

# Judging Quality

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<https://thechocolatelifelife.com/thechocolatelifelife-live/>  
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- A basket of attributes
- Each of us has our own collection of attributes
- Each of us values common attributes differently

# What is Quality?

Technical evaluations •  
Experiential observations - Is (this) well-made? •

# Objective Measures

Most approaches to judging are descriptive:

- What are the flavors and aromas I experience?
- How do I experience those flavors and aromas?
- *Do I like it?*
- *Is it worthy of even being considered for an award?*

# Subjective Measures

- Ethical certifications •
- Production methodology certifications •
- Dietary preferences •
- Conspiracy theories •

# Subjective Measures

How we characterize our opinions influences others' perceptions •

# Observation

*Judging quality* is primarily an individual, subjective, process  
that has *some* objective aspects

Know as much as you can about the biases of judges/reviewers

# Conclusions

- Cocoa of Excellence •
- International Chocolate Awards •
- Academy of Chocolate Awards •
- NW Chocolate Festival •
- International Chocolate Salon/Taste TV •
- AVPA •
- Coupe du Monde, National/World Pastry Team Championships •
- Good Taste Awards, Good Food Awards •

# Awards Competitions

*My association with awards programs*

- National/World Pastry Team Championships •
- Cocoa of Excellence •
- International Chocolate Awards •
- Good Food Awards •
- Next Generation Chocolatier •

Disclaimer

- Are the actual judging and scoring methodologies public?
- How complete is the public disclosure about the judges?
- How transparent are the organizations about reporting data?
- Do the organizers *publicly* thank the judges?

# Judging Questions

my pet peeves

Awards organizers are sitting on a treasure trove of data about the industry and do not appear to be doing anything that benefits the industry with that data other than hand out awards

# Data hoarding

Awards organizers do very little to promote the awards themselves and the winners

It is up to entrants to explain why the awards matter and to individually figure out how to monetize them

# No promotional support

- To the public? •
- To the industry? •
- To the winners? •

# What Do Awards *Mean*?



*Stepping  
Back*

*Unintended Consequences •*

# Are the Awards Dangerous?

What would an “ideal competition” even look like? •  
Is there room for such a program? •

# The Future of Awards