SENSORY CHARACTERIZATION OF HONEY FROM STINGLESS BEES


The honey from stingless bees is a product with functional properties and differentiated sensory characteristics, which vary according to bee species, flora apiarian and maturation. This study aimed to assess the overall acceptance, intensity of attributes and purchase intention of honey from Northeastern Brazil produced by bee species: Jandaíra (*Melipona subnitida* Ducke), Uruçu (*M. scutellaris* Latrelle) and Cupira (*Partamona helleri* Friese). The acceptance (color, flavor and aroma) and purchase intention tests were conducted with 57 untrained panelists using a structured hedonic scale of 9 and 5 points, respectively. The evaluation of the intensity of attributes was carried out with 12 trained panelists. Scale from 0 to 10 was applied, where 0 corresponds to *none* and 10 to *very intense*. Data were analyzed by ANOVA and Tukey tests (*p* <0.05). Honey from Uruçu bee showed greater acceptance for flavor (7.52) and honey from Jandaíra bee for odor (7.14) and color (7.82), differing from the others. In the test of intensity of attributes, the highest averages for odor (7.0), color (7.3), flavor (6.8), viscosity (6.3) and acidity (4.8) were achieved by the honey from Jandaíra bee. However, acceptance (8.0) and purchase intention (44.5%) were higher for honey from Uruçu bee, showing that the flavor intensity influences the overall acceptance.