment

Eligibility for final assessment requires documented attendance at a minimum of 70% of in-person training hours. This is at least 84 of the 120 hours. Digital learning assignments and independent Tastingkiosk tastings must also be completed and documented.

Please notify the course team of absences as early as possible. Required catch-up work will be agreed in accordance with the participation terms. Safety briefings and hygiene requirements form part of the professional delivery of practical training.

The three assessment components

Component	Format and content	Pass threshold
Written subject examination	90 minutes covering foundations, methodology and application	At least 70% of the available marks
Practical assessment, including calibration	Visual meat assessment and marbling, blind tasting, scales and descriptors, coded repeat samples and professional justification	At least 70% of the available marks
Sensory research assignment	8-10 pages with documented Sensory-ID data and a clearly reasoned professional analysis	At least 70% of the available marks

Each component must be passed separately. A higher result in another component cannot compensate for a failed component.

Assessment criteria, allocation of marks, submission deadlines, permitted resources and resit opportunities will be communicated in a format that can be saved, sufficiently in advance of the programme start. The agreed attendance and pass thresholds apply in accordance with the participation terms.

Research assignment and ongoing documentation

The research assignment connects a sensory question with documented data. Samples and conditions are described clearly, results are analysed professionally, and possible limits of the conclusions are considered. Tasting protocols, calibration records and course feedback support this work.

Qualification and certificate

After completing the mandatory programme components and passing the final assessment, you will receive the International Meat Sensory Professional certificate and the designated graduate insignia.

Graduates may use IMSP after their names.

Core area 1: sensory foundations and judgement

Sensory Foundations & Judgement

You develop your own initial assessment benchmark and learn to conduct tastings so that the results remain professionally interpretable.

01 Foundations of Sensory-ID

Sensory-ID Foundations

- Distinguish between personal preference, quality assessment and descriptive analysis.
- Explain your initial assessment using a documented reference framework.

Exercise and documentation Conduct a baseline tasting and document assessments and descriptors in Sensory-ID. Explain in a professional discussion what conclusions the data support and where uncertainty remains.

02 Blind, mixed and open assessment

Blind · Mixed · Open Assessment

- Distinguish blind, mixed and open assessments according to the information available.
- Choose an experimental design suited to the question and reflect on the influence of expectations.

Exercise and documentation Assess comparable samples with differing levels of product information. Record what information was available and discuss changes in your own assessment.

03 Sample sequence and context

Sequence & Context Effects

- Identify possible anchoring effects and influences of sample sequence.
- Analyse differences in assessment between groups with different starting samples in a clearly reasoned way.

Exercise and documentation Have two groups begin with different samples and then assess identical comparison samples. Compare scores, descriptors and group results.

04 Defining sample conditions

Sample Conditions

- Record product condition, browning aromas and salt as conditions in a protocol.
- Establish comparable sample conditions and account for deviations when interpreting results.

Exercise and documentation Create a sample protocol covering codes, product condition, preparation and tasting conditions. Raw samples are used for visual assessment; tasting follows the planned professional and hygienic sample-handling procedures.

Core area 2: descriptors and sensory language

Descriptor Analysis & Sensory Language

You translate perception into a shared professional vocabulary and connect quality assessments with differentiated descriptions.

05 Training with descriptors

Descriptor Training

- Describe aroma, flavour, texture, mouthfeel and fat perception in a differentiated way.
- Use appropriate language for meat intensity, browning and ageing notes, and possible off-aromas.

Exercise and documentation Conduct guided reference and product tastings. Create a personal descriptor profile and clarify ambiguous terms with the group.

06 Scaling intensities

Intensity Scaling

- Position descriptors on continuous intensity scales.
- Compare your own intensity values with references and group profiles.

Exercise and documentation Assess defined perceptual attributes using the same scale logic. Examine profiles in the group overlay and explain differences in scale interpretation.

07 Assessing quality and describing analytically

Scored Tasting + Descriptor Analysis

- Apply the 100-point system and descriptor analysis according to their respective purposes.
- Justify different quality judgements using appropriate descriptors.

Exercise and documentation Document Scored Tasting and descriptor analysis for the same samples. In the results report, explain which perceptions contributed to the points awarded.

08 Visual meat assessment

Visual Assessment

- Describe marbling, meat and fat colour, fat distribution and visible structure.
- Record visual observations and tasting-based conclusions separately in the protocol.

Exercise and documentation Produce a visual meat assessment and then add sensory data. Describe which expectations were confirmed and which remain unresolved.

Core area 3: calibration and reproducibility

Calibration & Reproducibility

You examine the stability of your assessment benchmark. Deviations are discussed using references, group values and repeat samples.

09 Calibrating with references

Reference Calibration

- Relate defined low, medium and high reference ranges to a common scale.
- Explain deviations between your own assessment and the reference clearly.

Exercise and documentation Assess reference samples, align your personal benchmark and maintain a calibration protocol with justified deviations.

10 Comparing group profiles

Group Overlay

- Distinguish your own values, the group mean, median and reference values in an overlay.
- Describe dispersion and account for it when interpreting group results.

Exercise and documentation Analyse a shared intensity profile. Locate your own values and discuss several professionally plausible explanations for differences.

11 Testing coded duplicate samples

Duplicate Sample Testing

- Explain the role of hidden duplicate samples in testing repeatability.
- Analyse differences between two of your own assessments of the same sample.

Exercise and documentation Assess the same sample under different codes. Once the codes are revealed, compare scores and descriptors and reflect on your own uncertainty.

12 Documenting calibration over time

Longitudinal Calibration

- Compare calibration data from several training blocks.
- Use data to describe the development of your judgement and any remaining fluctuations.

Exercise and documentation Bring recurring comparative tastings together in your personal Sensory Passport. Compare your development with early results and identify the next training objectives.

Core area 4: meat structure and biological factors

Meat Structure & Biological Factors

You connect anatomy and biological origin with sensory observations. Conclusions about an individual factor are examined in the context of the other product conditions.

13 Cuts and muscle sensory properties

CUT Atlas & Muscle Sensory

- Describe muscle function, fibre structure, connective tissue and fat distribution for selected cuts.
- Relate observed sensory properties to anatomical characteristics.

Exercise and documentation Compare cuts using the CUT Atlas, taste them under standardised conditions and check explanations based on structure against documented data.

14 Comparing positions within a cut

Intra-Cut Position Tasting

- Recognise and describe sensory differences within the same Ribeye or Striploin.
- Document a position-based comparative tasting with controlled preparation.

Exercise and documentation Cut, prepare and blind-assess several steaks from different positions of the same original piece in the same way. Once the information is revealed, relate the results to positions within the cut.

15 Assessing age and cut together

AGE-TO-CUT™

- Consider animal age, muscle, fat, ageing and preparation as interacting factors.
- Use a product comparison to explain the limits of an isolated conclusion about animal age.

Exercise and documentation Analyse selected comparison samples with AGE-TO-CUT. Record product conditions and test hypotheses about sensory effects against tasting data.

16 Breeds in their production context

Breed Atlas

- Bring breed, feeding, age, origin and intramuscular fat together in a product profile.
- Justify comparison groups in a way that keeps several origin-related factors visible.

Exercise and documentation Classify and compare products using the Breed Atlas. Discuss the contribution of possible influencing factors without attributing observed differences solely to breed.

Core area 5: preparation, temperature and ageing

Processing, Temperature & Aging

You investigate technical changes to products through controlled comparative tastings and connect them with aroma, texture and fat perception.

17 Temperature and sensory effects

Temperature Sensory · DKA Coreflex®

- Distinguish core temperature, temperature progression, carry-over cooking and tasting temperature in the protocol.
- Describe their effects on tenderness, juiciness, fat perception and aroma through comparison.

Exercise and documentation Assess identical or methodologically comparable cuts with different temperature profiles. Use DKA Coreflex and connect temperature data with sensory results.

18 Comparing browning aromas

Roasting Aroma Comparison

- Compare and describe perceptions intrinsic to meat and pronounced browning aromas.
- Explain the influence of different surface reactions on descriptors and overall judgement.

Exercise and documentation Assess cooked comparison samples with and without pronounced browning aromas. Document preparation conditions and compare the changed sensory profiles.

19 Investigating the influence of salt

Salt Influence

- Record salt as a defined variable in a standardised tasting.
- Describe differences between unsalted samples and samples with a defined quantity of salt.

Exercise and documentation Assess comparison samples with a documented use of salt. Omit other spices in the standardised trial and document changes in perception and assessment.

20 Sensory assessment of ageing

Kaizen Aging™

- Compare wet ageing, dry ageing and other controlled ageing approaches using sensory assessment.
- Describe positive ageing notes, oxidation and possible undesirable developments in a differentiated way.

Exercise and documentation Compare methodologically appropriate ageing samples using Kaizen Aging. Document aroma, texture and fat perception and include product and process conditions in the interpretation.

Core area 6: professional application and reflection

Professional Application & Higher Education Methods

You translate sensory findings into advisory work, teaching and professional exchange. Independent judgement and reasoned reflection remain explicit.

21 Presenting a meat assessment on video

Video Meat Assessment

- Build a meat assessment from observation, sensory description and professional interpretation.
- Use instructor feedback to develop more precise language and clearly reasoned arguments.

Exercise and documentation Create a structured video meat assessment. Analyse the feedback and revise your presentation using specific examples.

22 Professional feedback through Peer Review

Peer Review

- Review a suitable assignment professionally against agreed criteria.
- Provide reasoned feedback and incorporate feedback into your own work.

Exercise and documentation Review another participant's protocol or meat assessment. Distinguish observation, justification and suggestions for improvement.

23 Individual, paired and whole-group reflection

Think-Pair-Share

- Document an independent sensory judgement before discussion.
- Examine different interpretations in pairs and present the results clearly to the whole group.

Exercise and documentation First assess a sample individually, then compare in pairs and explain selected findings to the group. Retain the original individual judgement.

24 Using AI critically in professional work

AI Literacy & Critical Reflection

- Document AI assistance in a professional assignment transparently.
- Check AI statements against your own data and present justified differences.

Exercise and documentation Compare an AI-assisted interpretation with your own tasting. Explain its use, material adopted and professional corrections; your own sensory judgement remains the foundation.

Optional international further training

The seventh curriculum area extends the European core programme through international reference experience. Spain, Argentina and Japan are offered separately as voluntary professional study trips. They are not a prerequisite for the IMSP qualification and are not included in the 216 hours of the core programme.

Each country module comprises 30 training hours over approximately seven to ten calendar days. With all three modules, the total training volume is 306 hours. Specific dates and detailed programmes will follow after coordination with local partners.

Spain: ageing and Ibérico culture

You distinguish fat structure, intramuscular fat, aroma and mouthfeel in Ibérico products. Ageing progression is related to the original product, production culture and preparation. Spanish references are compared methodologically with products from the core programme.

The tasting module at Laia Erretegia in Hondarribia connects ageing and Basque grilling culture with the assessment of tenderness, juiciness and flavour.

Argentina: beef sensory assessment

You interpret local cuts and beef sensory properties in their production and feeding context. Grass-fed and grain-fed products are examined in justified comparison groups. Blind tasting, intensity scales and calibration connect product assessment with local references.

The tasting module at Elena, in the Four Seasons Hotel Buenos Aires, covers origin, ageing and cooking over an open fire. September or October 2027 is the planned period; specific dates will follow.

Japan: Wagyu sensory assessment

You describe marbling and fat distribution and then assess their sensory effects. Fat quality, melting behaviour, mouthfeel, umami and texture are connected with product culture and preparation.

The local practical training partner is the Federal Meat Academy in Tamamura, Gunma. Structured Wagyu tastings are combined with professional exchange on quality and processing. May 2027 is the planned period; specific dates will follow.

Working resources and organisation

Learning materials and tools

The planned course materials, videos, assignments and protocols are provided through the Sensory-ID learning environment. The following resources are used in particular:

Resource	Use within the course
CUT Atlas and Breed Atlas	Anatomical and biological classification of samples
AGE-TO-CUT, DKA Coreflex and Kaizen Aging	Product context, temperature management and ageing
Scored Tastings and descriptor analysis	Quality assessment and differentiated description
References and group overlays	Understanding scales, calibration and interpretation of dispersion
Sensory Passport and Video Assessment	Documentation of development and professional meat assessment

Working together during training

Individual assessments are documented before comparison with the group. Feedback refers to specific observations, data and professional arguments. AI assistance is disclosed and checked against your own sensory results. Personal access credentials and materials are used in accordance with the participation terms.

Course leadership and specialist trainers

Ronny Paulusch is responsible for the course concept and professional leadership. Specialist trainers from the published instructor pool contribute to the respective subject areas. Their specific teaching schedule will be announced during the course.

Published programme documentation

Curriculum
https://imsp.pro/curriculum

Programme and in-person schedule
https://imsp.pro/programm

Instructor pool
https://imsp.pro/dozenten

General terms and participation conditions
https://imsp.pro/teilnahmebedingungen

CONEXXUS teaching framework
https://web.meat-gmbh.com/conexxus-didaktik

The scope of services, confirmation of dates and participation are governed by the programme documentation and participation terms agreed at booking. The syllabus describes the professional learning pathway and supplements that documentation.

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