



June 11, 2003: What is the producers' message?

Geographical indications are important for producers

Geographical indications (GIs) designate products originating in a particular region or country which have a unique character due to their particular qualities and production methods. There are thousands of producers around the world, often living in disadvantaged regions, who depend on the reputation of their GI products.

Geographical indications are poorly protected

Geographical indications are misused far too often to designate products which have nothing to do with the original product from the traditional zone of production simply because geographical indications are poorly protected at the international level.

Usurpation is economically detrimental to tradition-based producers

Usurpation causes harm to traditional producers throughout the world because it prevents them from claiming their position on the world market. To illustrate, when coffee which is produced outside the Antigua region but which is nonetheless labeled « Antigua Coffee » is on the market, the value of the true Antigua coffee traditionally produced in Guatemala goes down with economic repercussions for the producers.

Producers are demanding better protection for geographical indications

The producers are demanding that the protection of geographical indications be reinforced through the ongoing WTO negotiations (extension of the protection granted in Article 23 of the TRIPS Agreement to ALL products and establishment of a multilateral registry for geographical indications).

The producers also are demanding that the technical cooperation activities be expanded so that producers in all countries have the means to put a mechanism for geographical indication in place.

International mobilization

Producers throughout the world are convinced of the importance of this issue and have joined together to create ORIGIN, an international network. Through this network, they hope to communicate their concerns to the international press and to present a united front in their demand that WTO Agreements provide for a better protection of geographical indications.