

IN STORE TASTING CHECKLIST

It will be important that you are organised when doing tastings, and the following checklist will help you remember some of the smaller things that might otherwise be forgotten. Remember, the smooth running of the tasting is the responsibility of the producer and not the shop. You need to be self-sufficient and organised.

PLANNING FOR THE TASTING

- Visit the store and clarify time and date for the tasting plus the location within store. Discuss when/ how the sampling stock will be delivered and where it will be stored. You will be required to provide your own stock for the tasting at no charge to the retailer. Clarify where you can prepare stock for sampling and where you can access toilets, electricity and hand-washing facilities. Check if you need to bring your own rubbish bin.
- If sampling stock is being delivered to the store in advance of the tasting, label it very clearly as "tasting stock".
- Discuss with the store the potential volume footfall so you can judge how many consumers are likely to sample your product on that day. Calculate the stock needed to support the tasting e.g. if 500 consumers are expected in store on the day of your tasting and approx. 400 of those are likely to sample your product, allow for 400 bite-sized pieces.
- Clarify with the local store where you will park on the day; how you will gain access to your stock; what is the appropriate dress code e.g. a hair net is needed.
- Ensure you have adequate stock to cover the uptake in sales as a result of the tasting.
- Provide the store with proof of public liability insurance in place if asked.
- Put thought into what you want to achieve from the tasting e.g. to encourage trial; to promote your brand; to get some consumer research etc. Think about questions you may wish to ask consumers e.g. what brand of ham do you normally buy.
- Use social media to promote the tasting.

SAMPLING IN STORE

- Ensure you have a branded tasting stand and/or poster to brand a generic tasting stand.
- Bring posters, leaflets, brochures etc. This is an opportunity to showcase the branding as well as the products, so it needs to look professional.
- Ensure you have a clean uniform and/or white coat to carry out the sampling.
- The wearing of aprons, disposable gloves, and hairnets/hats is mandatory. Don't forget to remove aprons and hats when leaving the shop floor for whatever reason.
- Ensure you have all the materials and equipment needed to prep samples e.g. apron, food gloves, chopping boards, knives, electric pans, thermometers, kitchen roll, plates etc.
- Ensure you have all the materials needed to serve the samples e.g. napkins, cocktail sticks, plastic cups etc. Ensure you have a bin located beside your tasting stand for all waste.
- Bring sanitised wipes to keep utensils clean in between washing, which you should try to do regularly, and to keep your stand clean of spills.

- Keep your tasting station clean and clutter free. Do not keep boxes of stock around your stand and cause blockages in store.
- Every few hours check around the store for your product which has been “dumped” elsewhere in store. Consumers may initially pick up your product with the intention to trial it but then dump it on a shelf if they change their minds over the course of their shop.
- Ensure you have staff lined up to cover the tasting – including late opening hours and lunch breaks. Ideally do the tasting yourself or rope in family members.
- Ensure that all tasting staff are fully briefed on what is to be communicated to consumers in terms of product story; your own story; USP; compelling reasons to sample and buy; any promotion e.g. money off etc. This is vital to “hook” and engage the consumer.
- Ensure that all till staff are aware the tasting is taking place and of any special money off promotion that they will need to account for at the tills.
- Never give an unaccompanied child a product to taste (they may be allergic). Always ask the parent for permission.
- Take care that extension leads are not a trip hazard and ensure that skillets and hot utensils cannot be pulled off the stand. Never leave hot food unattended.

CHECKLIST OF ITEMS:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tasting stock • Display Stand • Leaflets and Holders • Gloves • Foils or polystyrene cups for tasting • Sanitizing Wipes • Kitchen Towel • White Coat and Hat or apron with branding if possible • Black Bags and rubbish bin • Bucket with dishwashing liquid | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Probe to check temperature • Chopping boards • Knives • Bain Marie • Electric Cooker • Extension Lead for fridge/freezer/microwave • Plastic tasting forks or small spoons • Serving spoons • Labels for different flavours |
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AFTER THE TASTING:

- Be sure to take a stock take before and after the tasting, so you can gauge how much stock was sold during the tasting.
- Be sure to clean up after you. Wash down all surfaces and the floor if necessary.
- Touch base with store staff before leaving the store after the tasting to get their feedback on the tasting and potential suggestions for improving on the next tasting.
- Immediately after the tasting take notes of things to remember for your next tasting e.g. ran out of cocktail sticks by lunchtime; bring brochures along next time etc.