

SENSORY OVERVIEW OF SOME ROMANIAN MATURATED CHEESES

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E-mail: winedoctorsrl@gmail.com**Abstract**

This article highlights the sensory characteristics of several Romanian matured cheeses that have received gold medals at national and international competitions. The evaluation includes: Năsal cheese—considered one of the oldest matured cheeses in Romania, aged in the natural cave of Țaga; Hochland Praid Atelier—an artisanal creamy semi-hard cheese matured in the Praid salt mine; Gran Sârbova—produced by the Curtea Culoilor Association in Timiș County and aged for over a year; and Horezu matured cheese—crafted in Horezu using Manchego cheese-making techniques from Spain.

Keywords: sensory evaluation, Romanian matured cheeses, Năsal Cheese, Hochland Praid Atelier creamy semi-hard cheese, Gran Sârbova matured cheese, Horezu matured cheese

1. GENERAL CONTEXT OF MATURED CHEESE CONSUMPTION IN ROMANIA

Romania is a country located in the Carpathian-Danubio-Pontic space, and cheese consumption has influences from both the Slavonic side (Ukraine, Republic of Moldova) and the Mediterranean side, recalling here both Turkey and Greece, but also Italy.

Thus, cheese consumption in Romania is dominated by **fresh cheese** made predominantly from cow's milk, using a technology similar to tvorog-type cheeses, but with firmer grains.

In second place in cheese consumption, Romanians prefer **white cheese** also called **telemea**, which we find under the name "teleme" in Bulgaria and Albania, but also very similar to Feta cheese produced in Greece, with the mention that Feta cheese has some slightly different ripening steps than those of telemea cheese. In third place in Romanians' preferences is cashcaval cheese, which is a semi-ripened cheese made with pasta fillata, using a technology similar to Italian Mozzarella cheese.

In the mountain areas of Romania, the so-called **burduf cheese** is made like a mixture of shredded sheep and cow's curd, mixed with salt and matured in natural sheep or cow's stomach skin.

The finished product is one of the oldest matured cheeses made in Romania, which very much respects the characteristics of the area in which it is made and has some special sensory properties, recalling here, the yellow color, if cow's curd predominates and the white color if sheep's curd predominates, the special creaminess, but also a spiciness sensation, which should not bother you.

1.1. Overview of selected Romanian matured cheeses

A unique matured cheese in the world is the **Năsal cheese** made and matured in the Țaga cave, located in central Transylvania.

Although it is a cheese made from pasteurized milk, the terroir characteristics are perfectly borrowed from the maturation in the cave where *Brevibacterium linens* naturally develops and covers the surface of the cheese during maturation.

History says that this cave was used since ancient times by shepherds who wanted to hide their manufactured cheese and when they came back to pick it up they noticed that the resulting cheese was much tastier and more appetizing. In 1830, the landowner who also owned the Țaga cave began to manufacture artisanal Năsal cheese. In 1958, a milk processing factory was built around the cave, equipped with stainless steel machineries, which was renovated 2 years ago.

Immediately after manufacturing, the cheese is transferred to the maturation spaces from Țaga cave where the maturation process begins and can last from 1 to 6 months.

During this time, factory employees wash the surface of each piece of cheese with saline solution to facilitate the development of specific surface bacteria and to obtain the desired ripening characteristics.

Though Năsal cheese has not been entered in contemporary competitions, legend holds that it received a gold medal at the 1867 Universal Exposition in Paris.

Romania's modern matured cheese industry is relatively new—only about 15 years old—but has seen the emergence of producers who recognize the global appreciation for well-matured cheeses.

Domestic consumers, too, have become more receptive to complex sensory profiles.

To date, only a few Romanian cheeses enjoy official recognition, such as Telemeaua de Ibănești (PDO) and Telemeaua de Sibiu (PGI).

As a certified cheese taster—trained through ONAF Italy—I have served on national juries (e.g., FNDA's National Competition of Semi-Matured and Matured Cheeses) and international juries (e.g., Concours International de Lyon, International Frankfurt Trophy).

In this article, I will focus on three hard-aged cheeses that have been awarded either gold or grand gold medals at the 2024 FNDA competition, as well as the World Cheese Awards 2024–2025.

Because the tasting of these cheeses was conducted by myself and other professional tasters during the Revino Fair, Gourmet Edition in 2020, I will also compare the sensory profiles obtained in 2020 and 2024 to observe their evolution.

The three cheeses that will be comparatively analysed in terms of sensory profile between 2020 and 2024 are:

- **Gran Sârbova hard-ripened cheese**, matured for 22 months (Grand Gold Medal at the National Semi-ripened and Matured Cheese Competition 2024)
- **Horezu hard-ripened cheese**, matured for 6 months (World Cheese Award Gold Medal 2024-2025)
- **Hochland Praid Atelier creamy semi-hard cheese**, matured for 2 months (Gold Medal at the National Semi-ripened and Matured Cheese Competition 2024)

Additionally, to further incorporate the historical context of Romanian matured cheese production, I will include the sensory testing of **Năsal cheese**, produced in the Țaga cave. Năsal cheese received the gold medal at the 1867 Universal Exhibition in Paris and was tested by me in 2021 during a visit to its processing facility.

2. GENERAL ASPECTS OF CHEESE CLASSIFICATION

In Romania, cheese classification is based on the *type of raw milk* used in production. Examples include:

- Cow's milk cheeses: Fresh cheese, telemea, matured cheese, Năsal and burduf cheese
- Sheep's milk cheeses: Telemea, matured cheeses, and burduf cheese
- Goat's milk cheeses: Creamy cheeses, telemea, and matured cheeses
- Buffalo's milk cheeses: Telemea
- Mixed cheeses: Cow and goat cheese, cow and sheep cheese, burduf cheese

Romanian cheeses can also be classified based on their *fat content in dry matter* for the finished product:

- Fatty cheeses: > 42% fat (absolute fat content > 25%)
- Semi-fatty cheeses: 20% - 42% fat (absolute fat content > 8% and up to 16%)
- Low-fat or dietetic cheeses: < 20% fat (with some dietetic cheeses reaching as low as 0.5% fat)

Regarding *maturation time*, Romanian cheeses are categorized as follows:

- Fresh cheeses: No maturation—these are the majority of Romanian cheeses
- Semi-ripened cheeses: Maturation between 1 and 6 months
- Ripened cheeses: Maturation of over 6 months, reaching up to 1 year. Some cheeses, like Horezu ripened cheese (which has a 14-month variety) and Gran Sârbova (aged for 22 months), can be matured for even longer.

Classification based on *moisture content* includes:

- Soft cheeses: moisture > 55% (e.g., fresh cow cheeses, creamy goat cheeses)
- Hard cheeses: moisture 54% - 45% (e.g., telemea, Năsal cheese, burduf cheese)
- Semi-hard cheeses: moisture 44% - 38% (matured cheeses over 6 months)
- Hard cheeses: moisture 37% - 30% (matured for over 1 year)

In Romania, extremely hard cheeses (those with moisture content under 30%) are not produced.

3. DESCRIPTION OF THE ANALYZED CHEESES FROM A TECHNOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

3.1. Năsal Cheese

We begin with Năsal cheese, which is recognized as the oldest matured cheese made in Romania. The base ingredient is whole cow's milk, which is pasteurized and cooled before undergoing the enzymatic coagulation process at temperatures between 32°C and 34°C, facilitated by animal rennet. After the curd has formed, it is cut into large cubes (approximately 2–3 cm) to retain the whey in the paste and create a firm, but not hard texture.

The whey drains gradually through self-pressing when the curd is transferred into cylindrical or parallelepiped molds. Once the whey is drained and the cheese molds are formed, they undergo a salting process by immersion in brine (18–22% NaCl) for 12–24 hours, depending on the size of the cheese piece.

Maturation is the most crucial technological step in the production of Năsal cheese. It occurs in the natural underground galleries of the Țaga cave, where a characteristic microflora dominated by *Brevibacterium linens* develops on the cheese's surface. Additionally, strains of *Corynebacterium*, *Micrococcus*, and halophilic yeasts (such as *Debaryomyces hansenii*) are present in the surface microflora. These microorganisms contribute not only to the formation of the characteristic orange rind color and the intense aroma but also to the degradation of proteins and lipids, both in the superficial layer and the depth of the cheese.

The physical-chemical parameters of Năsal cheese are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Physical-chemical parameters of Năsal cheese

Physico-chemical characteristics	Value
Moisture content	48–52%
Fat in dry matter	45–55%
The pH of the cheese	5.3–5.8 at the beginning 6.5 in rind

3.2. Horezu matured cheese

Horezu matured cheese is produced in the town of Horezu, located in Vâlcea County, a mountain area with rich pastures that ensures a high-quality raw cow's milk. This cheese can also be made from sheep's milk sourced from farms on the outskirts of Sibiu, in the Transylvanian Depression. Horezu cheeses are typically matured between 2 and 12 months. Their rinds often display patterns resembling a wheat ear, as they are made following the Manchego cheese technology from Spain's Castilla la Mancha region.

The primary raw material used is sheep's milk, sometimes mixed with cow's milk in varying proportions. The milk is pasteurized and then cooled to a temperature suitable for inoculation with lactic acid bacteria and enzymatic coagulation, which occurs at temperatures between 29°C and 32°C for 30–45 minutes. After coagulation, the curd is cut into small pieces, and then slowly mixed to encourage the removal of whey from the curd particles.

Following the removal of some whey, the curd (along with the remaining whey) is heated to temperatures between 36°C and 40°C under continuous stirring. After heating, the curd is placed into 3–9 kg molds and undergoes a pressing operation to remove additional whey, followed by a 12-hour resting period. After this, the cheese pieces are placed in a brine tank for 2 days, where they are brined in a 20–22% brine solution at a temperature of 12–14°C.

The cheese is then matured in ripening warehouses conditioned to maintain 85–90% relative air humidity and a temperature of 12–14°C. The maturation process typically lasts at least 2 months, though it can extend up to 1 year or more.

The physical-chemical parameters of Horezu matured cheese are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Physical-chemical parameters of Horezu matured cheese

Physico-chemical characteristics	Value
Moisture content	45–50%
Fat in dry matter	45–55%
The pH of the cheese	4.8–5.2

3.3. Gran Sârbova matured cheese

Gran Sârbova is a hard cheese, handmade according to traditional Italian recipes by the Curtea Culoilor Association in the village of Sârbova, Timiș County. The association, founded in 2011 by both Italian and Romanian members of the Carmelite Ecclesiastical Movement, aims to provide housing and vocational training for young women without families.

The raw material used for this cheese is cow's milk collected from two milkings: the evening milking, during which the milk is skimmed, and the morning milking, where the milk is used in its entirety. After pasteurization at 72°C for 20 seconds, lactic ferments and natural calf rennet are added. Following coagulation, the curd is cut, and the resulting mass is heated a second time, as is done with Horezu matured cheese, to aid in whey removal and the formation of a hard paste.

Once formed, the cheese is pressed into molds placed in warm whey, then removed from the molds and matured on wooden boards in a cellar. The maturation period ranges from 4–5 months to 1 year or even more, depending on the desired final product.

The physical-chemical parameters of Gran Sârbova matured cheese are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Physical-chemical parameters of Gran Sârbova matured cheese

Physico-chemical characteristics	Value
Moisture content	35%
Fat in dry matter	48–50%
Protein content	29%

3.4. Hochland Praid Atelier creamy semi-hard cheese

The final cheese discussed is the Praid Atelier creamy semi-hard cheese, produced by Hochland Romania under the Atelier brand name. This cheese is made from pasteurized cow's milk sourced from the Sovata area, and is matured in the Praid salt mine, located in Harghita County, under hygienic conditions compliant with food safety standards.

The manufacturing process of this cheese begins with pasteurized milk, which is inoculated with a special blend of lactic cultures before coagulating under the action of rennet. The formed curd is cut into medium-sized pieces and poured, along with the whey, into cheese wheel molds with a capacity of up to 9 kg.

In these molds, pressing takes place to facilitate the removal of whey. Once removed from the molds, the cheese wheels are immersed in brine to achieve the desired taste and allow the salt to penetrate the cheese. After brining, the cheese undergoes a fanning operation for two days in a controlled temperature and humidity environment. Once stabilized, the cheese pieces are sent to ripen in the Praid salt mine, at a depth of 50 meters underground, where they are matured for at least two months.

The consistent temperature conditions (14–16°C) and low humidity in the salt mine contribute to the cheese's complex olfactory profile, which results in a unique taste and aroma.

The physical-chemical parameters of Hochland Praid Atelier creamy semi-hard cheese are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Physical-chemical parameters of Hochland Praid Atelier creamy semi-hard cheese

Physico-chemical characteristics	Value
Moisture content	35%
Fat in dry matter	47%
Protein content	31%

4. SENSORY EVALUATION METHODS FOR CHEESE

Sensory analysis is an objective technique that uses human evaluators as measuring instruments and has as its general objective the classification and sensory characterization of cheeses in order to offer the consumer a clearly defined product that meets his expectations.

The scoring system of the cheeses presented was with scores from 1 to 10 as recommended by specialists from ONAF Italy, below being presented the scoring criteria:

1/2/3/4 (NEGATIVE) unpleasant sensations, very serious defects.

5 (INSUFFICIENT) not very pleasant sensations, slight defects.

6 (SUFFICIENT) overall sensations without defects but not extraordinary.

7/8 (GOOD) pleasant sensations, normal for the type of cheese, with a discreet or even good complexity.

9 (OPTIMAL) optimal visual appearance, optimal gustatory-olfactory sensations, typicality and complexity.

10 (EXCELLENT) excellent is given when the characteristics reach perfection.

The professional way of tasting cheeses is briefly described below:

- The cheese must be cut into strips and taken BY HAND!
- This way, the tactile, sensory and visual aspects can be evaluated. To evaluate its smell, break the piece of cheese in 2 to release the aromas.

Try a little cheese, taking care to spread it all over the tongue and the roof of the mouth. This will activate all the taste buds.

When evaluating cheeses, the following sensory aspects are taken into account and analysed: 1. EXTERNAL APPEARANCE 2. PASTE APPEARANCE 3. FERMENTATION HOLES 4. UNDER-CRUST – MATURATION – CONSISTENCY 5. SMELL 6. MOUTHFEEL STRUCTURE 7. BALANCE OF SENSATIONS 8. AROMATIC PERSISTENCE 9. TYPICALITY 10. COMPLEXITY

The cheese tasting sheet applied was the one adapted by the National Federation of Authorized Tasters of Romania (FNDA) and is presented in Figure 1:

FIȘA DE EVALUARE BRÂNZETURI – FNDA

TIPUL DE BRÂNZĂ _____

Locul de desfășurare _____ data _____ Proba N° _____

DEGUSTĂTOR _____ COMISIA _____

EVALUAREA VIZUALĂ											
	punctaj	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
ASPECT EXTERIOR											
ASPECTUL PASTEI											
GĂURI – PREZENTA MUCEGAURIOR											
SUB CRUSTĂ – MATURARE – CONSISTENȚĂ											

EVALUARE GUSTATIV-OLFACTIVĂ											
MIROȘ											
STRUCTURA ÎN CAVITATEA BUCALĂ											
ECHILIBRUL GUSTATIV											
PERSISTENȚA AROMATICĂ											
TIPICITATE											
COMPLEXITATE											

TOTAL

NOTE _____

Figure 1. Cheese evaluation sheet (www.fnfa.ro)

5. SENSORY TASTING ASPECTS OF THE EVALUATED CHEESES

5.1. Sensory aspects of Năsal cheese

Năsal cheese, also known as Țaga cheese, is produced in the village of Țaga, Cluj County, in central Transylvania. This cheese belongs to the category of soft cheeses with a washed rind, similar to French cheeses such as Reblochon or Munster, but with a unique character due to the development of the bacterium *Brevibacterium linens* on its surface, directly influenced by the ripening cave's microclimate. The cave provides ideal conditions for ripening: a constant temperature of approximately 14°C and high humidity (rH > 90%).

The *Brevibacterium linens* bacteria are responsible for the cheese's distinct orange rind and its specific, slightly pungent smell. The aroma is earthy, fermented, and slightly sulphurous, which is characteristic of cheeses ripened with washed rind techniques.

From a gustatory perspective, Năsal cheese offers a strong, intense flavor, with a mildly salty taste and notes of nuts and minerality.

These taste characteristics are influenced by the natural environment of the cave, where the cheese is ripened. The texture is creamy and smooth, without any fermentation holes, and the rind is elastic and pale orange in colour. Depending on the ripening time, the cheese may present a darker stripe at the periphery of the rind, contrasting with the lighter centre. This rind variation reflects the gradual fermentation process and the specific conditions of the cave. The cheese will also be observed under the rind, where the longer the maturation time, the thicker the stripe becomes. As a culinary pairing, this cheese pairs excellently with nuts, honey, and dried fruits. For wine pairing, aromatic white wines such as Sauvignon Blanc, Pecorino, or Gewurztraminer are recommended, as well as light and fruity red wines made from Malvasia grapes. A downside of this cheese is related to the frequent changes in ownership or manufacturing rights, which prevented the cheese from obtaining a Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) at the European level.

5.2. Horezu matured cheese

Horezu matured cheese has a crumbly, firm, and compact texture with small, irregular, unevenly distributed eyes. Its taste and smell are intense and slightly sour, with the color ranging from pale yellow to an intense greenish yellow. As the cheese matures, the aroma develops spicy and peppery trigeminal sensations. The rind is washed and decorated with dense wheat-ear-type shapes, and the cheese is covered with black paraffin to preserve its natural appearance and protect it from mould.

Culinary pairing for this cheese is perfect with cranberries, dried figs, and pears. For wine pairing, it is recommended to serve it with a mature Feteasca Neagra.

5.3. Hochland Praid Atelier creamy semi-hard cheese

This variety of matured cheese has a creamy, softer consistency and a light-yellow color with a delicate caramel taste. As it matures, the salty notes of the brine become more pronounced, contributing to a minerality from the presence of excess sodium ions. The aroma and taste also feature notes of wildflowers, as well as fatty undertones of milk and fermented cream.

For culinary pairing, this cheese goes well with nuts, fruits with yellow peels, gooseberries, blackberries, and honey. In terms of wine, it pairs nicely with a barrique Chardonnay or a quality Pinot Noir.

5.4. Gran Sârbova matured cheese

Gran Sârbova matured cheese has a washed rind that is treated to prevent moisture loss and ensure long preservation. The paste is compact and hard, with small, irregular holes distributed unevenly. The area beneath the rind shows signs of long maturation, with a darker colour indicating this. The smell is characterized by walnut, chocolate, caramel, and pineapple, with a slightly sulphurous finish lingering in the aftertaste.

The taste is a harmonious balance of salty, sweet, and acidic flavours. It is recommended to pair this cheese with nuts or sour fruits like blackcurrants or gooseberries, and orange or tangerine jam.

It is perfect paired with a meditation wine, which can usually be a Cabernet Sauvignon matured for at least 1 year in barrels and kept for at least 2 years in the bottle to create its maturation bouquet.

6. SENSORY CHARACTERISTICS OBTAINED BY PROFESSIONAL TASTING

The sensory characteristics of the matured Gran Sârbova cheese obtained at the Revino tasting in 2020 are presented in Table 5 as a whole, and those obtained at the National Semi-Matured and Matured Cheese Tasting Competition organized by the FNDA in 2024 are presented in Table 6 for each taster.

Table 5. Sensory evaluation by parameters for Gran Sârbova matured cheese

Sensory characteristics	Score
External appearance	60
Appearance of the paste	70
Holes-molds	70
Under the crust-ripening-consistency	80
Smell	80
Mounthfeel structure	80
Taste balance	70
Aromatic persistence	80
Typicality	70
Complexity	70
Total	73

From here we can see a rather low score given in 2020 to this matured cheese due to some defects observed by the tasters, namely: white mould on the surface of the cheese, the presence of a non-specific hole in the paste, the presence of mites under the rind, aromatic persistence due to the presence of excess sulphur.

Table 6. Sensory evaluation by tasters for Gran Sârbova matured cheese

Professional taster	National competition score
Taster 1	87
Taster 2	85
Taster 3	91
Taster 4	90
Taster 5	90
Taster 6	89
Taster 7	89
Total	88,71

The graphic representation of the sensory characteristics obtained following the 2020 tasting is presented in Figure 2, from which we can see a unity of all sensory characteristics, in which none stands out or is lacking, which denotes an optimal product from a sensory point of view.

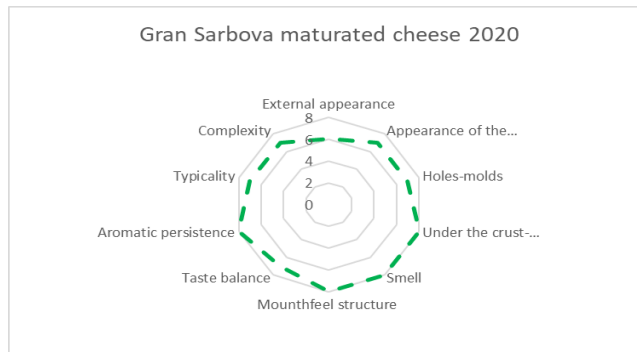


Figure 2. Sensory evaluation parameters for Gran Sârbova matured cheese

For matured Horezu cheese, the sensory characteristics obtained at the Revino tasting in 2020 are presented in Table 7 as a total, and those obtained at the National Semi-Matured and Matured Cheese Tasting Competition organized by FNDA in 2024 are presented in Table 8 for each taster.

Table 7. Sensory evaluation by parameters for Horezu matured cheese

Sensory characteristics	Score
External appearance	8
Appearance of the paste	8
Holes-molds	8
Under the crust-ripening-consistency	8
Smell	8
Mounthfeel structure	8
Taste balance	8
Aromatic persistence	8
Typicality	8
Complexity	9
Total	81

Table 8. Sensory evaluation by tasters for Horezu matured cheese

Professional taster	National competition score
Taster 1	86
Taster 2	84
Taster 3	77
Taster 4	83
Taster 5	81
Taster 6	77
Taster 7	82
Total	81.43

As can be seen from the 2 tables, over time, the sensory characteristics of this matured cheese have remained almost the same. The graphic representation of the sensory characteristics obtained following the 2020 tasting is presented in Figure 3, from which we note that this cheese is distinguished primarily by its aromatic and gustatory complexity, the other characteristics being in balance.



Figure 3. Sensory evaluation parameters for Horezu matured cheese

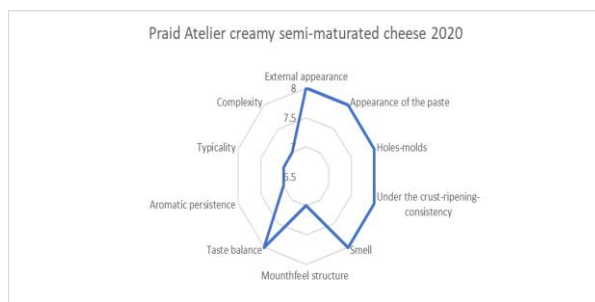


Figure 4. Sensory evaluation parameters for Praid Atelier creamy semi-hard cheese

The sensory characteristics of the Hochland Praid Atelier creamy semi-hard cheese obtained at the Revino tasting in 2020 are presented in Table 9, and those obtained at the National Semi-Matured and Matured Cheese Tasting Contest organized by the FNDA in 2024 are presented in Table 10.

Table 9. Sensory evaluation by parameters for Praid Atelier creamy semi-hard cheese

Sensory characteristics	Score
External appearance	8
Appearance of the paste	8
Holes-molds	8
Under the crust-ripening-consistency	8
Smell	8
Mouthfeel structure	7
Taste balance	8
Aromatic persistence	7
Typicality	7
Complexity	7
Total	76

Table 10. Sensory evaluation by tasters for Praid Atelier creamy semi-hard cheese

Professional taster	National competition score
Taster 1	90
Taster 2	93
Taster 3	75
Taster 4	78
Taster 5	73
Taster 6	73
Taster 7	78
Total	80

From these 2 tables we observe an increase in the sensory qualities for this matured cheese, over the course of the 4 years, an increase that is also observed from the graphic representation of these sensory characteristics in Figure 4 where it can be seen that several of them were scored at a fairly low level.

For Năsal cheese, only the sensory characteristics obtained following professional tasting carried out by the undersigned at the production factory in 2021 are presented in Table 11.

Table 11. Sensory evaluation by parameters for Năsal cheese

Sensory characteristics	Score
External appearance	9
Appearance of the paste	9
Holes-molds	7
Under the crust-ripening-consistency	9
Smell	8
Mouthfeel structure	9
Taste balance	8
Aromatic persistence	9
Typicality	9
Complexity	9
Total	86

As details of the sensory characteristics observed, it can be mention: fine and washed rind, creamy and hole-free paste, pleasant consistency with a nutty and floral scent, creamy and unctuous structure in the mouth, salty, sweet and sour taste well intertwined, with long aromatic persistence and the gustatory typicality specific to the bacterium *Brevibacterium linens*.

The graphic representation of these characteristics of Năsal cheese is made in Figure 5, where their roundness and specific optimal values can be observed.

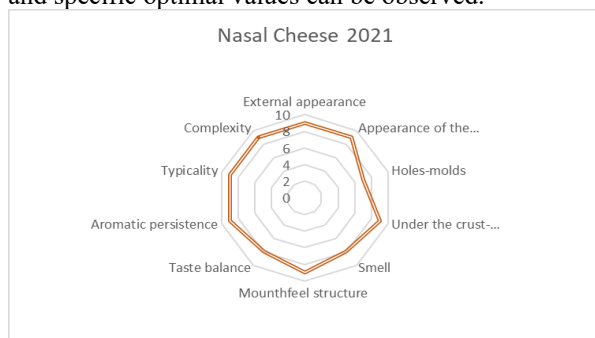


Figure 5. Sensory evaluation parameters for Năsal cheese

For the National Semi-Ripe and Ripened Cheese Competition, a graph was created in which the characteristics of all the cheeses analysed by all the professional tasters participating in the tasting are inserted and appears in Figure 6

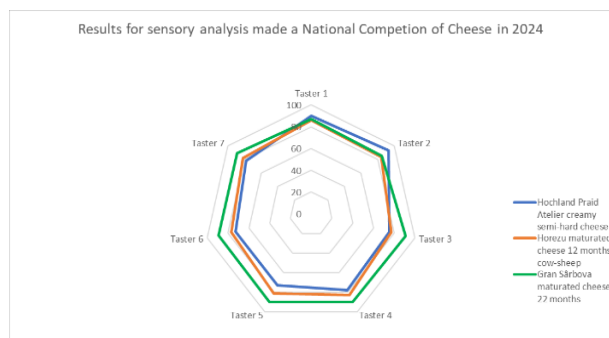


Figure 6. Sensory analysis results from National Competition of Cheese from 2024

7. CONCLUSIONS

The modern production of matured cheeses in Romania has only been established in the last 15 years. During this period, numerous producers have emerged, understanding that matured cheese possesses sensory qualities that are highly appreciated by consumers globally.

From the sensory analysis of the presented cheeses, a qualitative improvement in their sensory characteristics is evident. This reflects the Romanian industry's progress in refining production technologies and maturation methods. In particular, this development has been driven by the extended maturation periods, which have allowed cheeses to reach their specific sensory characteristics. Additionally, producers have found optimal solutions to maintain the temperature and humidity conditions necessary for the development of the microflora essential to each type of cheese.

However, many Romanian producers still market cheeses matured for only 1-2 months. For many of these cheeses, the biochemical processes of proteolysis and lipolysis have not been fully completed. Consequently, these cheeses have not yet reached their optimal sensory qualities, filling the market with products that lack the desired characteristics.

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