

Brussels, 13/05/2020

## oriGIn EU contribution to the Annual Work Programme for 2021 concerning promotion of agricultural products

**oriGIn EU is the European branch of the Geographical Indications (GIs) global alliance (<https://www.origin-gi.com>).** oriGIn EU represents both individual GIs (like Bayerisches bier, Irish Whiskey, Champagne, Parma Ham...), as well as national associations of specific sectors, such as CNAOL (French GIs cheeses), FEDERDOC (Italian GIs wines), origen España and oriGIn Portugal (Portuguese GIs agricultural products).

Within the EU, the GIs sector makes a tremendous contribution to the economy at the local, national and regional level. The GIs sector represents a sales value of more than €75 billion, according to a study published on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2020 and some 15.5% of total EU food and drink exports<sup>1</sup>.

On 20<sup>th</sup> of April, the European Commission also published its [Short term outlook for EU agricultural market in 2020](#). It is clear that the outbreak of the coronavirus brings about unprecedented challenges for the EU agri-food sector as food demand has rapidly changed since the beginning of the crisis. **High-value products, such as quality GI meat products, wines and specialty cheeses are seeing a significant decrease in consumption and are the most affected by the pandemic.** This is due to several factors, such as stockpiling behaviour as well as the closure of restaurants, bars and hotels and the loss of export opportunities are having a direct impact on GI producers.

**At a time where GIs, and the variety of economic actors that thrive around them, face an unprecedented crisis because of the COVID19 outbreak, on top of several uncertainties, such as the ones related to “Brexit” and to the US retaliatory tariffs, we need more than ever the support of the European Commission to promote our products in the internal market and in third countries.**

### **1. Internal market**

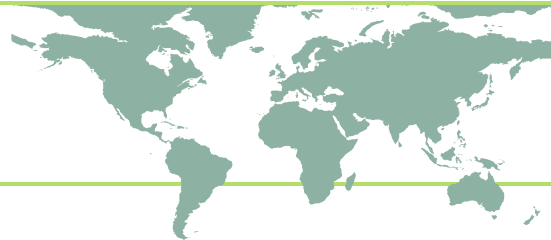
The uncertainty generated by the pandemic is affecting consumers patterns and disrupting trade flows.

We therefore believe this call should take into consideration the European GIs sector needs and strongly prioritise the promotion of EU quality scheme both in domestic markets and the internal market. A preliminary analysis would suggest focussing the tender on national markets and the EU market, broadening/changing the activities covered (exploring the possibility for producers to get involved), providing simplified administrative procedures, in particular for small GIs groups.

### **We therefore encourage the European Commission to:**

- Keep programmes on EU quality schemes as top priority, both for simple and multi programmes;
- Increase funds available for these topics to allow producers to mitigate the damages of the COVID outbreak;
- Simplify the administrative procedures for small GIs groups

<sup>1</sup> Study on economic value of EU quality schemes, geographical indications (GIs) and traditional specialities guaranteed (TSGs), 2020. AND-International, Directorate-General for Agriculture and Rural Development (European Commission), ECORYS



## 2. Third countries

As the pandemic is global and in constant evolution, it will be important to allow for flexibilities in the use of the aid (ex. Change of action) for the promotion of EU quality schemes in third countries to ensure that operations and activities will still be eligible for financial support. It would be interesting to allow for similar flexibilities which were introduced in the past months by the European Commission in the framework of the Wine National Support Programme (WNSP) in the horizontal promotion policy to further help beneficiaries.

In addition, it is clear that there should be an increase of funds available for such activities, and a need to target in particular foreign markets that are well established as the global situation will make it difficult to explore new market opportunities.

The focus should be on rebooting and consolidating markets that have seen recent strong growth. It is also crucial to support EU producers so that they do not lose their market shares on the long-term despite the negative effects the COVID-19 crisis. EU GIs producers will also need support to face existing issues faced by the sector, namely the 25% *ad valorem* US tariffs and continued uncertainties concerning “Brexit”.

### **We therefore encourage the European Commission to:**

- Include the following third countries as priorities for the 2021 AWP: United Kingdom, United States, Canada, China, South Korea and Japan.
- Increase funding available for multi programmes in third countries for programmes on EU quality scheme
- Introduce a specific topic for simple programmes in third countries on “Information provision and promotion programmes on EU GIs”, as it was done for beef and veal in the 2020 AWP.
- Plan an “own initiative” promotion campaign regarding GIs in the USA to mitigate the impact of the 25% *ad valorem* tariffs (through communication or promotion seminars, storytelling, masterclasses, targeting amongst other, the Horeca sector)