

Geographical Indications in Horticulture

¹Akshay Mehta*, ²Alkesh Yadav and ²Aman Kumar

¹Department of Horticulture, Maharana Pratap Horticultural University, Karnal

²Department of Horticulture, CCS Haryana Agricultural University, Hisar

*Corresponding Author: akshayrock431@gmail.com

Geographical Indication (GI) is a form of intellectual property that signifies a product's specific geographical origin, possessing qualities, reputation, or characteristics attributable to that location. A Geographical Indication (GI) is a symbol affixed to products linked to a distinct geographical source, representing their unique qualities or reputation derived from that specific place. It acts as a certification of authenticity and quality, ensuring consumers associate the product with its unique origin. GI rights protect traditional knowledge and local communities, promoting economic growth and fair trade. The registration of a GI provides legal protection, preventing unauthorized use of the geographical name on similar products. This system aids in preserving cultural heritage, fostering rural development, and encouraging sustainable production practices tied to specific regions, thus adding significant value to regional economies.

Some examples of goods are - Darjeeling Tea, Alphonso Mango, Tezpur Litchi, Kachai Lemon, Tripura Queen Pineapple, Khasi Mandarin, Jalgaon Banana, Nashik Grapes, Mahabaleshwar Strawberry, Solapur Pomegranate etc.

What can be Geographical Indications?

GI may be Agricultural product (Darjeeling Tea), Manufactured product (Kolhapuri Chappal), Food stuff (Bikaneri Bhujia), Natural product (Makrana Marble), Wine & Spirit Drink (Feni) and Handicraft (Muga Silk of Assam).

Registration of GI products

The registration and management fall under the purview of the Geographical Indications Registry as stipulated in the GI of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act of 1999. This registry is situated in Chennai. Individuals engaged in the production, processing, packaging, or trading of agricultural commodities, natural goods, handicrafts, or industrial

products have the eligibility to apply for registration. Successful GI registration grants exclusive rights to the registered proprietor and authorized users to safeguard the GI on the designated goods. This market exclusivity empowers producers to regulate prices, potentially charging premiums and bolstering profits. Studies indicate that 80% of consumers are willing to pay 20-30% more for GI products, believing them to possess superior qualities compared to other goods.

Benefits of GI

Higher market price and demand: Profitability hinges on factors like product reputation, quality, market size, competition level, consumer perception, and demand elasticity. Geographical indications create a valuable avenue for commanding premium prices in the market. Research demonstrates that consumers are prepared to pay a premium for products guaranteed by their geographical origin.

Remunerative price for producers: Leveraging geographical indications can result in increased profits in international markets, and creating strong agricultural brands can give farmers a competitive edge in global markets driven by consumer preferences.

Quality products for consumers: Geographical indications ensure that consumers access high-quality products with desired characteristics, shielding them from deceptive practices. The distinctive qualities of the product establish a favorable perception among consumers, essentially transforming the product into a recognized brand for them.

Market penetration: An established and reputable brand facilitates marketers in entering new markets effortlessly. Positive feedback and endorsement from devoted customers further aid in reaching and engaging with new customer bases.

Traditional knowledge: Traditional knowledge encompasses the insights, innovations, and customs of

indigenous communities and local people. Geographical indication safeguards against the erosion of traditional ways of life, unauthorized use, and exploitation of this knowledge without fair benefit-sharing.

Improve tourism industry: Geographical indications (GI's) represent distinct products originating from specific defined regions. The cultivation or manufacturing processes involved can serve as a tourist attraction, drawing visitors to witness these unique processes. Handicrafts and handlooms, known for their distinct characteristics, are inherently appealing to tourists. Regions promoting their GI's can entice tourists to savor special GI foods or

beverages and purchase unique products with enticing discounts, thereby bolstering market potential and increasing export earnings.

Rural development: Preserving Geographical Indications (GIs) holds great importance for rural development, acknowledging our exceptional biodiversity and traditional knowledge. GIs play a role in generating employment within local communities, curbing rural migration and encouraging rural tourism.

Legal Protection: This led to a surge in the export of Indian geographical indications, ensuring legal protection and paving the way for seeking similar safeguards in other WTO member nations.

* * * * *