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Beta Version of the Coffee Value Assessment Protocol and Forms Unveiled at Re:co Symposium

April 20, 2023 — The Specialty Coffee Association (SCA) has unveiled the beta version of the Coffee Value Assessment Protocol and Form at Re:co Symposium in Portland, Oregon. This output is part of the years' long endeavor to evolve the tool the industry uses to discover value in coffee through a complete, "high-resolution" picture of a specific coffee across four assessment types.

Earlier today, SCA CEO Yannis Apostolopoulos formally introduced the beta version of the SCA Coffee Value Assessment on the Re:co Symposium stage, a thought leadership event that takes place prior to the Specialty Coffee Expo in Portland, Oregon. Yannis also unveiled an Early Adopter program designed to help the SCA refine the system's protocol and forms through community feedback before it moves through the SCA's standards development procedures.

On the Re:co stage, Yannis stated, "The long-term vision for the SCA's Coffee Value Assessment is more than the beta version of the protocol and forms you'll see here in Portland. There are really two paradigm shifts happening here: there's the paradigm shift of having a holistic record of what could make a coffee valuable to someone, somewhere. But there's also the paradigm shift of taking all these new, high-resolution pictures that the protocol and these forms capture, and leveraging them to create a global database of what is valued, where, and by whom. It's about addressing the information asymmetry that resulted in the dichotomy of price-makers and price-takers in our industry by making that database accessible to *everyone*."

Currently in its beta version, the SCA Coffee Value Assessment allows coffee experts to inventory the valuable attributes of a coffee in alignment with the [SCA's new definition of specialty coffee](#). Once the Coffee Value Assessment exits its beta testing, users will be able to record information about coffees across four different *assessment types—physical, extrinsic, affective, and descriptive*. This approach reflects best practice in sensory and consumer science, making it compatible with scientific research for the first time.

Tools in the current beta version enable cuppers to evaluate and record a coffee's *sensory* attributes by separating the objective description of a coffee's flavor profile (called a *descriptive* assessment) from the taster's impression of quality (called an *affective* assessment). The tools employing the *physical* and *extrinsic* assessment types are still in research and development.

Speaking of the SCA's commitment to coffee producers, Yannis added, "The SCA is committed to ensuring this tool is accessible to coffee producers and producing organizations all over the world. Without them, there would be no specialty coffee and none of this is worth doing if we cannot make specialty coffee a thriving, equitable, and sustainable activity for all."

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Re:co participants will have the opportunity to apply the new assessment system during a dedicated seminar track and sensory experiences. There will also be many additional opportunities to interact with the new assessment system at the Specialty Coffee Expo later this week. View the SCA Coffee Value Assessment activations taking place at Expo at coffeexpo.org/value-assessment

Opportunities to learn more, beta-test the forms, or apply to take part in the Early Adopter program can be found at sca.coffee/value-assessment.

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[Photos of SCA CEO Yannis Apostolopoulos and the Coffee Value Assessment Protocol and Forms at Re:Co Symposium](#)

About the SCA Coffee Value Assessment System (CVA)

After three years of research and development, the SCA is evolving the tool the global industry uses to discover value in coffee. The Coffee Value Assessment System offers a complete, “high-resolution” picture of a specific coffee across four assessment types, completed separately to avoid bias—and it will soon be available to “beta test” as a part of an early-adopter program, launching at the SCA’s [Specialty Coffee Expo](#) in Portland, OR.

Driven by the SCA’s sustainability agenda, which emphasizes equitable value distribution throughout the supply chain, the system aspires to be a powerful tool to help measure and facilitate value assessment and distribution. It simultaneously integrates advances in sensory and coffee science, making it compatible with scientific research for the first time, as well as learnings from a large user-perception research project conducted with the specialty coffee community.

Despite its broad reach within the coffee sector, the 2004 SCA cupping system had not been thoroughly investigated or substantially updated since its creation—and the SCA is committed to improving its tools to improve market access and equity throughout the specialty coffee supply chain. The new Coffee Value Assessment System, an evolution of the 2004 SCA Cupping and Grading Protocol guided by the results of a user perception survey of 1600 cuppers worldwide, has been in testing with groups of cuppers in Europe, Latin America, and the US in 2022. Learn more at sca.coffee/value-assessment.

About Re:co Symposium

Re:co is a unique, experiential gathering of the specialty coffee industry designed to explore the emerging future so that we may effectively—and collectively—respond to its opportunities. Taking place prior to the Specialty Coffee Expo, April 19-20, at the Oregon Convention Center, Re:co is an immersive in-person experience featuring plenary talks, seminars, sensory experiences, and networking opportunities, that will spark intellectual & personal connections to help you respond to specialty coffee’s emerging future.

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About the Specialty Coffee Association (SCA)

The SCA is a trade association built on foundations of openness, inclusivity, and the power of shared knowledge. The SCA's purpose is to foster global coffee communities to support activities to make coffee a more sustainable, equitable, and thriving activity for the whole value chain. The SCA acts as a unifying force within the specialty coffee industry and works to make coffee better by raising standards worldwide through a collaborative and progressive approach. Dedicated to building an industry that is fair, sustainable, and nurturing for all, the SCA draws on years of insights and inspiration from the specialty coffee community. Learn more at sca.coffee.

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