

# Exploring consumer perceptions of composite plant-based beverages formulated with neglected and underutilized crops

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## HIGHLIGHTS

- Plant-based beverage blends were formulated with neglected and underutilized crops.
- Blends of oat, faba bean, and buckwheat received slightly favourable liking scores.
- Sensory properties of blends still drive acceptance on top of information provided.
- Feelings of novelty, surprise, and humour were linked to the preferable blends.
- Possible protein fortification ingredients are neglected and underutilised crops.

## ABSTRACT

The growing interest in plant-based beverages highlights the need for improving the nutritional and sensory qualities of these products in relation to conventional beverages. To enhance the acceptance and appeal of plant-based beverages, blending different plant ingredients is a promising strategy. However, further exploration is necessary to identify sensory properties that drive consumer acceptance of plant-based beverages blended with alternative ingredients. This study examined the sensory properties of fortified conventional oat beverages using the case of underutilized crops. Through a multi-country sensory evaluation study (Belgium, Italy, Serbia, Spain; n = 371), four beverage blends based on oat, faba bean, buckwheat, and lupin, were tested under blind and informed conditions. For all the beverages, participants' hedonic liking was measured, and perceived beverage properties and their emotional responses were scoped through CATA tasks. Results showed that blends of oat, faba bean and buckwheat were rated similarly or slightly higher than the single-ingredient oat beverage. In contrast, the oat and lupin blend received lower ratings. Informing consumers about the underutilized crops used generally increased acceptance, but this effect varied by age and product type. In addition, consumers associated positive emotions such as surprise, humour and novelty with the more appreciated beverages. Finally, these findings highlight the potential of combining underutilized crops in beverage blends, while also underlining the need for careful ingredient selection and further exploration of crop combinations.

**Keywords:** Plant-based drink, Fortification, Formulations, Emoji, Minor Crops, Liking

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In response to the calls for sustainable food consumption, plant-based alternatives have gained prominence (GFI, 2021; Prakash et al., 2023). In particular, plant-based beverages have seen varying growth trajectories within the broader plant-based sector, primarily as substitutes for animal-derived products (GMI, 2025; Nielsen, 2024). Generally, these beverages are derived from cereals or nuts, such as oat, rice, almonds, etc., through various processing techniques (Silva et al., 2022). At present, the current array of plant-based beverages available in the market cover a large scope, as driven by innovations in the types and formulations of beverages available (Khemiri & Raymundo, 2024).

Historically, such products were developed as alternatives for individuals with dietary restrictions such as lactose intolerance, or those following vegan lifestyles. However, while these beverages are not new to the market, they have gained renewed attention due to increasing concerns about sustainability (Appiani et al., 2023; Moss et al., 2022). For instance, these alternative beverages are gaining more traction due to their reported lower environmental impacts compared to conventional, animal-sourced beverages. While the exact extent of environmental benefits is still debated (Berardy et al., 2022; Khanpit et al., 2024), these beverages are generally associated with reduced greenhouse gas emissions and land use. National dietary guidelines increasingly encourage the inclusion of plant-based options, supporting their growing presence in commercial markets (Klapp et al., 2022).

In Europe, the consumption of these plant-based beverages has been largely expanding, in light of both health and environmental consumption issues, notwithstanding consumer concerns on price, taste, and variety (GFI, 2025; Hansen et al., 2023). In the same vein, previous literature has explored consumer preferences for these products (Bocker & Silva, 2022; Silva et al., 2022). For example, prior consumer studies have demonstrated what potential drivers and contextual factors can impact an individual's propensity to consume these beverages, starting from food choice preferences, labelling influences, and so on (Appiani et al., 2023; Moss et al., 2022; Su et al., 2024). From a sensory perspective, plant-based beverages provide unique sensory profiles, offering diverse consumption experiences to consumers (Alsado et al., 2025). However, issues remain as to the improvement of the sensory properties of these beverages as some plant-based beverages have been noted for off-flavours and aromas or even unpleasant textures and mouthfeel (Jaeger et al., 2024).

Aside from these potential avenues for improving the quality of plant-based beverages, certain aspects remain unexplored (Khemiri & Raymundo, 2024). Most commercially available beverages rely on single-source ingredients, such as soy, oat, or almond, with known differences in sensory and nutritional profiles (Aydar et al., 2020; Moss et al., 2023). However, producing composite beverages (or blends) using multiple plant ingredients is a promising yet underexplored way to boost both the sensory and nutritional value of plant-based beverages, especially in response to undesirable properties of single ingredient plant-based beverages. The motivation for blending different plant-based ingredients stems from both nutritional and sensory dimensions (Lee et al., 2024). For instance, certain nutrients found in one crop may complement those inherently present in another, leading to a more complete nutritional profile, which in turn, can compete against beverages derived from a single source (McClements & Grossmann, 2021). Beyond these nutritional benefits, blended formulations of beverages enhance taste complexity and can boost overall sensory appeal (Cardello et al., 2022; Rincon et al., 2020). However, achieving an optimal presentation of composite plant-based beverages blends whether in terms of nutritional, sensory, or even economic aspects remains a key challenge, notwithstanding the numerous possibilities of sourcing ingredient blends.

To this end, in developing plant-based beverage blends that can potentially offer satisfactory nutritional and sensory outcomes, the present study looks to the case of underutilized crops. Essentially, there exists a wide range of crops that are constrained in smaller markets yet

101 possess inherent nutritional components that are desirable for consumption (Jenkins et al.,  
102 2023; Knorr & Augustin, 2024). Furthermore, with the apparent desirable protein qualities of  
103 certain crops such as legumes and pseudocereals, they may be effective in fortifying existing  
104 mainstream products, allowing for further innovation and diversification. As a matter of fact,  
105 prior studies have explored potential food matrices that can be prepared using underutilized  
106 crops, such as bakery items and snacks, to underscore any resulting quality improvements  
107 (Kaur et al., 2025; Wang & Jian, 2022). Together with other studies on plant-based beverages,  
108 there still seems to be a focus on singular applications of these crops, emphasising individual  
109 ingredient differences (Duarte et al., 2022; Jaeger et al., 2024; Vaikma et al., 2021).

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111 Aside from this, little is still known about consumers' emotional responses towards multiple  
112 plant-based beverage blends, especially for blends made with underutilized crops (Alemayehu  
113 et al., 2022). Previous studies have documented the nature of cognitive associations with  
114 these plant-based alternative beverages, where evocations related to adventure and  
115 sophistication were linked to a handful of ingredients mainly used in plant-based beverages  
116 (Cardello et al., 2022). Similar emotional responses between plant-based and animal-based  
117 dairy products have also been found elsewhere, with some plant ingredients receiving  
118 negative valence responses (Jaeger et al., 2023; McCarthy et al., 2017). However, some of  
119 these studies often concentrated on a sample of already existing and widely commercialized  
120 beverages, whereas not so much has been documented yet for the case of blends, especially  
121 blends made with underutilized crops. In this regard, understanding emotional responses to  
122 plant-based beverage blends can complement previous findings.

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124 Therefore, the aim of the study is to examine consumer responses to the sensory and  
125 emotional aspects of plant-based beverages fortified with underutilized crops across different  
126 countries. This study also aims to further explore whether informing consumers about the  
127 underutilized status of these crops influences their quality perceptions and emotional reactions  
128 to the beverage blends. By addressing these aspects, the study highlights the potential of  
129 underutilized crop blends to enhance the positioning and appreciation of plant-based  
130 beverages.

## 131 132 **2. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

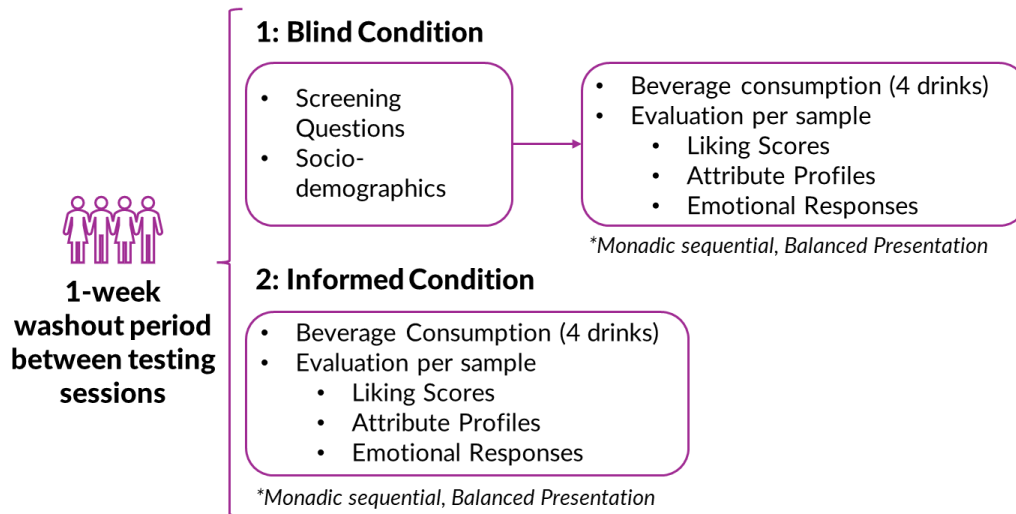
### 133 134 2.1. Study Design and Beverages

135 This study was executed in four different countries: Belgium, Italy, Spain, and Serbia. Prior to  
136 beginning the study, ethical approval was obtained from the Research Ethics Committee of  
137 the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences at Ghent University (Ref. 2024-44). Informed  
138 consent was also obtained from all the participants in the experimental sessions.

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140 In running the experimental sessions, a within-subjects design was employed where  
141 participants were made to evaluate multiple plant-based beverages both in blind and informed  
142 conditions. In the blind condition, no specific information about the content of the beverages  
143 was provided, whereas in the informed condition, the participants were made aware of the  
144 specific composition of the beverages they had to evaluate. A one-week washout period was  
145 placed in between the blind and informed condition sessions. Figure 1 presents a summary of  
146 the experimental design for this experiment.

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149 **Figure 1.** Within-subjects design for the evaluation of the plant-based beverages  
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 153 Four plant-based beverages were provided to the participants which they all evaluated across  
 154 the different sessions (see Table 1). More specifically, the four plant-based beverages were  
 155 made with a combination of different crops (oats, faba beans, lupines, and buckwheat) and a  
 156 bulking agent (maltodextrin). Aside from the underutilized nature of these crops compared to  
 157 mainstream products, these crops were selected due to their overall protein content, protein  
 158 quality and acceptable sensory profiles from pilot testing procedures done in the laboratory  
 159 (CROPDIVA, 2025). All beverages were first developed as soluble powders in the Institute of  
 160 Agri-food Research and Technology (IRTA, Spain) and securely distributed to the partner  
 161 countries for testing. To create the soluble powders, pulse spray drying procedures were  
 162 applied (PCD-70, Ekonek, Spain) to the prepared liquid beverage formulations. The powders  
 163 were spray dried with an outlet temperature range of 82-86<sup>0</sup>C, a maximum feed flow rate of  
 164 71 L/h, and a total water evaporation rate of 28 kg/kg. Afterwards, the powders were stored at  
 165 a refrigerator (Max. 15<sup>0</sup>C) for a maximum of one month at for the duration of the experiment.  
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167 **Table 1.** Summary of the composition of the plant-based beverages

Abbrev.	Crop Blends	Formulation	Relative Protein Content
O	Oat	76% Oat flour 24% Maltodextrin	100% Oat protein w/w
OF	Oat and Faba Bean	71% Oat flour 22% Maltodextrin 7% Faba protein isolate	53% Oat protein w/w 47% Faba protein w/w
OFB	Oat, Faba, and Buckwheat	41% Oat flour 31% Buckwheat flour 22% Maltodextrin 6% Faba protein isolate	49% Faba protein w/w 29% Oat protein w/w 22% Buckwheat protein w/w
OFB	Oat and Lupin	40% Oat flour 36% Lupin flour 24% Maltodextrin	21% Oat protein w/w 79% Lupin protein w/w

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 169 A common protocol was utilized across the different study countries to handle the beverage  
 170 powders. Each powder type was reconstituted into beverage form by adding water, with a  
 171 1:1.05 ratio by weight of distilled water and powdered beverage respectively. In reconstituting  
 172 the beverages, both powder and water were combined in a container at the same time, and a

173 handheld whisk mixer was used to combine the ingredients until homogeneous. The  
 174 reconstituted beverages were prepared and stored for at most, 48 hours at a maximum  
 175 temperature of 15°C. Prior to testing with the study participants, the reconstituted beverages  
 176 were equilibrated to ambient temperature (20 °C) and manually agitated. Due to their  
 177 physicochemical composition, phase separation of insoluble solids occurred during storage.  
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## 179 2.2. Participants

180 Participants were recruited through snowball techniques and consumer panels across the  
 181 different countries following some inclusion and exclusion criteria. Only participants who were  
 182 at least 18 years of age were allowed to join, and the participants had to be involved mainly  
 183 or partially in their own household's food purchasing activities. Additionally, participants who  
 184 had known general allergies to food products, eating or smelling disorders, were pregnant or  
 185 lactating at the time of the experiment, and/or not open to try new plant-based drinks, were  
 186 screened out of the study. In total, n = 371 participants were able to fully accomplish the two  
 187 sessions of the experiment (tasting in blind and informed conditions). The participants received  
 188 compensation (in accordance with prevailing financial rules per study country) upon  
 189 successfully completing the study. Table 2 presents an overview of the respondents in this  
 190 study, as aggregated at a country level.  
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192 **Table 2.** Country-level distribution of participants and socio-demographic profiles

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Total (n = 371)</b>	<b>Belgium (n = 105)</b>	<b>Italy (n = 95)</b>	<b>Spain (n = 103)</b>	<b>Serbia (n = 68)</b>
Age (Mean, SD)	37.0 (13.9)	26.3 (6.0)	43.5 (14.6)	40.8 (14.5)	38.8 (10.8)
Sex, n (%)					
<i>Male</i>	151 (40.7)	38 (36.2)	47 (49.5)	51 (49.5)	15 (22.1)
<i>Female</i>	220 (59.3)	67 (63.8)	48 (50.5)	52 (50.5)	53 (77.9)

## 193 2.3. Experimental Procedure

194 On the day of the experiment, participants were asked to come to the testing facilities to  
 195 answer questionnaires administered through the EyeQuestion platforms. (Logic8 B.V., The  
 196 Netherlands). The questionnaires began with the consent and screening questions, and after  
 197 which, the participants were made to evaluate the different beverages. The beverages were  
 198 served monadically, with the order balanced across participants, following a Latin square  
 199 design. Furthermore, the beverages were served in transparent cups of approximately 20 mL  
 200 per serving. Prior to and in between tasting each beverage, the participants were instructed to  
 201 rinse their mouth with water.  
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 204 For each beverage, the participants were made to provide their overall liking of the product,  
 205 as measured by a linear 9-point hedonic scale (1: Extremely disliked – 9: Extremely liked).  
 206 The participants were then instructed to perform a rapid sensory profiling of the different  
 207 beverages through the CATA (Check-All-That-Apply) approach, where the participants  
 208 evaluated different sensory modalities of each (appearance, odour, taste/flavour, and texture).  
 209 In total, 19 terms were generated for the CATA procedure (five for appearance, three for  
 210 odour, seven for taste/flavour, and four for texture, see Table 5). These terms were derived  
 211 from existing literature and also based on pilot testing done by the researchers which scoped  
 212 terms to retain for the evaluations (Appiani et al., 2023; Jaeger et al., 2023, 2024). In the pilot-  
 213 testing sessions, the researchers evaluated all the beverages and generated possible attribute  
 214 descriptors. Following an iterative round of testing, additional attributes were obtained based  
 215 on total frequency citation.  
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217 Concerning the emotional profiling of the beverages, an emoji questionnaire based from the  
 218 EsSense profile was used, again following a CATA format (Jaeger et al., 2017). Instead of  
 219 word-based emotional profiling questionnaires, the use of emojis was motivated by their ability

220 to discriminate between beverages while minimizing translation issues, thereby allowing for a  
221 broader understanding of emotional reactions that account for potential cultural differences in  
222 language. Aside from the questions on the beverage evaluations, socio-demographic data  
223 were also obtained, particularly concerning the age and sex of the respondents.  
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225 This experimental procedure was replicated for the informed condition, with the modifications  
226 done on the presentation of the beverages. In addition, all questionnaires were first produced  
227 in English and were subsequently translated by native speakers to the native languages of the  
228 target study population.  
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#### 230 2.4. Data Analysis

231 All data were collected and compiled by June 2025. After obtaining the complete dataset, the  
232 responses were aggregated across all countries. First, the hedonic liking scores were  
233 examined, particularly through difference tests. Here, comparisons were made among all the  
234 beverages to identify those which were relatively comparable to the single crop formulation  
235 (oat only), in terms of the liking scores generated by the consumers. Aside from the intra-  
236 sample differences with the four beverages provided, variations between the two testing  
237 sessions (informed and blind conditions), age, and gender effects were also accounted for. To  
238 this end, a repeated-measures ANOVA procedure was conducted to test these differences  
239 and the model was specified with testing conditions (blind/informed) defined as the within-  
240 subjects factors and age, country, and gender were the between-subjects factors, following  
241 similar approaches in prior literature (Pereira et al., 2019; Schouteten et al., 2017; Spinelli et  
242 al., 2015). Prior to this, normality of the data was assessed through Shapiro-Wilk's tests,  
243 histograms, and Q-Q plots. Furthermore, homogeneity of variance was checked through  
244 Levene's test. For any significant group differences found through the ANOVA procedure,  
245 estimated marginal means were computed, along with Bonferroni corrections.  
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247 Regarding the CATA data for the different sensory modalities of the beverages, Cochran's Q  
248 and McNemar tests were first executed to determine which descriptors discriminated the  
249 different beverages the most. Afterwards, correspondence analyses were conducted to map  
250 significant associations between the beverage (blend type) and sensory characteristics  
251 (appearance, odour, taste/flavour, texture). Together with mapping the beverages and the  
252 descriptors, country factors were also considered, and this allowed an examination of country-  
253 level differences in perceived beverage properties. Finally, the emotional profiling responses  
254 from the emoji questionnaire were treated as CATA data, and hence, correspondence maps  
255 were also generated, alongside hypothesis testing through the Cochran's Q and McNemar  
256 procedures (Meyners et al., 2013).  
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258 The alpha level was set at 5% for all hypothesis tests conducted in the study. Data were  
259 analysed through R via EyeOpenR (Version 6.1.2.5).  
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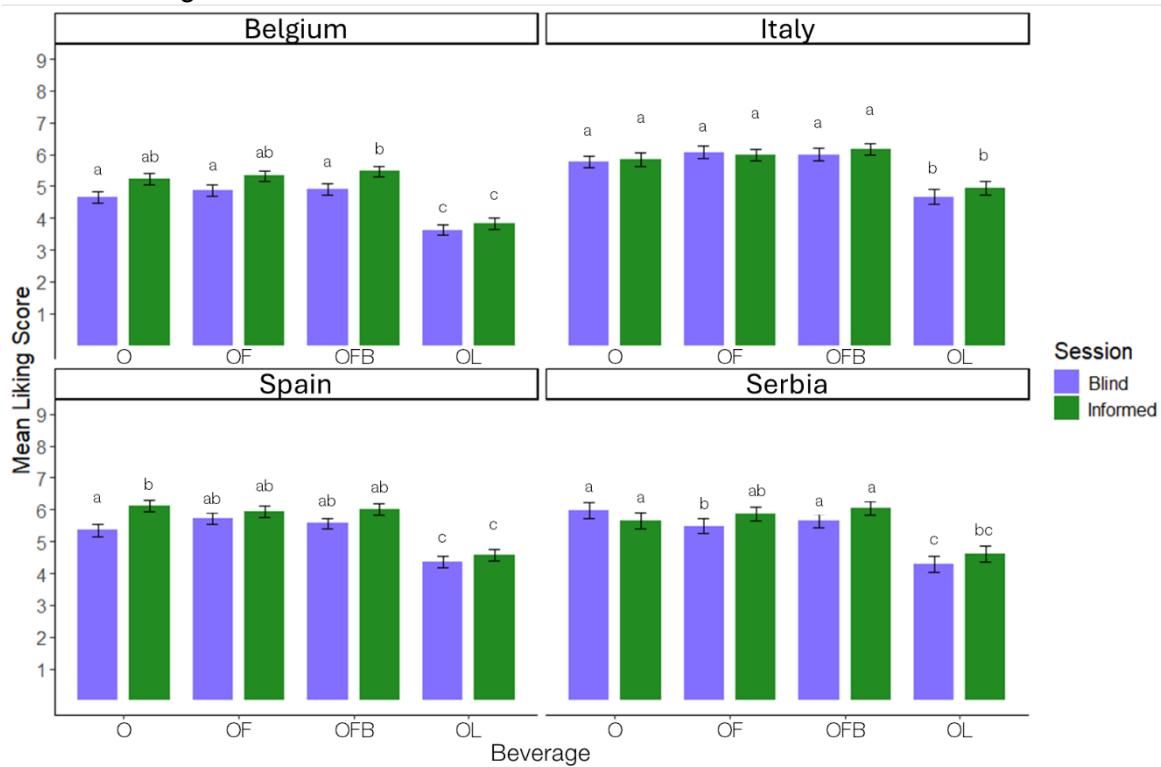
### 261 3. RESULTS

#### 262 3.1. Overall liking scores under blind and informed conditions

263 The liking scores (1: Extremely dislike – 9: Extremely like) for the beverages (oat, oat-faba,  
264 oat-faba-buckwheat, oat-lupine) in the blind and informed testing conditions across countries  
265 (Belgium, Italy, Spain, Serbia) are shown in Figure 2. After evaluating the responses gathered  
266 from all the study participants, most of the plant-based beverages obtained slightly favourable  
267 liking scores, and no extreme reactions (both positively and negatively) were recorded on  
268 average (Range: 4-7), although significant differences were verified through the ANOVA  
269 procedure after considering country, condition, age, and gender factors (Table 3).  
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**Figure 2.** Comparison of hedonic liking scores for the beverage, mapped between blind and informed testing conditions across countries



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Note. O: Oat only, OF: Oat and Faba beverage, OFB: Oat, Faba, and Buckwheat beverage, and OL: Oat and Lupin beverage. Different letters indicate significant differences according to the ANOVA procedure.

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Additionally, in Table 3, when examining the interaction effects among these factors, a significant interaction was found among beverage, testing condition and age factors, indicating that differences are conditional ( $F_{\text{Huynh-Feldt}} = 3.7, df = 6.4, p < 0.001$ ). Notably, the effect of condition on beverage liking was significant ( $F_{\text{Huynh-Feldt}} = 15.8, df = 6.4, p < 0.001$ ), confirming the role of the information provision on the beverage liking scores, but these influences must be contextualized with age. Pearson correlations revealed significant positive relationships with age and the beverages (except the oat beverage in blind conditions). No significant effects were found when factoring in gender and country for the liking scores in this respondent pool. Taken together, these results highlight both the broad and nuanced ways in which beverage formulation and informational framing can interact to shape consumer preferences.

**Table 3.** Effects of beverage, condition, age, gender, and country on beverage liking scores

Effect	df	$F_{\text{Huynh-Feldt}}$	p-value
Beverage:Condition	6.4	15.8	< 0.001*
Beverage:Condition:Age	6.4	3.7	< 0.001*
Beverage:Condition:Gender	6.4	1.7	0.12
Beverage:Condition:Country	19.3	1.3	0.17
Beverage:Condition:Gender:Country	19.3	0.9	0.65

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Note. \* Indicates significance at the 0.05 level.

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At an overall level, the liking scores of the beverages containing oat and faba ( $M = 5.78 \pm 1.79$ ), and oat, faba, and buckwheat ( $M = 5.73 \pm 1.78$ ) were generally comparable to the single ingredient beverage (oat only,  $M = 5.53 \pm 1.85$ ) in terms of how the participants appreciated these beverages. Through an initial inspection, only the beverages made with the oat and lupine beverage received consistently the lowest liking scores on average ( $M = 4.69 \pm 2.06$ ), and in some instances, these beverages were generally negatively appreciated by the

300 respondents. When it comes to country-level differences, respondents from Belgium tended  
 301 to give lower liking scores across the board, for all plant-based beverages. Respondents from  
 302 Italy, Serbia, and Spain on the other hand, seemed to provide a higher range of liking scores  
 303 for the beverages (See Appendix 1 for values).

304  
 305 Table 4 displays the estimated marginal mean liking scores for each of the beverages tested,  
 306 comparing both blind and informed testing conditions. The oat and lupine beverage  
 307 consistently obtained the lowest liking score, and the difference with the other beverages was  
 308 significant both in the blind and informed conditions ( $F_{Pillai(7,356)} = 32.2, p < 0.001$ ). However,  
 309 while it was observed that the oat, faba, and buckwheat beverage had the highest absolute  
 310 rating, the respondents' liking for this beverage did not differ largely compared to the oat only  
 311 beverage, and even the oat and faba beverage.

312 **Table 4.** Comparison of mean liking scores for all beverages per test condition

Condition Beverage	Blind Condition		Informed Condition	
	EM Mean	SE	EM Mean	SE
Oat	5.5	0.1	5.7	0.1
Oat, Faba	5.5	0.1	5.7	0.1
Oat, Faba, Buckwheat	5.5	0.1	5.9	0.1
Oat, Lupine	4.2	0.1	4.5	0.1

314 Note. EM Mean: Estimated marginal mean, SE: Standard error

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 316 3.2. Attribute profiling of plant-based beverages

317 Cochran's Q test identified a variety of descriptors which were able to discriminate among the  
 318 four different beverages (Table 5). In the blind testing condition, 89.5% of the descriptors were  
 319 able to discriminate the beverages, whereas the taste descriptor "sour" and the texture  
 320 descriptor "silky" did not elicit significant differences. In the informed condition, only the texture  
 321 descriptor "silky" was not discriminating, and 94.7% of the attributes were able to discriminate.

322 **Table 5.** Cochran's Q tests for beverage attributes in blind and informed testing conditions

Blind Testing Conditions				Informed Testing Conditions			
Descriptor	Q	df	p-value	Descriptor	Q	df	p-value
<i>Appearance</i>				<i>Appearance</i>			
<b>Brown</b>	<b>386.29</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	<b>Brown</b>	<b>427.82</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
<b>Light</b>	<b>205.41</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	<b>Light</b>	<b>200.73</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
<b>Opaque</b>	<b>17.03</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	<b>Opaque</b>	<b>19.57</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
<b>Translucent</b>	<b>63.17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	<b>Translucent</b>	<b>63.84</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
<b>Yellow</b>	<b>350.78</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	<b>Yellow</b>	<b>432.03</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
<i>Odor</i>				<i>Odor</i>			
<b>Cereal</b>	<b>20.28</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	<b>Cereals</b>	<b>24.98</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
<b>Mild</b>	<b>50.21</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	<b>Mild</b>	<b>28.17</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
<b>Vegetal</b>	<b>32.78</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	<b>Vegetal</b>	<b>47.62</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
<i>Taste / Flavour</i>				<i>Taste / Flavour</i>			
<b>Bitter</b>	<b>101.26</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	<b>Bitter</b>	<b>122.12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Sour	2.26	3	0.52	Sour	22.2	3	<0.001
<b>Sweet</b>	<b>53.71</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	<b>Sweet</b>	<b>63.66</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
<b>Legume</b>	<b>26.91</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	<b>Legumes</b>	<b>73.01</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
<b>Nutty</b>	<b>42.78</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	<b>Nutty</b>	<b>59.74</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
<b>Oat</b>	<b>9.31</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.025</b>	<b>Oat</b>	<b>25.08</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
<b>Vegetal (Taste)</b>	<b>8.66</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.034</b>	<b>Vegetal (Taste)</b>	<b>9.54</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.023</b>
<i>Texture</i>				<i>Texture</i>			

<b>Astringent</b>	<b>58.8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	<b>Astringent</b>	<b>35.71</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
<b>Gritty</b>	<b>18.78</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	<b>Gritty</b>	<b>29.36</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
Silky	4.85	3	0.183	Silky	4.5	3	0.213
<b>Watery</b>	<b>14.03</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.003</b>	<b>Watery</b>	<b>19.02</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>

Note. Significant discriminators marked in bold.

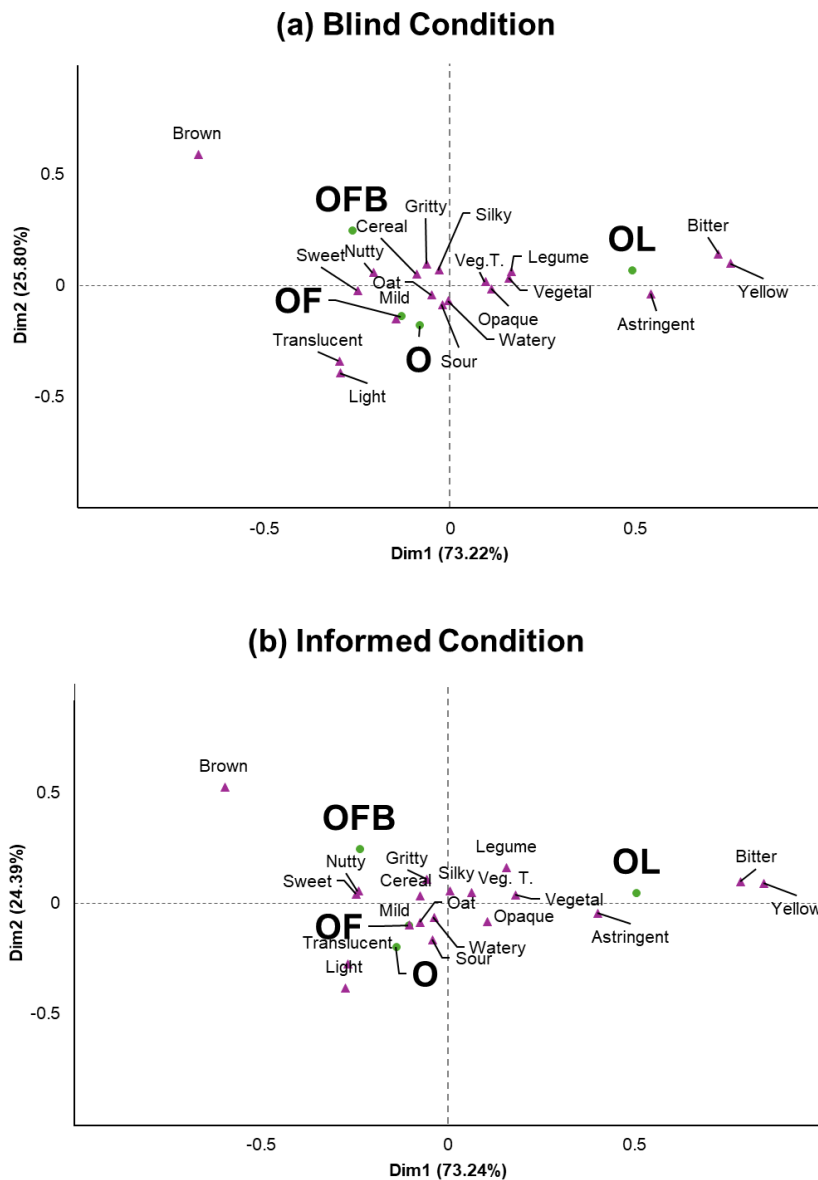
324  
325

326 Extending the profiling procedure, results from the McNemar test also yielded some product  
327 level insights (See Appendix 2 for full results). For example, when characterizing the  
328 appearance of the beverages, the faba, oat, and buckwheat beverage was consistently  
329 described as a “brown” beverage in comparison to the others, both in blind and informed  
330 conditions ( $p < 0.05$ ). A similar observation was made for the oat and lupine beverage, where  
331 this beverage was particularly marked as “yellow” ( $p < 0.05$ ). For the other characteristics, the  
332 McNemar test also revealed that the oat only beverage was somewhat like the oat and faba  
333 and oat, faba, and buckwheat beverages in various modalities (appearance, aroma,  
334 taste/flavour, texture). These three beverages were described similarly as having a “vegetal”  
335 aroma, a “sweet” taste, and an “oat” flavour, among others ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, during the  
336 informed testing condition, these similarities were not preserved, indicating potentially an  
337 information effect, especially as the participants were made aware of what the beverages  
338 contained. Even during the informed testing condition, not all beverages were consistently  
339 described as having an “oat” flavour, despite that all beverages contained oat as a base  
340 ingredient.

341

342 To summarize, Figure 3 shows the biplots from the correspondence analysis procedure, and  
343 this presents strong associations across the beverages with the descriptors used. From Figure  
344 3, several associations can be identified. Oat and oat-faba blends were somehow “translucent”  
345 and “light”, whereas the oat, faba, and buckwheat blend was “nutty” and “gritty”. It is also  
346 confirmed that the oat and lupine beverage was consistently viewed as “bitter”, “yellow”, and  
347 “astringent”, and these were descriptors which could have been linked to the significantly lower  
348 liking scores for this particular beverage. Both biplots for the blind and informed testing  
349 conditions are presented due to differences in attribute elicitation.

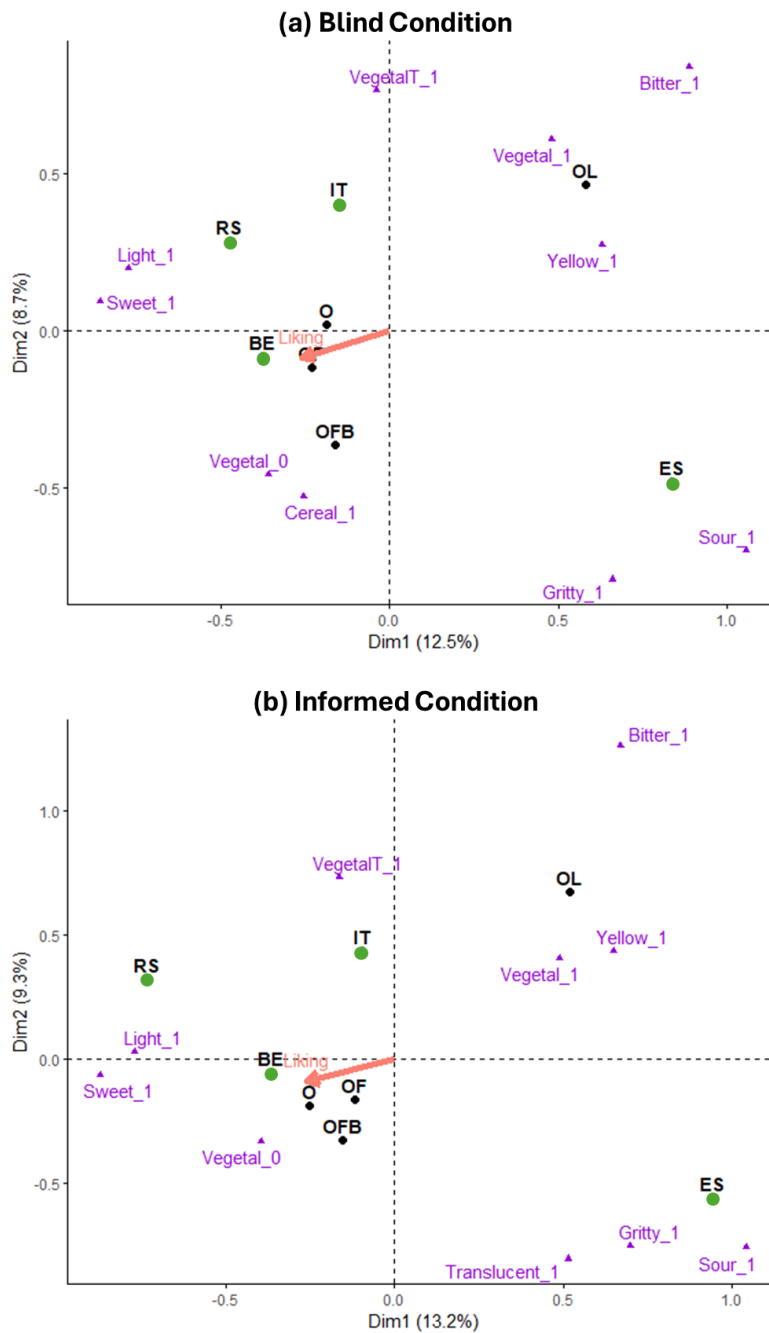
350 **Figure 3.** Correspondence analysis maps for beverage attribute descriptors in (a) blind and  
 351 (b) informed conditions



352 Note. O: Oat only, OF: Oat and Faba beverage, OFB: Oat, Faba, and Buckwheat beverage,  
 353 and OL: Oat and Lupine beverage.  
 354

355  
 356 Finally, country-level differences were factored in, and Figure 4 displays a biplot summarizing  
 357 these associations.  
 358

359 **Figure 4.** Country-level differences in perceived beverage attributes, grouped into (a) blind  
 360 and (b) informed conditions



361  
 362  
 363 Note. O: Oat only, OF: Oat and Faba beverage, OFB: Oat, Faba, and Buckwheat beverage,  
 364 and OL: Oat and Lupine beverage. IT: Italy, ES: Spain, BE: Belgium, RS: Serbia. Pink arrows  
 365 indicate the mapped liking scores of the respondents. Only the 10 main contributing attributes  
 366 were included for improved readability.

367  
 368 From Figure 4, there were some country-specific tendencies observed in the CATA task. For  
 369 instance, participants from Spain were more likely to detect the texture attribute “gritty” and  
 370 the taste attribute “sour” for certain beverages. This was consistent when comparing both blind  
 371 and informed testing conditions. On the other hand, no strong associations between the  
 372 selection of descriptors could be seen when investigating responses from Belgium, Italy, and  
 373 Serbia, indicating a degree of homogeneity in their evaluations for the beverages. Afterwards,  
 374 observing the decomposition of the liking scores on the correspondence map, beverage liking

375 seemed to be opposed to the presence of the attributes “bitter”, “vegetal”, and “yellow”, and  
 376 these attributes were marked in the oat and lupine beverage, as discussed previously.  
 377 Conversely, liking was linked towards beverages that were light and sweet. This was also  
 378 consistent in both blind and informed testing conditions.

379

380 3.3. Emotional associations towards plant-based beverages

381 Table 6 presents the outcomes of Cochran’s Q test for the CATA task on emoji. There were  
 382 fewer significant discriminators observed when it comes to the emotional associations with the  
 383 different beverages (Blind: 56%, Informed: 88%). For instance, in both the blind and informed  
 384 testing conditions, the emoji 🖐️ (clapping hand sign), 👎 (thumbs down), and 🙄 (face with  
 385 stuck out tongue) were some of the few emoji which could discriminate the beverages. While  
 386 not a lot of these emoji did so, the significant discriminators had various meanings, covering  
 387 a wide array of valences in expressing emotional associations. From the previous example,  
 388 the emoji 🖐️ (clapping hand sign), 👎 (thumbs down), and 🙄 (face with stuck out tongue)  
 389 represent various feelings such as appreciation, disapproval, and cheekiness respectively.

390

391 **Table 6.** Cochran’s Q tests for emoji descriptors in blind and informed testing conditions

Blind Testing Conditions				Informed Testing Conditions			
Descriptor	Q	df	p-value	Descriptor	Q	df	p-value
🖐️	<b>8.49</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.037</b>	🖐️	<b>13.69</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.003</b>
😬	<b>18.07</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	😬	<b>22.14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
🙄	<b>8.88</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.031</b>	🙄	<b>11.56</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.009</b>
😬	<b>21.95</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	😬	2.59	3	0.459
😎	3.22	3	0.359	😎	<b>13.46</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.004</b>
😞	3.94	3	0.268	😞	<b>24.06</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
😐	2.5	3	0.474	😐	<b>13.22</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.004</b>
👁️	5.34	3	0.148	👁️	6.39	3	0.094
🙄	3.55	3	0.315	🙄	<b>9.38</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.025</b>
👍	<b>60.67</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	👍	<b>50</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
👍	<b>39.99</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	👍	<b>40.58</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
😬	2.47	3	0.482	😬	1.24	3	0.742
💡	<b>13.03</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.005</b>	💡	<b>11.33</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.01</b>
😬	7.11	3	0.068	😬	<b>12.57</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.006</b>
😬	<b>9.45</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.024</b>	😬	<b>9.29</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.026</b>
😬	3.98	3	0.263	😬	<b>7.97</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.047</b>
😬	1.63	3	0.654	😬	<b>15.06</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.002</b>
🙄	<b>23.34</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	🙄	<b>26.69</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
😞	1.17	3	0.76	😞	<b>9.54</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.023</b>
😬	7.81	3	0.05	😬	<b>20.12</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
😬	<b>68.2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	😬	<b>47.5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
😬	<b>8.35</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.039</b>	😬	<b>19.92</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
😬	<b>23.48</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>	😬	<b>45.81</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
😬	<b>11.8</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.008</b>	😬	<b>17.04</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>
😬	7.82	3	0.05	😬	<b>19.63</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>&lt;0.001</b>

392 Note. Significant discriminators marked in bold.

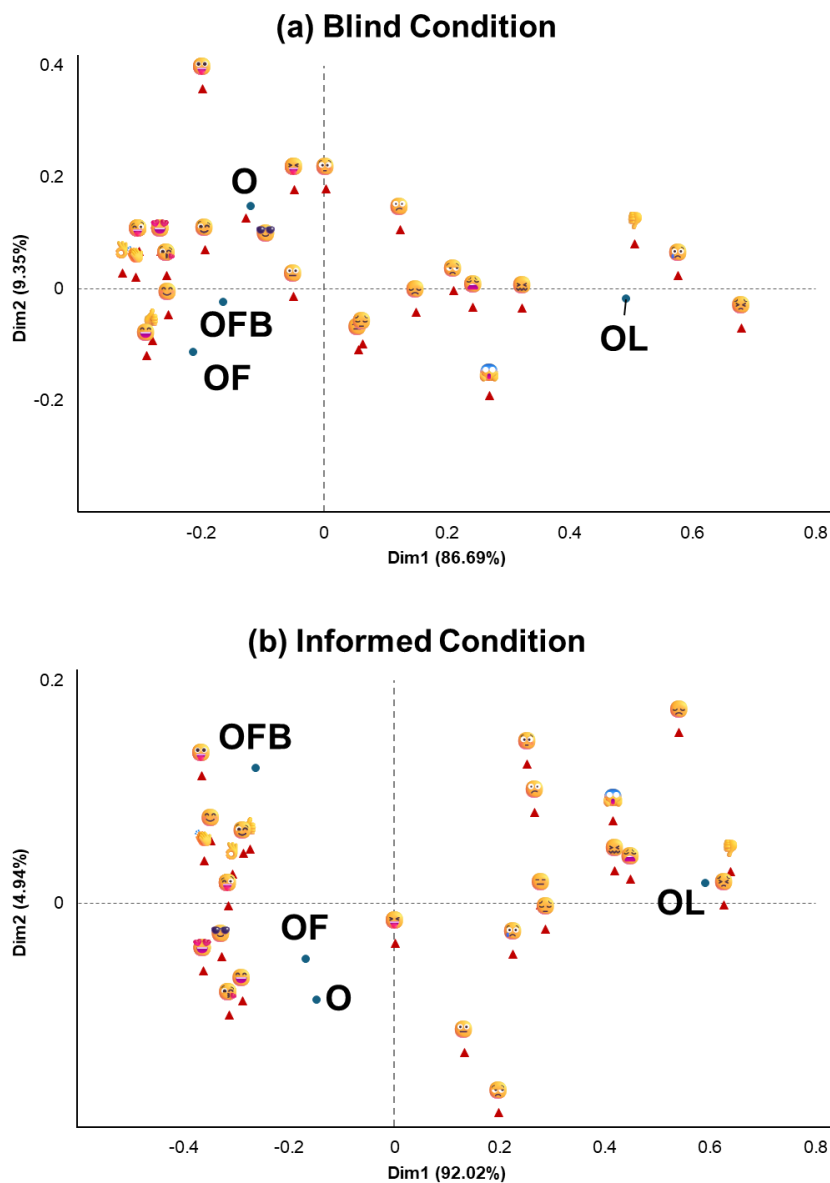
393

394 From the McNemar procedure, similar to the findings revealed from analysing the attribute  
 395 descriptors, some emoji were seen to be associated strongly with certain beverages (See  
 396 Appendix 3 for full results). For example, the emoji 🖐️ (clapping hand sign) was significantly  
 397 associated with three beverages (oat, oat and faba, oat, faba and buckwheat) and this was

398 differently elicited for the oat and lupine beverage. This was seen as well with the 🙌 (OK  
 399 hand sign), 😜 (winking face), 🤪 (face with stuck out tongue), 😊 (smiling face) emoji, where  
 400 the liked beverages were rated as such. Conversely, the more negative valence emoji were  
 401 distinctively linked to the oat and lupine beverage, such as the emoji 🤔 (confounded face)  
 402 and 😞 (persevering face).

403  
 404 Putting these findings together, Figure 5 presents the correspondence biplot covering the  
 405 emoji and beverage associations. As seen in Figure 5, there seems to be a substantial split  
 406 between the positive valence and negative valence emoji. Moreover, in the informed testing  
 407 condition, these negative valence emoji associations with the oat and lupine beverage  
 408 displayed a stronger degree, indicating that knowledge of the blend composition may have  
 409 drawn certain expectations among the consumers.

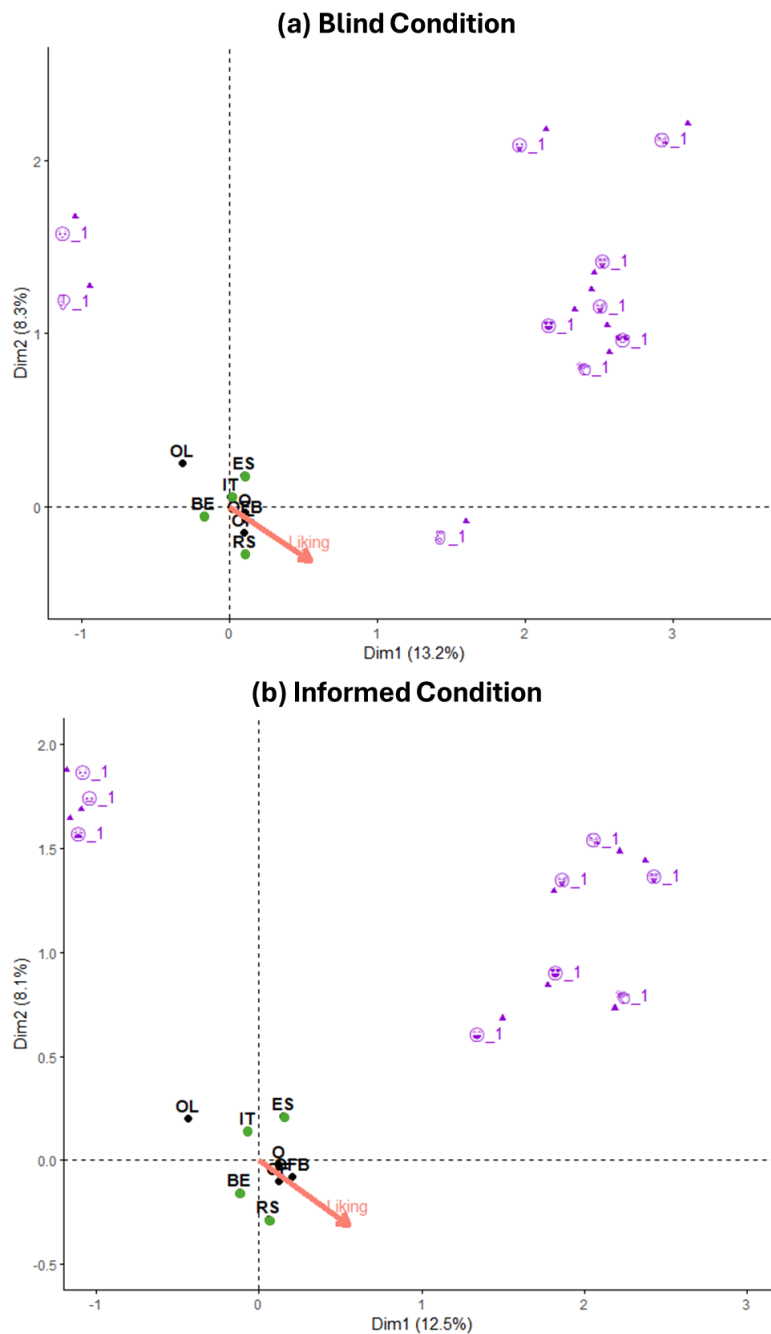
410  
 411 **Figure 5.** Correspondence analysis maps for emoji-beverage associations in (a) blind and (b)  
 412 informed conditions



413 Note. O: Oat only, OF: Oat and Faba beverage, OFB: Oat, Faba, and Buckwheat beverage,  
 414 and OL: Oat and Lupine beverage.  
 415  
 416

417 In considering any country-level effects in eliciting emoji associations, no strong country-level  
 418 associations were found, even after comparing both blind and informed testing conditions  
 419 (Figure 6a-b). No particular country seemed to favour selecting particular emoji (or indirectly,  
 420 emotional expressions) in describing how the consumption of the beverages evoked feelings.  
 421 In addition, the liking scores of the respondents were somehow more linked to emoji of positive  
 422 valence (e.g. 😊, OK hand sign), as expected, and conversely, those with negative valence  
 423 were opposite from the liking associations (e.g. 😞).

424  
 425 **Figure 6.** Correspondence analysis maps for country-level differences in emoji associations,  
 426 grouped into (a) blind and (b) informed conditions  
 427



428  
 429 Note. O: Oat only, OF: Oat and Faba beverage, OFB: Oat, Faba, and Buckwheat beverage,  
 430 and OL: Oat and Lupine beverage. IT: Italy, ES: Spain, BE: Belgium, RS: Serbia. Pink arrows

431 indicate the mapped liking scores of the respondents. Only up to the 10 main contributing  
432 emojis were included for improved readability.

433

#### 434 4. DISCUSSION

435

436 The first objective of this study was to understand the potential of plant-based beverage blends  
437 among consumers, specifically looking at sensory properties that might drive acceptance. In  
438 this regard, this study tested blends of oat beverages fortified with proteins sourced from a  
439 variety of underutilized crops. In food processing, blends of ingredients are often done for  
440 various reasons, including taste improvement, nutrient content development, and other  
441 economic reasons (Chakraborty et al., 2022; Martins et al., 2022). With the present study, it  
442 was demonstrated that blending plant-based ingredients may have potential in eliciting similar  
443 (but not entirely more competitive) reactions among consumers compared to beverages with  
444 a single main ingredient. This has then implications on the way products are formulated in the  
445 market. On one hand, diversifying ingredient bases and product offerings may be a key  
446 strategy to capture or retain current markets and to maximize sustainability in food production  
447 (Malekpour et al., 2024; Raak et al., 2022). On the other hand, blending more familiar plant-  
448 based ingredients with emerging crops (such as underutilized crops) may be strategic in  
449 increasing their visibility (Bhardwaj & Pandey, 2011). These underexploited crops often  
450 struggle with visibility despite the numerous potential benefits they can accord to the food  
451 value chain (Kaur et al., 2025). Hence, blending has been demonstrated as a potential  
452 workaround for such types of crops.

453

454 From the different beverage blends presented in this study, two beverages emerged to be  
455 preferable, namely the beverages prepared from oat and faba, and oat, faba, and buckwheat.  
456 When comparing these beverages to the oat-only formulation, no significant differences at  
457 least in liking scores were obtained, signalling the potential of these beverages to compete  
458 with single ingredient formulations. Several characteristics were also identified which were  
459 linked to these most liked beverages. For product development purposes, those associated  
460 with higher liking scores include attributes such as having a light texture or a sweet taste.  
461 These attributes can be seen as typical of the product class (e.g. dairy, plant-based alternative  
462 beverages) and can thus be leveraged further (Appiani et al., 2023; Jaeger et al., 2024; Moss  
463 et al., 2023; Waehrens et al., 2023), especially when dealing with blends so that no single  
464 flavour from the ingredients is overpowering. Furthermore, some attributes such as a bitter  
465 taste, yellow colour, and vegetal aroma were associated with the oat and lupine beverage,  
466 which was least liked. This is somewhat expected since these attributes deviate from  
467 preferential aspects of conventional beverages. Needless to say, differences in consumer  
468 profiles have to be taken into account when determining product acceptance, especially since  
469 different groups tend to associate specific factors such as health, sustainability, and value with  
470 plant-based beverages (Runte et al., 2024). While this study showed that the respondents'  
471 countries did not lead to major differences in affecting the acceptance of the beverages, it is  
472 important to note common preferences for specific blend formulations so that they may appeal  
473 to broader audiences.

474

475 The next objective of this study was to evaluate whether presenting underutilized crops as the  
476 blended ingredients in fortifying the plant-based beverages would affect consumer  
477 acceptance. In sum, providing consumers with information as to the blended composition of  
478 the crops seems to have increased liking scores for the beverages, but this is also dependent  
479 on the age of the participant. Identifying the ingredients as coming from underutilized crops  
480 (described in the informed condition as crops “...that are not popular in mainstream markets  
481 and are also called neglected species...”) may have positively influenced how respondents  
482 appreciated the beverages. This seemingly goes against prior evidence, where designating  
483 products as only made of unconventional plants led to less favourable ratings (Barbosa et al.,  
484 2021; Santos et al., 2025). While this was observed, the underutilized crops in the study were  
485 blended with a more familiar and mainstream crop (oat), and this could have led to better

486 expectations from the participants, as also hypothesized by Santos et al. (2025). Nevertheless,  
487 as with other messaging used to promote food products, a careful balance must be identified.  
488 Otherwise, consumers might eventually become too saturated with information, lessening their  
489 ability to discern and maximize the information presented in the products (Bawden &  
490 Robinson, 2020; Maksi et al., 2024).

491  
492 Afterwards, this study also aimed to scope what emotional responses can be associated with  
493 the fortified plant-based beverages, as evidenced by the variations of associations from the  
494 emoji CATA task. To this end, understanding emotional responses towards plant-based  
495 beverages made with underutilized crops requires some more clarification. For many  
496 consumers, initial impressions matter, and having early positive reactions towards a certain  
497 product may facilitate acceptance in the long run (Delarue & Blumenthal, 2015; Mehta et al.,  
498 2024). In this sense, determining what emotional responses are triggered at the first instance  
499 is crucial to secure awareness. However, for a product such as beverages, it is important to  
500 observe whether emotional responses to the same product can be stable in the long run, or  
501 whether consumers provide fleeting responses (following the notions of the mere-  
502 measurement effect) (Ahlich et al., 2023; Morwitz & Fitzsimons, 2004). As with the case of  
503 other low involvement products, acceptance may stagnate in the future, and this calls for more  
504 varied formulations of beverages (Calvo-Porrall et al., 2018). Furthermore, with the numerous  
505 sources of plant-based crops which can be used for making beverages in retail at present,  
506 understanding emotional triggers for underutilized crops can help better position them among  
507 consumer markets.

508  
509 In the present study, the generally least liked beverage (oat and lupine), was mostly  
510 associated with negative valence emoji, thereby indicating another dimension of consumer  
511 appreciation. This trend was observed in both testing conditions, and even knowing the  
512 composition did not significantly elicit higher liking scores. This could have occurred due to  
513 two main reasons. First, the sensory properties emerging from the use of lupines could have  
514 taken priority in the participants' evaluations, overriding any perceived benefits from the use  
515 of an underutilized crop such as lupine (Abreu et al., 2023; Schlegel et al., 2019). Secondly,  
516 due to the highly niche production and consumption context of lupine in Europe (and its status  
517 as a potential allergen), the respondents were unfamiliar with the crop and thus may have  
518 been less enthusiastic about its use. Evidently, the utilisation of lupine in Europe is relegated  
519 mostly to feed purposes and hence, consumers may not be aware of their food product  
520 application potentials (Lucas et al., 2015; Szczepański et al., 2022). Similar to other unfamiliar  
521 foods, the degree of uncertainty towards a particular product (in this case, lupine) may have  
522 led to more negative perceptions (Tuorila & Hartmann, 2020).

523  
524 Interestingly, for the beverages which were more or less appreciated (oat, faba, buckwheat),  
525 there were some nuanced emoji used to describe them, besides the expected positive valence  
526 emoji. For instance, the results showed that emoji such as 😜 (winking face), and 🙄 (face  
527 with stuck out tongue) were associated with the liked beverages in the study. These emoji are  
528 linked with connotations of humour or cheekiness, indicating a more specific perception of the  
529 plant-based beverages studied. Instead of generalizing the positive emoji associations found,  
530 it well may be that consumers attach certain cognitive sentiments to these beverages,  
531 especially under the context of novelty or surprise (Jaeger & Giacalone, 2021).

532  
533 Given the findings of this study, there are still some aspects to consider regarding the methods  
534 employed. First, this study utilized a selection of crops to investigate the sensory potential of  
535 combining multiple ingredients in a single beverage formulation. While there are certainly other  
536 crops that can be used, this study leveraged the case of underutilized crops which have been  
537 shown to fortify beverages with proteins of superior quality, following confirmatory laboratory  
538 testing. The study likewise showed indications of using underutilized crops in formulating new  
539 beverages. Nevertheless, upcoming studies along this line can use designs of experiments to

540 identify other new blend formulations among various ingredient type permutations (Galvan et  
541 al., 2021; Hidalgo-Piamba et al., 2024).

542

543 Another factor which might have affected the sensory profiles of the beverages could have  
544 been any unaccounted physical food matrix interactions of the beverage ingredients. For  
545 example, combining buckwheat and faba could yield unique profiles. Additionally, during the  
546 processing of plant-based beverages, some undesirable compounds perceived upon  
547 consumption could arise (Pucci et al., 2024). Prior studies have likewise shown how different  
548 compounds in plant-based ingredients can lead to undesirable flavour compounds that can be  
549 perceived by consumers such as off, rancid, or grassy flavours (Xie et al., 2023). To minimize  
550 these types of ingredient interactions, all beverages used in this study shared oat as a  
551 common ingredient, allowing for baseline comparisons. Aside from these, the use of emoji to  
552 measure elicited emotional responses can be further explored. From this study, some emoji  
553 were not utilized, and this could have been either due to respondent biases or perhaps their  
554 interpretability. While complex, other methods to measure emotional responses may be  
555 employed, such as the use of other lexicons or devices that can measure implicit reactions  
556 linked to emotional responses (Kaneko et al., 2021; Schouteten, 2021). Nevertheless, the  
557 study revealed the practicality of using emoji to measure emotional associations with food  
558 products across different European regions.

559

## 560 **5. CONCLUSION**

561

562 This study demonstrates the potential of underutilized crops such as faba bean, buckwheat,  
563 and lupine when blended with oat in plant-based beverages, with some blends being able to  
564 comparatively compete with single-formulation oat beverages. More importantly, the study  
565 showed that consumer perceptions for beverage blends focus on their sensory properties as  
566 well as how underutilized crops are presented to consumers. As this study has showed,  
567 highlighting the nature of the ingredient blends, particularly their status as underutilized  
568 ingredients can enhance the overall acceptance of beverages. This further emphasizes the  
569 role of framing beverage blends to better position their unique product characteristics and  
570 composition. Furthermore, this study also reinforced the need to scope emotional responses  
571 alongside the sensory properties of beverage blends. In particular, this study forwards that  
572 evocations of positive feelings such as humour, novelty, and surprise were associated with  
573 preferred beverage blends. In this sense, capitalizing on the marketing of beverage blends  
574 through these aspects can perhaps make these beverages more salient and appealing for  
575 consumers who are willing to try them.

576

577 Beyond these conclusions, future studies can look at the potential of using underutilized crop  
578 blends in other food matrices, aside from just beverages alone. Moreover, while this study  
579 focused on acceptance and even emotional responses to plant-based beverage blends, other  
580 diverse acceptance measures can be examined, such as whether consumers would be willing  
581 to consume these beverages on a frequent basis. Sensory experiments following the same  
582 theme can explore other dimensions of product acceptance, and they can likewise consider  
583 the use of trained panellists for evaluation. Lastly, providing different message frames based  
584 on other distinguishing characteristics of underutilized crops can be tested to see what  
585 messaging strategies can resonate well with consumers.

586

587 **ETHICAL STATEMENT**

588 Ethical approval for the involvement of human subjects in this study was granted by the  
589 Research Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences, Ghent University  
590 (Reference number 2024-44, 12/11/2024).

591

592 **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

593 The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal  
594 relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

595

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598

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602

603 **AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS**

604 S. B. worked on the conceptualization, methodology, formal analysis, writing – original draft,  
605 writing – review and editing. M. L., C. P., C. C., worked on the conceptualization, methodology,  
606 writing – review and editing, and supervision. L. G., C. B-O., A. C., T. D-H., M. Pe., D. Š, D.  
607 U., M. Po., worked on the conceptualization, methodology, writing – review and editing,  
608 supervision, and resources. H. D. S., J. J. S. worked on conceptualization, writing – review  
609 and editing, supervision, and project administration.

610

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846 **APPENDICES (List)**

847

848 **Appendix 1.** Mean liking scores for the beverages, as grouped by condition (blind/informed)  
849 and country

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<b>Belgium</b>			<b>Italy</b>		
Oat	Mean	Std.Dev.	Oat	Mean	Std.Dev.
Blind	4.65	1.89	Blind	5.76	1.73
Informed	5.24	1.76	Informed	5.85	2.05
Oat/Faba	Mean	Std.Dev.	Oat/Faba	Mean	Std.Dev.
Blind	4.87	1.76	Blind	6.06	1.91
Informed	5.32	1.71	Informed	5.99	1.74
Oat/Faba/Buckwheat	Mean	Std.Dev.	Oat/Faba/Buckwheat	Mean	Std.Dev.
Blind	4.9	1.78	Blind	6	1.87
Informed	5.48	1.65	Informed	6.16	1.84
Oat/Lupin	Mean	Std.Dev.	Oat/Lupin	Mean	Std.Dev.
Blind	3.62	1.79	Blind	4.67	2.14
Informed	3.85	1.83	Informed	4.94	2.06
<b>Spain</b>			<b>Serbia</b>		
Oat	Mean	Std.Dev.	Oat	Mean	Std.Dev.
Blind	5.35	1.93	Blind	6.87	0.57
Informed	6.13	1.77	Informed	5.65	2.1
Oat/Faba	Mean	Std.Dev.	Oat/Faba	Mean	Std.Dev.
Blind	5.74	1.78	Blind	6.87	0.57
Informed	5.93	1.78	Informed	5.87	1.79
Oat/Faba/Buckwheat	Mean	Std.Dev.	Oat/Faba/Buckwheat	Mean	Std.Dev.
Blind	5.56	1.77	Blind	6.87	0.57
Informed	6.02	1.79	Informed	6.04	1.82
Oat/Lupin	Mean	Std.Dev.	Oat/Lupin	Mean	Std.Dev.
Blind	4.37	1.81	Blind	6.87	0.57
Informed	4.58	1.87	Informed	4.62	2.11

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**Appendix 2.** McNemar Tests for comparing attributes elicited across all beverages

The following table presents the results of the McNemar tests for all attributes tested. Different sub-groups are denominated by capital letters. Values indicate the total number of times the particular attribute was selected for the corresponding beverage. Differences are grouped at 5% significance level.

<b>BLIND CONDITION</b>					<b>INFORMED CONDITION</b>			
<b>s1_Brown</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>s2_Brown</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
OFB	210				OFB	240		
OF		67			OF		86	
O			50		O		72	
OL				6	OL			10
<b>s1_Light</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>		<b>s2_Light</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
O	172				O	175		
OF	165				OF	165		
OFB		83			OFB		80	
OL			38		OL			46
<b>s1_Opaque</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>			<b>s2_Opaque</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	
OL	185				OL	190		
OF		157			O	174		
O		150			OF	174		
OFB		141			OFB		140	
<b>s1_Translucent</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>		<b>s2_Translucent</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
O	76				O	91		
OF	72				OF	89		
OFB		42			OFB		56	
OL			18		OL			29
<b>s1_Yellow</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>		<b>s2_Yellow</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	
OL	260				OL	280		
O		77			OF		65	
OF		64	64		O		62	
OFB			52		OFB		54	
<b>s1_Cereal</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>		<b>s2_Cereals</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
OFB	198				OFB	223		
OF		172			O		195	
O		158	158		OF		186	186
OL			143		OL			164
<b>s1_Mild</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>		<b>s2_Mild</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
OF	170				OF	172		
O	164				O	163	163	
OFB		131			OFB		144	
OL			95		OL			113
<b>s1_Vegetal</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>			<b>s2_Vegetal</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
OL	201				OL	212		
OFB		146			OF		163	
O		145			OFB		154	154
OF		143			O			133
<b>s1_Bitter</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>			<b>s2_Bitter</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	
OL	87				OL	97		
O		23			OF		26	
OF		23			O		22	
OFB		21			OFB		22	
<b>s1_Sour</b>	<b>A</b>				<b>s2_Sour</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	

O	57			O	97		
OF	57			OF		75	
OFB	48			OL		65	
OL	48			OFB		64	
<b>s1_Sweet</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>		<b>s2_Sweet</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
OFB	123			OFB	147		
O	118			O		124	
OF	103			OF		108	
OL		55		OL			63
<b>s1_Legume</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>		<b>s2_Legumes</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
OL	151			OL	173		
OFB		113		OFB	153	153	
O		108		OF		143	
OF		97		O			80
<b>s1_Nutty</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>s2_Nutty</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
OFB	150			OFB	134		
OF		122		OF	122		
O		114		O		96	
OL			76	OL			58
<b>s1_Oat</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>		<b>s2_Oat</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
OF	145			O	195		
OFB	124	124		OF	186	186	
O		120		OFB		169	
OL		111		OL			142
<b>s1_Vegetal Taste</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>		<b>s1_Vegetal Taste</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	
OL	153			OL	138		
O	130	130		OFB	134		
OFB		128		OF	130		
OF		122		O		108	
<b>s1_Astringent</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>s2_Astringent</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	
OL	75			OL	71		
O		40		OF		41	
OF		26	26	O		35	
OFB			19	OFB		27	
<b>s1_Gritty</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>s2_Gritty</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	
OFB	129			OFB	130		
OF	112	112		OF	117		
OL		98	98	OL		94	
O			87	O		82	
<b>s1_Silky</b>	<b>A</b>			<b>s2_Silky</b>	<b>A</b>		
OFB	107			OFB	118		
O	89			OL	104		
OL	89			OF	102		
OF	86			O	96		
<b>s1_Watery</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>		<b>s2_Watery</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	
OF	229			O	232		
O	224			OF		205	
OL		202		OFB		204	
OFB		196		OL		184	

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**Appendix 3. McNemar Tests for comparing emojis elicited across all beverages**

The following table presents the results of the McNemar tests for all emojis tested. Different sub-groups are denominated by capital letters. Values indicate the total number of times the particular attribute was selected for the corresponding beverage. Differences are grouped at 5% significance level.

BLIND CONDITION			INFORMED CONDITION		
<b>s1_👏</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>s2_👏</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
O	18		OFB	25	
OF	18		OF	22	
OFB	16		O	21	
OL		7	OL		7
<b>s1_😬</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>s2_😬</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OL	55		OL	47	
O		29	O		23
OFB		29	OF		20
OF		27	OFB		20
<b>s1_😞</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>s2_😞</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OL	55		OL	46	
O	54		OFB		29
OF	38	38	O		26
OFB		36	OF		25
<b>s1_😟</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>s2_😟</b>	<b>A</b>	
OL	29		OL	16	
O		12	O	12	
OFB		9	OF	10	
OF		8	OFB	9	
<b>s1_😎</b>	<b>A</b>		<b>s2_😎</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
O	18		O	25	
OFB	17		OFB	21	
OF	12		OF	15	15
OL	11		OL		7
<b>s1_😓</b>	<b>A</b>		<b>s2_😓</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OL	26		OL	36	
OFB	23		OFB		15
O	17		OF		12
OF	16		O		11
<b>s1_😐</b>	<b>A</b>		<b>s2_😐</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OL	43		OL	53	
OF	41		OF		33
OFB	37		O		31
O	32		OFB		28
<b>s1_😱</b>	<b>A</b>		<b>s2_😱</b>	<b>A</b>	
OL	14		OL	15	
OF	10		O	7	
OFB	7		OFB	7	
O	6		OF	6	
<b>s1_😨</b>	<b>A</b>		<b>s2_😨</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OFB	12		O	21	
O	10		OF	20	
OF	9		OFB	18	
OL	5		OL		7

<b>s1_👉</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
OL	70		
O		35	
OFB		26	26
OF			19
<b>s1_👍</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>
OFB	91		
OF	85	85	
O		68	
OL			38
<b>s1_😏</b>	<b>A</b>		
O	15		
OFB	11		
OL	10		
OF	9		
<b>s1_😬</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	
O	22		
OFB	16	16	
OF		8	
OL		8	
<b>s1_😏</b>	<b>A</b>		
O	19		
OF	17		
OFB	16		
OL	7		
<b>s1_😞</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	
OL	41		
OFB	32	32	
O	26	26	
OF		21	
<b>s1_😬</b>	<b>A</b>		
O	28		
OFB	21		
OL	21		
OF	16		
<b>s1_😬</b>	<b>A</b>		
OFB	81		
O	74		
OF	72		
OL	68		
<b>s1_👉</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	
O	46		
OF	46		
OFB	38		
OL		16	
<b>s1_😞</b>	<b>A</b>		
OL	21		
OF	20		
OFB	17		
O	16		
<b>s1_😬</b>	<b>A</b>		
OL	38		
O	23		

<b>s2_👉</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OL	49	
O		17
OF		15
OFB		13
<b>s2_👍</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OFB	98	
O	84	
OF	82	
OL		40
<b>s2_😏</b>	<b>A</b>	
O	15	
OFB	12	
OL	12	
OF	10	
<b>s2_😬</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OFB	19	
O	14	
OF	14	
OL		5
<b>s2_😞</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OFB	25	
OF	24	
O	23	
OL		9
<b>s2_😞</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OL	34	
O	31	
OF	26	26
OFB		15
<b>s2_😬</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OL	30	
OF	20	20
OFB	20	20
O		13
<b>s2_😬</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OL	81	
OF	78	
O	69	
OFB		46
<b>s2_👉</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OFB	55	
O	49	
OF	48	
OL		20
<b>s2_😞</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OL	35	
OF	24	24
O		19
OFB		17
<b>s2_😬</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OL	40	
O		20

OFB	23		OFB		16
OF	22		OF		15
<b>s1_🙄</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>s2_🙄</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OL	68		OL	54	
OFB		20	O		22
O		19	OF		15
OF		17	OFB		14
<b>s1_😄</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>s2_😄</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OFB	23		O	34	
O	20		OFB	31	
OF	16	16	OF	29	
OL		9	OL		9
<b>s1_😊</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>s2_😊</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OFB	78		OFB	84	
OF	75		OF	72	
O	67		O	68	
OL		37	OL		25
<b>s1_😁</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>s2_😁</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
OF	36		O	42	
OFB	29		OF	41	
O	26	26	OFB	37	
OL		14	OL		16
<b>s1_😇</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>s2_😇</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
O	40		OF	46	
OF	35	35	OFB	45	
OFB	31	31	O	34	
OL		21	OL		18

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