

DAIRY FLAVOR DESCRIPTORS

With over 20 years of experience developing custom dairy concentrates, First Choice Ingredients has compiled a comprehensive list of the most common dairy descriptors. Featuring 73 dairy descriptions, you can use this sheet as a guide to help you along your flavor tasting experience.

Acetic The flavor of white vinegar; characterized by a sharp taste. Acetic acid occurs as a byproduct of bacterial fermentation.

Acidic Bitingly sharp taste; characterized by citric acid.

Acrid Harsh or bitter; can be irritating to the mouth or nose.

Aftertaste The flavor impression that lingers after a food is swallowed.

Aged Mature, resulting from aging cheese to full flavor.

Ammoniacal The pungent, harsh aroma of ammonia; biproducts of decomposing protein matter.

Animal The flavor and aroma associated with the hide, hair and flesh of beef and pork.

Aromatic Fragrant; strong top note.

Astringent The sensation that dries the mouth; associated with the tannins in wine, tea and grape seeds.

Barnyard Flavor and aroma of a barn; i.e. hay, manure, musty, horsey.

Bite Sharpness or bitterness; sometimes associated with heat, as in black pepper or ginger.

Bitter Late, unpleasant, lingering astringent taste often from peptides, amino acids, oxidized fatty acids.

Bland Low in flavor profile or having little to no flavor.

Brothy Brothy/meaty type aroma and flavor.

Brown Overcooked, fermented.

Burnt Aroma and flavor associated with blackened, acrid carbohydrates.

Buttery Delicate, sweet dairy character like fresh butter; not rancid, butyric or diacetyl-like.

Butyric Distinctive aroma and flavor of sour or rancid butter; derived as a byproduct of oxidation or fermentation.

Caramelized Characteristic of brown sugar, butter, and cream cooked over high heat; smooth and sweet.

Caseinate The characteristic flavor of milk proteins, bland, sl. cardboard-like.

Chalky The consistency of chalk; dry, precipitous.

Cheesy Characteristic of ripened cheese; piquant dairy/creamy notes.

Chemical An artificial character, volatile with a sharp edge, unbalanced.

Clean Fresh, with no discernible defects; no aftertaste.

Cooked Heated, processed, rich brown notes.

Cow Associated with a grassy, milky flavor; slightly dirty.

Creamy The flavor of sweet cream; bland, rich, fatty.

Cultured Fresh and tangy with mild sourness; resulting from the souring of milk by the addition of cultures.

Dairy The combination of flavors that denote butter, milk, cream, cheese, or whey; non-specific.

Diacetyl A chemical compound characterizing the flavor of butter, milk fat and fermented dairy products.

Earthy Smell or flavor reminiscent of freshly turned soil; moldy. The decomposition of proteinaceous material.

Fatty Oily, greasy, heavy, mouth-coating.

DAIRY FLAVOR DESCRIPTORS (CONTINUED)

Fermented	Aromas and flavors resulting by the actions of yeasts (fruity) and molds (musty).
Floral	Having the sweet aromas and flavors associated with flowers.
Fruity	Aroma and/or flavor of sweet ripe fruits; non-specific. In butter, an off-flavor associated with the esterification of butterfats.
Full-Bodied	Overall complete flavor profile.
Gamey	Having the tangy flavor or aroma of game; almost tainted, as if kept too long before cooking.
Goaty	Animal-like, lingering, associated with a harsh odor and sharp taste; caprylic acid.
Grassy/Green	The green notes of new grass; characteristic of fresh foliage.
Harsh	Rough, biting character.
Hay	The mellow notes of dry grass or straw.
Ketonic	Solvent-like, heavy chemical top note; characteristic of blue cheese.
Lactonic	Creamy, milky, coconut-like.
Lipolyzed	Fatty, upfront sourness; treating dairy components with lipase enzymes to produce fatty acids.
Lingering	Long-lasting flavor and late taste.
Milky	A sweet, bland flavor with the slight sharpness of lactic acid.
Moldy	The flavor characteristic of blue mold.
Mouthfeel	An agent to impart richness, smoothness, a texturizing effect.
Musty	Stale, moldy, earthy.
Nutty	Characteristic of the dry, brown, fatty, pyrazine flavor of nuts.
Off-Flavors	Unidentified flavors or odors that are not characteristic.
Oxidized	Rancid aroma or flavor, due to the overexposure of fats or oils to air.

Processed	Characteristic of ingredients that have been held at high temperatures for long periods.
Proteolytic	Protein-type aroma and flavor, bitter and harsh; the enzymatic breakdown of proteins to yield peptides.
Pungent	A strong, penetrating aroma or flavor; irritating to the oral and nasal cavities.
Rancid	The off-flavor associated with the oxidation of fat or oil.
Rich	Full of flavor and robust.
Rindy	Reminiscent of the thick outer layer of surface-ripened cheese; i.e. Brie, Camembert.
Savory	Pleasant, umami, mouth-watering flavor.
Sharp	Pungent aroma or flavor of biting acid or tannin.
Skunky	Associated with a sulfurous odor; cooked cabbage.
Smoky	Aroma and flavor associated with burning wood.
Soapy	Flavor characteristic of unscented soap and oxidized fats.
Sour	Sharply acidic or vinegary.
Spicy	Associated with the characteristics of spices; top note.
Stale	Loss of freshness. Musty, dry, flat, tasteless.
Sulfury	Aroma associated with pungent, over-ripe cheese.
Sweaty	Aroma associated with human body sweat, gym socks, and old shoes. Similar to "goaty."
Sweet	Characterized by sugars and polyalcohols. Further defined as ester sweet, citrus sweet, brown sweet, spicy sweet and sugary sweet.
Tart	Sharp and a bit sour or acidic.
Toasted	The aroma and flavor characteristics associated with a complex browning reaction (heating carbohydrates).
Top Note	The initial character of a flavor perceived.
Umami	Described as the "Fifth Taste Receptor"; savory and succulent.



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