



**If I can taste it, I want it...  
Sensory Marketing in Grocery Retail Stores**

av

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**Akademisk avhandling**

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## Abstract

Johan Swahn (2011): If you can taste it; you want it...Sensory Marketing in Grocery Retail Stores. Örebro Studies in Culinary Arts and Meal Science 9, 58 pp.

This thesis is based on four studies taking a quantitative and qualitative approach, and combining three different research areas: sensory science, linguistics, and marketing science. Each study stands alone as a piece of research, but the overall aim was to investigate the creations of a sensory marketing strategy, with a focus on food and taste, for using a sensory language as a marketing tool in grocery retail stores.

The sensory study aimed to examine sensory descriptions and compare consumer perceptions with those of a trained sensory panel. The perceptions expressed by the consumers correlated quite well with the terminology used by the trained panel, and a partial least squares regression showed that the two groups used many identical words. Taking a qualitative approach, a sensory semantic frame was constructed on the basis of the vocabulary used by the two groups. The combination of sensory and semantic analysis could be one way of extracting valuable words for use in contexts such as product description for marketing purposes in retail stores.

The sensory description labels were then used in different observational studies in grocery retail stores to investigate consumer choice behaviour in response to different sensory marketing cues such as sensory description labels, taste preference, price, and visual appearance. The sensory description labels were found to have an effect on consumer choice behaviour. For example, when only the brand name was given on the label, the consumers tended to choose the apples with a strong brand name, but their choice shifted when sensory description labels were added. Consumers also tended to be less price sensitive when sensory description labels were present.

*Keywords:* advertising, brand/product choice, consumer behaviour, decision-making, food choice, labelling, sensory description, sensory marketing, sensory perception, semantic frame theory, retailing

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