

Specialty Coffee Association Cupping Methodology and Protocol



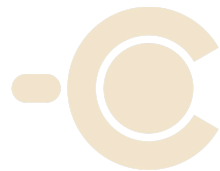
SCA/CQI Certified Coffee Cupping Lab

SCA Coffee Skills Program Campus


Kona, Hawai'i

Background on the SCA Coffee Cupping System

- The goal: To evaluate the *quality* of roasted coffee
 - Cupping was originally designed for defect detection in the cup
 - Categorize coffee as *Specialty* or not specialty grade based on 100 point scoring system
 - Evolved as a practice to evaluate sensory characteristics and their intensities
- Specialty Coffee Association
 - The Coffee Cuppers Handbook: First written publication on cupping protocol
 - Shifted from the “craft” of cupping based on experience and practice to a “scientific” approach
- Coffee Quality Institute
 - Develop a form
 - Training, calibration, license Q Graders, global reach




Evolution of the Scoring Form

 **Specialty Coffee Association of America Coffee Cupping Form**

Directions: (1) Mark the relative darkness of the sample. (2) Mark the intensity of fragrance/aroma of the dry, crust and break on the vertical scale. (3) Rate the quality of fragrance/aroma on the horizontal scale. (4) Upon tasting the liquor, evaluate intensity of acidity and level of body. (5) Mark the quality of the flavor attribute on the horizontal 1-10 scale. If the score changes, note the change with an arrow. Mark any taints or defects found, along with the number of cups in which it was found. (6) Enter the final quality score of each flavor component in the upper right box. (7) Add all component scores together. (8) Subtract defects and taints to get final sample score.

Quality scale:
 10- Exceptional
 9- Outstanding
 8- Excellent
 7- Very good
 6- Good
 5- Average
 4- Fair
 3- Poor
 2- Very poor
 1- Unacceptable
 0- Not present

Sample #	Roast Level of Sample	Fragrance/Aroma Score	Acidity Score	Body Score	Flavor Score	Clean Cup Score	Uniformity Score	Overall Score	Total Score
		Score: 5-10 Dry Qualities Break Intensity High Low	Score: 0-10 Intensity High Low	Score: 0-10 Level Heavy Thin	Score: 0-10 Sweetness	Score: 0-10 Balance	Score: 0-10 Aftertaste	Defects (subtract) Taint=2 # cups X Intensity Fault=4	
Notes:									Final Score

 **Specialty Coffee Association of America Coffee Cupping Form**

Name: _____
 Date: _____ Session: _____ Table No. _____

Quality scale:
 6.00 - Good 7.00 - Very Good 8.00 - Excellent 9.00 - Outstanding
 6.25 7.25 8.25 9.25
 6.50 7.50 8.50 9.50
 6.75 7.75 8.75 9.75

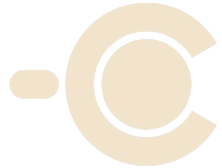
Sample #	Roast Level of Sample	Fragrance/Aroma Score	Flavor Score	Acidity Score	Sweetness Score	Body Score	Clean Cup Score	Overall Score	Total Score
		Score: 7-10 Dry Qualities Break Aftertaste Score: 7-10 Intensity High Low	Score: 7-10 Intensity High Low	Score: 7-10 Intensity High Low	Score: 7-10 Balance	Score: 7-10 Uniformity	Defects (subtract) Taint=2 # cups X Intensity Fault=4		
Notes:									Final Score

 **Specialty Coffee Association Arabica Cupping Form**

Name: _____
 Date: _____
 Table no: _____

Quality Scale
 6.00 - GOOD 7.00 - VERY GOOD 8.00 - EXCELLENT 9.00 - OUTSTANDING
 6.25 7.25 8.25 9.25
 6.50 7.50 8.50 9.50
 6.75 7.75 8.75 9.75

Sample No.	Roast Level of Sample	Fragrance/Aroma Score	Flavor Score	Acidity Score	Body Score	Uniformity Score	Clean Cup Score	Overall Score	Total Score
		Score: 7-10 Dry Qualities Break Aftertaste Score: 7-10 Intensity High Low	Score: 7-10 Intensity High Low	Score: 7-10 Intensity High Low	Score: 7-10 Balance	Score: 7-10 Sweetness	Defects (subtract) Taint=2 # cups X Intensity Fault=4		
Notes:									Final Score



SCA/CQI Cupping Definition

“Coffee cupping is a method used to systematically evaluate the aroma and taste and texture characteristics of a sample of coffee beans.” - Ted Lingle

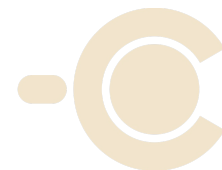
Why should cupping have standardized methodology?

- Standardized language to aid in clear communication between cupper and other members of the supply chain
- Standardized protocol to maintain consistent results
- Standardized calibration and training through CQI - Licensed Q Arabica Grader



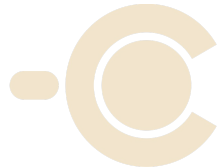
Cupping Standards: Preparation

- Roasting
- Environment
- Coffee Measurements
- Coffee tools



Cupping Standards: Steps of Preparation

1. Weigh coffee in individual cups as whole beans. 5 cups per flight of coffee.
2. Grind individual cups and flush between different coffees. **Evaluate dry fragrance**
3. Pour water (calibrated to 125-175 ppm TDS) into each cup at 200°F (198-203°F / 92-95°C)
4. Steep (allow to brew undisturbed) for 3-5 minutes. Be consistent from flight to flight.
5. Break the crust and gently stir three times. **Evaluate aroma.**
6. Skim the surface to remove bubbles and grinds left floating
7. Continue to steep and let cool to 160°F, about 8-10 mins. Be consistent from flight to flight.
8. Aspirate and taste; rinse, spit, document, and repeat until cooled to 70°F



Cupping Form

Sample No.	Roast Level of Sample	Fragrance/Aroma	Flavor	Acidity	Body	Uniformity	Clear Cup	Overall	Total Score
		Dry _____ Qualities _____ Break _____	Aftertaste _____ _____ _____	Intensity _____ High _____ Low _____	Level _____ Heavy _____ Thin _____	Balance _____ _____ _____	Sweetness _____ _____ _____	Defects (subtract) Taint - 2 _____ Fault - 4 _____	# of cups Intensity _____ X _____ = _____
Notes:									Final Score

Quality Scale

6.00 - GOOD

7.00 - VERY GOOD

8.00 - EXCELLENT

9.00 - OUTSTANDING

6.25

7.25

8.25

9.25

6.50

7.50

8.50

9.50

6.75

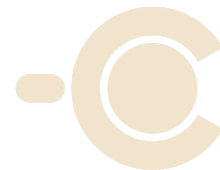
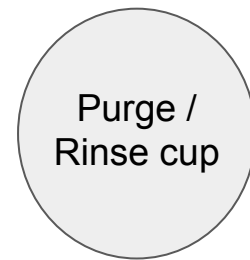
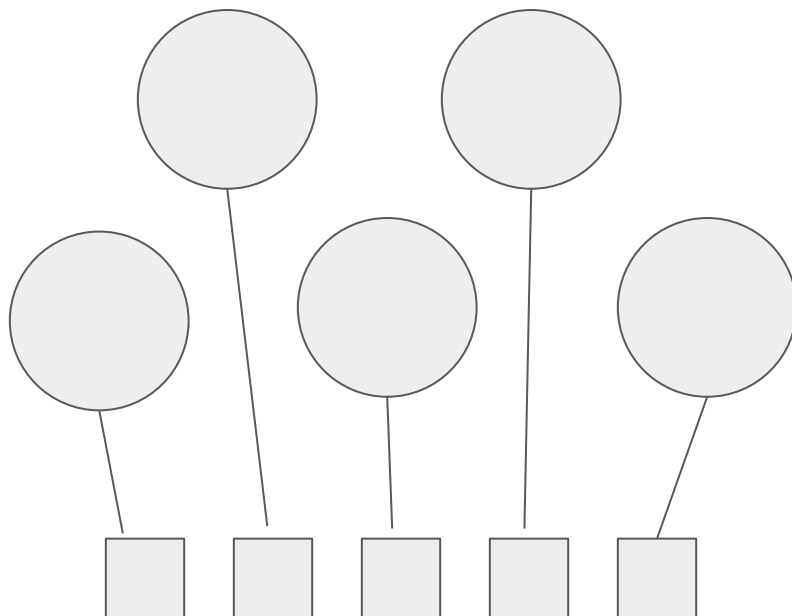
7.75

8.75

9.75

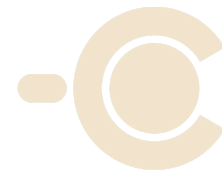
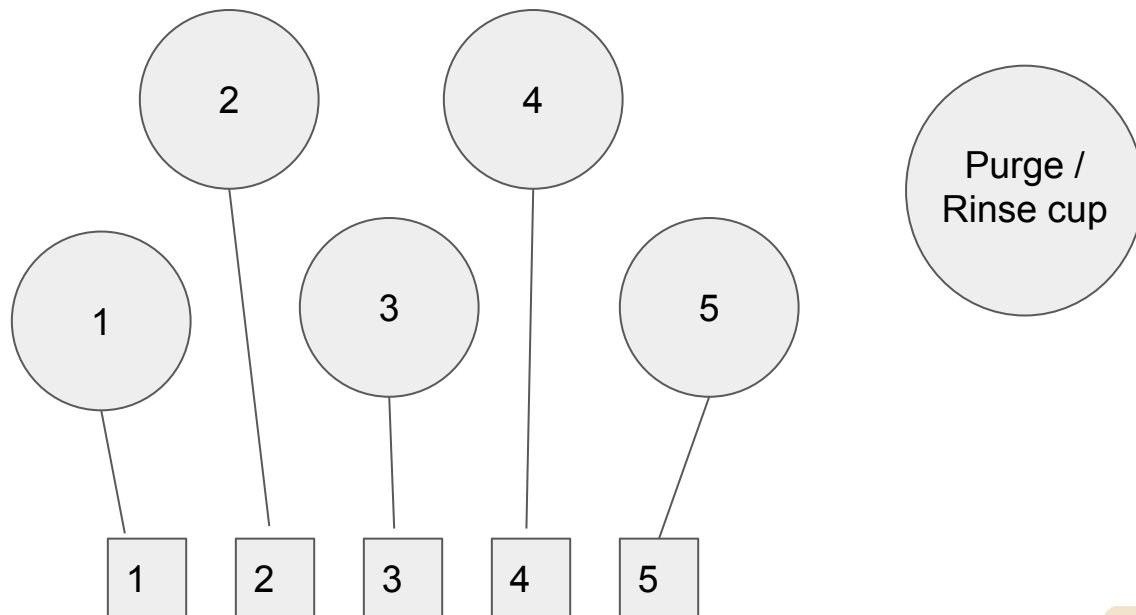
Cupping Standards: Table and Cup Numbers

Uniformity	Score	Clean Cup	Score
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Sweetness	Score
		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	



Cupping Standards: Table and Cup Numbers

Uniformity	Score	Clean Cup	Score
<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	
		Sweetness	Score
		<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	




Cupping Form: Terminology


Defects - Negative or off-flavors that detract from the quality of the coffee. Defects must be classified as a taint or fault and then identified or described. (Ie. ferment, phenolic, mold)


Taint (-2 points per cup)	Fault (-4 points per cup)
An off flavor that is noticable but not overwhelming.	An off flavor usually observed in both aromatic and flavor aspects of the sample. It is overwhelming and may render the sample unpalatable.



Cupping Form: Completed

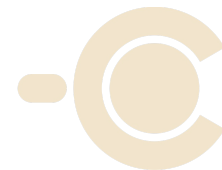
Sample No. 3897	Roast Level of Sample 	Fragrance/Aroma Dry Qualities Break Cacao berry Compote	Flavor 8.25	Acidity 8	Body 8.25	Uniformity 10	Clean Cup 10	Overall 8	8.25
		Aftertaste Sweet 7.75	Intensity High citric phosphoric Low	Level Heavy juicy Thin silky	Balance 8	Sweetness 10	Defects (subtract) Taint - 2 # of cups intensity Fault - 4 <input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/> = <input type="checkbox"/>		
Notes: brown sugar, vanilla Vanilla, fresh Strawberry, rose, lemon, honey, sparkling, tropical fruit								Final Score	8.25

Sample No. 3824	Roast Level of Sample 	Fragrance/Aroma Dry Qualities Break cedar cocoa	Flavor 7.25	Acidity 7.25	Body 7.5	Uniformity 10	Clean Cup 8	Overall 7.25	7.25
		Aftertaste Sweet 7.25	Intensity High citric Low	Level Heavy juicy Thin	Balance 7.25	Sweetness 8	Defects (subtract) Taint - 2 # of cups intensity Fault - 4 <input type="checkbox"/> x <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> = 2		
Notes: grape, paper Bk cup, some fruit, Sweet spice, chocolate, lacks sweetness								Final Score	7.25

Sample No. 3811	Roast Level of Sample 	Fragrance/Aroma Dry Qualities Break nutty sweet chocolate	Flavor 7.75	Acidity 7.75	Body 7.75	Uniformity 10	Clean Cup 10	Overall 7.5	8.5
		Aftertaste Sweet 7.75	Intensity High malic Low	Level Heavy coating Thin	Balance 7.5	Sweetness 10	Defects (subtract) Taint - 2 # of cups intensity Fault - 4 <input type="checkbox"/> x <input type="checkbox"/> = <input type="checkbox"/>		
Notes: dk. chocolate almond extract, bittersweet chocolate, brown sugar, candied apple								Final Score	8.5

Who Uses the System

- Producers
 - Processing decisions
 - Variety selection
- Buyers
 - Standard communication with producers
 - Processors
 - Coops
 - Importers
 - Roasters
- Consumers
 - Marketing



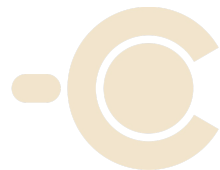
Pros and Cons

Advantages

- Standardized calibration
- Comprehensive CQI program
- Communication through a global language
- Purchase insurance
- Market discovery!
- World Coffee Research - Lexicon

Disadvantages

- Defects' impact on score
- Lengthy process
- Limited by standards of how a coffee *should taste*
- Subjectivity



Thank you!



www.pacificcoffeeresearch.com

Instagram: @PCR.coffee

brit@pacificcoffeeresearch.com

