



DISCOVERING THE FIFTH SENSE SENSATION ON THE TASTETREK™ UMAMI

As part of our ongoing global quest to discover new taste technology, Givaudan embarked on TasteTrek™ Umami in Japan at the end of 2009. The team included flavourists, chefs and analytical scientists from Europe and Japan. The aim of TasteTrek™ Umami is to discover new taste molecules with the focus on umami and taste enhancement from ingredients used in the Japanese kitchen.



The Japanese have a vast amount of culinary expertise in umami and taste enhancement through the use of ingredients that are naturally rich in taste. For 2,000 years, the Japanese did not consume meat due to religious beliefs and its only in the last 300 hundred years that meat and dairy based ingredients have been used in cooking. As a result, the Japanese kitchen developed a range of unique ingredients used to provide taste enhancement and mouth feel that meat, fat and dairy ingredients would normally provide.



Our Japanese colleagues' knowledge and food ingredient experiences enabled the global team to map out the Japanese kitchen to identify ingredients that are used specifically to provide taste during cooking. Japanese cuisine uses a range of unique fermentation, maturation and curing processes. These processes result in microbial or enzyme modification of the foodstuff, which often generates molecules high in taste activity. For this reason, many traditionally preserved foodstuffs are still used today as they are appreciated for their taste.

The Givaudan team concentrated on Japanese cuisine's key elements and the mapping exercise resulted in the identification of a range of interesting critical ingredients. The flavourists and analytical teams are now evaluating these ingredients with their unique taste profiles. Preliminary results look very promising and we expect this Trek to lay the foundations for our future capabilities in taste enhancement for snacks and savoury.