

**THE GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION OF GOODS
(REGISTRATION & PROTECTION) ACT, 1999**

Received Rs. 5000 in cash
Cheque/D.D. No. on 27/12/06
vide entry no. 0199 in the
register of valuables
Cashier
27/12/06
D.D.O.

(To be filled in triplicate along with the Statement of case accompanied by five additional representations of the Geographical Indication. One representation to be fixed within the space and five others to be send separately.)

FORM GI-1

Application for registration of a geographical indication in Part A of the register.

Section 11(1), Rule 23 (2)

1. Application is hereby made by SPICES BOARD for registration in Part A of the Register of the accompanying geographical indication furnishing the following particulars:-

A. Name of the Applicant.

SPICES BOARD- A Commodity Board and Agency under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

B. Address

SPICES BOARD, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, SUGANDHA BHAVAN, N.H Bye-Pass, P.B. No.2277, Palarivattom, Cochin 25

C. List of association of persons/ producers /organization/ authority

The members and constituents of the SPICES BOARD

D. Type of goods

Variety of spices in Class 30

E. Specification

Spices – COORG GREEN CARDAMOM

S. Kannan

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23/12/06

F. Name of the Geographical Indication and particulars.

COORG GREEN CARDAMOM

The Specification originates from the definite territory in Coorg District, Karnataka State. Spices hold a very prominent position not only in Indian history but in World history as well. Many wars fought, many nations discovered, many ailments cured—all in the name of spices. India is termed as the land of spices and South-India including Karnataka the abode. The present state of Karnataka and the adjoining regions of the Western Ghats are rated as the prime producers of the worlds most wanted spices. Coorg or otherwise called Mercara is a personal pride of Karnataka. Coorg in itself due to its topography, climate, soil culture and its associated labour brings in itself and with it a separate stamp of uniqueness. Spice has been Coorgs lifeblood for the millennia and one of the crops that has drawn traders from all over the world and has contributed immensely to foreign exchange is *Cardamom, the queen of spices*. It is indeed the gift of nature coupled with unique climate and efficient labour that has transformed this small but productive land of Coorg into one of the abodes of the the queen of spices (cardamom). COORG GREEN CARDAMOM is the traditional grade of the spice cardamom, in other words it is a form in which a particular grade of cardamom of a particular quality is introduced into the international market, upholding a blend of certain unique characteristics and thereby constituting one of the best varieties of the crop. The size, colour and chemical constituents of this grade of cardamom put itself in a different class when compared to the others. The applicant is a Commodity Board under the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, Government of India, to monitor and develop the Indian spice trade and to regulate and encourage

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spice trade and to regulate and encourage the export of authentic quality cardamom from India. It is a certifying authority for indigenous quality cardamom from various producers. This particular Geographical Indication identifies, asserts and signifies the unique grade of cardamom namely COORG GREEN CARDAMOM.

Quality has been the tradition and benchmark of Indian spice trade and in order to maintain this tradition and also to stay in the modern day race, certain grade specifications were drawn up on the basis of the age old and familiar trade names. COORG GREEN cardamom is one among the oldest and the most popular, referring in particular to a special variety of cardamom grown in Coorg. The grade COORG GREEN, since olden times in itself, acclaims by its mere name certain quality, aroma, flavour and other attributes specific for this brand in the minds of people. This application is now sought for to check the excessive adulteration, incessant and irrational use, misuse and depiction of the name COORG GREEN in relation to various spurious and substandard cardamom being exported and sold within, thereby misleading the trade and the public at large as to the origin and quality of these goods. If protection is not sought even now, the brand in itself with its synonym Coorg which was and is even now to some extent inseparable will stand erased thereby effecting the cardamom trade and in turn the skilled cultivators. Thus the picture is quite clear that owing to the abominable adulteration and exploitation this variety along with its geographical source which was once considered inseparable and unique is slowly parting its ways from the minds of people as well as in the arene of trade. COORG GREEN is one among the most important

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type of cardamom grown and exported from India accounting for a fair amount of trade and foreign exchange.

Since cardamom and other spices account for over a quarter of the worlds trade, the applicant is making a consistent effort to protect the true quality of COORG GREEN CARDAMOM, thereby boosting the export of the same and in turn promoting the economic prosperity of the producers.

G. Description of the goods:

a. What is cardamom?

Cardamom belongs to the genus *Elettaria*, and species *Cardamomom* (Matton). The genus name is derived from the Tamil root *Elettari*, meaning cardamom seeds. The genus belong to the natural order Scitaminae, family Zingiberaceae under monocotyledons with diploid chromosome number, $2n=48$. The genus consists of about six species. *E. Cardamom Maton* or true cardamom occurs in South India and it is the only economically important species. Cardamom is the unripened fruit of the perennial *Elettaria Cardamomom*. Enclosed in the fruit pods are, dry, brown, aromatic seeds which are slightly pungent to taste.

(b) Varieties of cardamom:

The genus consists of about six species only. The Srilankan and the Malaysian variety being two among others. In India other than the

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true cardamom there exists another form of cardamom termed as *Amomum Subulatum* or large cardamom found mainly in Sikkim & Nepal. This form of cardamom has very little commercial value. However *E. Cardamom Maton* exhibits considerable variation under cultivation. In South India there exist mainly three varieties, Malabar (the variety that constitutes COORG GREEN), Mysore and Vazhukka (a hybrid of the above varieties).

(c) COORG GREEN?

This is a grade name that asserts quality. The cardamom in this grade is of certain unique quality and also depicts the geographical uniqueness of the place where it is grown. The novelty in quality is attributable to the geography of its place of origin, the mode of cultivation and the labour. The grade COORG GREEN cardamom today includes the variety of cardamom traditionally grown and produced in Coorg and in parts of Southern India, but particularly and traditionally speaking it mainly includes the cardamom of "Malabar" category grown in Coorg. This grade is unique in its colour, size, chemical constituents and oil content. COORG GREEN cardamom shall be the dried capsule of *Elletaria Cardamom* with a colour ranging from greenish to brown with global shape skin ribbed or smooth and pedicels separated. The superiority of cardamom is due to their volatile oil contents. Percentage of cardamom seeds is positively co-related with volatile oil on dry seed basis, whereas percentage of husk to volatile oil is negatively correlated. The Malabar variety constituting COORG GREEN too is no exception. It has the major components of cardamom oil i.e., 1,8- cineole and α -terpinyl acetate in abundance. Detailed studies on volatile oil reveal that, var. Malabar contains high percentage of 1,8- cineole compared to other

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varieties thereby bringing in a fresh campharaceous cool odour with a diffusive taste and a refreshing effect. However the quantity of α -terpinyl acetate is comparable. The identity of this brand is interwoven with the geographical name Coorg. It is because the climate, soil content, the topography and the labour contribute immensely to give shape to this brand of carddamom possessing the required specifications and qualities. The underlying factor is that the geography of origin coupled with the labour contributes such that that these attributes has subsequently constituted the international standards too. Thus upon the quality and region of origin, the name COORG GREEN which still now holds prominence is a trademark and an internationally accepted grade on its own. Eventhough in general this grade includes all cardamom grown in South-India which meets the required standard, in particular it is the Malabar variety grown in Coorg. It is the sole contribution of Coorg that gave birth to this particular standard and Coorg still holds reminiscence of the same.

H. Geographical area of production and map:

COORG GREEN Cardamom is a stamp of quality attributable to the topography, soil, climate and labour of Coorg. It is the traits of this locale that lead to the identification of a superior brand of cardamom which turned out to be the brand ambassador of cardamom trade. Thus the origin of this brand is exclusively attributable to the locales and the accompanying traits of Coorg. The map of the geographical area is produced herewith.

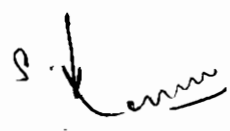
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I. Proof of origin:

Cardamom-"Ela" has been used as a spice in India since pre historic times. Cardamom is one of the most exotic, flamboyant and highly priced specie of spice which has an origin in the Western Ghats and a history as old as human civilization. The word cardamom vernacularly nomenclatured as Elattari and its use from the ancient time indicated the existence and presence of this spice since time immemorial. Further the presence of the word Ela in the Sanskrit scriptures crystallizes its antecedence. Almost all ancient as well as modern researches, documents, commentaries and such other works point towards the Western Ghats as the epicenter of cardamom. The present State of Karnataka accounts for over 30% of the cardamom produce ,second to Kerala, then and now.

It is said that, nothing is more interesting than sketching the history of spices as it brings in the world history itself. The ancient scriptures of *Arthashastra* (3rd century), the *Taitreya Samhita* (of the later Vedic period-3000BC), the *Charaka Samhita* (Ayurveda Text) *Susrutha Samhita* (1400-600 BC) among others mentions the importance of cardamom as a spice and as a medicine. The spice encyclopedia reveals that as early as in the 4th century BC, cardamom was used in India as a medical herb and the Greeks and Romans imported it as a digestive aid. The Babylonians and Assyrians were well informed of the medicinal values of cardamom. It was an article of Greek trade during the 4th century BC and it was listed among the Indian spices liable to duty in Alexandria. The spice history and its relation to India can be sketched in different phases. During 200 BC -



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1200 the Romans started sailing from Egypt to India to trade spices. In between 1200 to 1500 Europeans started exploring passages to the East Indies. During the 15th - 17th centuries the world witnessed wars for control of the spice trade. The Portuguese under Vasco-Da-Gama opened the gateway for spice trade from the west coast. Many more invaders followed. Portugal, England, Holland and others fought for monopoly. In 1658 the Dutch gained control and established exclusive trading rights from Malabar port. During the 16th -18th century the English exploration began. First the Portuguese then the Dutch and French and at last the English. In 1780 the Dutch and English fought a war over the spice trade which the Dutch lost. All these incidents point towards the common fact that India was the abode of spices. Virtually all the cardamom that existed in the ancient era travelled from India and particularly from the southern belt including Karnataka. During that time the Arabs were the major traders. They were successful in trading of spices to the Mediterranean with out revealing the source of the spice. Cardamom too was no exception and even historians like Pliny thought that Cardamom originated in Arabia. However the curtains on the monopoly of the Arab trade were brought down by the discovery of sea route to India and by the landing of Portuguese.

Southern India and in particular Karnataka has been a prosperous land by all means since ancient time. Kalidasa's '*Raghuvamsam*' describes the Pandya Empire that ruled South-India as a prosperous one as it was bestowed in abundance with cardamom and other spices. Linchosten in his *Journal of Indian Travels* (1596) describes two forms of cardamoms being used in South India. The writings of Ludlow (then Asst. Conservator of Forests) and Watt (1872) also describes briefly about the cardamom cultivation in South- India. According to Ridley(1912), this

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system of cardamom collection from naturally growing plants continued till 1803 at least, but in later years the demand became too large and large scale organised cultivation was started in India. It is also revealed that, in the forest lands owned by the British Government cardamom was a miscellaneous produce, while in Coorg, forest lands were leased out to private individuals for cardamom cultivation.

In the post independent era, in 1963, to preserve, protect and enhance cardamom cultivation a 'Cardamom Development and Marketing Advisory Committee' was constituted. Subsequently in 1966 the Cardamom Board was formed and later in 1987 accepting a broader vision the board was conferred a wider ambit and was named as the Spices Board.

No other spice anywhere in this world might have got such protection and support as cardamom in South- India. Cardamom is such an exotic spice that during the period of 1000 BC it was said that a hand full of cardamom worth as much as a poor mans early wages. History acclaims the origin and quality of cardamom to South- India and also to Karnataka. In Karnataka Coorg is the prime producer of cardamom. Although Chikmagalur and Hassan districts also grow cardamom, it is Coorg that stands supreme both qualitatively and quantitatively. Glorifying the facts today we have one of the best as well as one among the most wanted quality of Green Cardamom in COORG GREEN. In the modern day blind race to succeed none is bothered about quality and standard. Thus it becomes very necessary to accord protection to the existing standards.

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I. Method of production

Cardamom is a shade loving crop. It is grown extensively in the hilly regions of South India, Coorg being one of the prominent destinations, at elevations of 800 – 1300 m. above mean sea level as an under crop in forest lands. The cardamom growing regions lie within 8° and 30° N latitudes and 75° and 78° 30' E longitudes. A warm and humid climate, loamy soils rich in organic matter, with adequate moisture and well distributed rain fall are certain basic earthly standards pre requisite for good cultivation of cardamom. The land is prepared by removing under growths and then thinning out forest trees to give the much required shades. In the Coorg system of planting firstly small patches of forest land, a quarter- one sixth hectare in area, are cleared and planted with cardamom. Care is taken in selecting plots that face north or north-east for ensuring adequate lateral shade. Seedlings from natural regeneration are thinned out or seedlings are raised in nurseries and transplanted. Shallow pits of 1.5-2.5m are dug. Area is weeded periodically. Var. Malabar is the variety grown here. After 15 years the area is left to natural forest. *The Malabar variety, which basically constitutes the COORG GREEN, is medium in size and attains 2-3m height on maturity. The dorsal side of the leaves may be pubescent or glabrous. Panicles are prostrate and the fruits are globose- oblong shape. This variety is better suited to areas of 600-1200m elevation. Malabar type is relatively less susceptible to thrips infection. It can thrive under low rainfall conditions.*

The period after the advent of the South- West monsoon is suitable for planting. The seeds germinate after 5 -7 weeks of sowing.

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Cardamom starts bearing capsules 2-3 years after planting the seedlings. Flowering commences mainly during April-May or some times even a bit later. It is at the maximum during May-June. The fruits mature in about 120 days after flowering. Capsules that are just short of full ripeness are harvested mainly during the months of October-November. In the peak season harvesting is carried out at an interval of 15 days, as this crop has a prolonged and extensive flowering period thereby inducing several pickings. In Karnataka picking usually starts by August and continues till December- January. There exist mainly two types of pickings. The first is light picking where in only mature capsules are harvested while the second is hard picking where semi-matured capsules are also removed.

It is the post- harvesting techniques that form the true backbone of quality cardamom. The green colour of the capsule is directly proportional to the concentration of chlorophyll contents of the capsule. This variety as well as its clones during the post ripening period tends to loose more chlorophyll and hence delay in picking of these could affect the final greenness of the capsule. Further, capsules after harvest are washed thoroughly in water to remove the adhering soil and other extraneous matters and then taken for drying in kilns. Curing is essential to bring down the initial moisture level of the harvested crops and also to preserve the greenness of capsules. Thus proper curing of capsules at harvest becomes very important. Generally two types of curing methods are adopted viz natural sun drying (undesirable for cardamom) and artificial drying. Among the artificial methods pipe curing (kiln drying) is one of the best methods. Cardamom cured by sun drying or in a dryer, has to be protected from absorption of moisture, contamination with

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foreign orders, microorganisms and other insect infestations. Thus proper packing also becomes necessary. Subsequently the produce is graded on the basis of its colour, size, weight and chemical constituents. Some variety of cardamoms retains its green colour while some others turn to brownish and golden colours. Some others are bleached. COORG GREEN cardamom or Coorg clipped cardamom (otherwise called) is the dried capsule variety of *Elettaria Cardamomum* grown in Coorg, colour ranging from pale yellow to brown, global shape, skin ribbed or smooth; the pedicels separated, a unique feature of this variety alone.

J. Uniqueness

Coorg Green cardamom, one of the best quality in cardamom, is novel and unique on its own. The basic characteristics of COORG GREEN are that, they shall be the dried capsules of *Elletaria Cardamom*, ranging from greenish to brown in colour, measuring about 8mm in diameter weighing 450 G/L with global shape skin ribbed or smooth , the pedicels separated and free from insect infestation. Another distinct feature of this variety is that it is more adaptable and drought resistant.

The variation in colour ranging from green to brown including a golden and pale yellow attribute, places this brand of cardamom in an entirely different class. The colour of the produce is a very important commercial factor. Mainly the crop is harvested before it gets fully ripened or say in the just ripened stage. Early picking is very essential as this variety tends to loose its chlorophyll content very soon . Apart from

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the characteristics of the variety of the crop, a lot depends on the way of processing so as to retain the chlorophyll and thereby the light green colour. The techniques to prevent absorption, contamination and other infestations require a great deal of skill and competence. It is here where the zeal of the labour connected with the geographical region contributed for the propagation of the trade of cardamom. Another inevitable factor that adds to the uniqueness of this variety is the natural contribution of the area of origin. As it is known soil plays a very major role in the cultivation and outcome of every crop. The cardamom-growing soils of Karnataka are mostly clay loam. The soil pH of Karnataka is higher and also the CEC(Cation Exchange Capacity) of Coorg soils is higher than the soils of other cardamom growing areas. The organic carbon content percentage is also at an up. On an average the cardamom soils from Coorg in Karnataka contain much less NH_4OAC and HNO_3 , extractable K compared to soils of other areas though the other soil properties are comparable. Despite the lower K, the Coorg soils produced nearly twice as much cardamom yield compared to Idukki soils.

The spice is distilled for its essential oil, which is an inevitable factor. The essential oil of cardamom is the source for its aroma and flavour. The volatile oil in the seeds of COORG GREEN is (7.5-9.1) in percentage when compared to the other grades. Cardamom oil is produced commercially by steam distillation. The commercially distilled oil from COORG GREEN has a fresh campharaceous cool odour with a diffusive taste and a refreshing effect. The volatile oil from var.Malabar represented by the Coorg Greens are more camphory in aroma due to the relatively higher content of 1,8- cineole while the α -terpinyl acetate content is comparable. Malabar Variety is represented by one of the

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most sought Indian cardamom grade COORG GREEN. There are six grade designations in COORG GREEN. They are Extra Bold, Bold, Superior, Coorg green or Mota green, Shipment and Light. They are classified based on their size, weight and the extraneous matter they hold. Thus the size (in diameter) varies from 8mm-3.5mm and the weight from 450 G/L-280 G/L.

Cardamom is very popular as a spice and a food additive because of its delicious flavour. It is an indispensable substance in culinary use. In Arab countries it is an inevitable ingredient in tea preparation. There even exists folklore that coffee with cardamom is a symbol of hospitality and prestige. The constituents of its volatile oil are responsible for the flavour and fragrance. It also possesses carminative, stomachic and anti-microbial actions. Indian cardamom is low in fat content and rich in proteins. Cardamom also finds application in the indigenous system of medicine. The terpenoid constituents of cardamom transform it into an effective anti-fungal medication. Tincture cardamom and compound tincture of cardamom are included as official preparation in the British *Pharmaceutical Codex*, *British Pharmacopoeia*, *Pharmacopoeias* of China, Hungary, Japan etc.... It enhances oxidation and detoxification of xenobiotics, the anti-inflammatory activities and immunological defense mechanisms of the human body. No element of toxicity is reported for cardamom. It checks nausea, vomiting and is reported to be a cardiac stimulant. Chewing of cardamom seeds prevents bad smell of mouth, indigestion and even pyrosis. A daily gargle of cardamom water protects the body from flu infections. *Eladigana*- is a cure to vata (arthritis) and kapha (congestion). Cardamom is effective against many dermatological disorders also. It is also stressed that,


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consuming a cardamom capsule daily with a tablespoon of honey improves eyesight, strengthens nervous system and keeps one healthy.

In Ayurveda and Sidha systems, cardamom finds application as a component of several therapeutic formulations. *Charaka Samhita* denotes it as an antidote for food poisoning. It is used as an ingredient in over 24 medical preparations like *Brahmi Rasayana*, the one used for treating inflammations. Cardamom is also used as an ingredient in preparations used for the treatment of asthma, bronchitis, hemorrhoids, cardiac disorders, dyspepsia, and gastropathy, vatha and for many other diseases. All these unique features have turned cardamom into a hot export commodity. However due to the over domestic consumption, excessive adulteration and misuse coupled with adverse agro-climatic conditions the export percentage is slowly depreciating. In a global scenario cardamom is exported from India to over 18 countries including the big guns like USA, UK, Japan, Canada, the Middle East and others. In 2005-06 about 875 MT of cardamom was exported fetching more than 2700 lacs as income thereby marking a small hike than in the previous years. In this Karnataka accounts for over 30% of production of cardamom. Today Guatemala is the prime producer and exporter of cardamom, but the underlying factor is that the source of origin of Guatemalan cardamom is from India and their quality too is much inferior. ***COORG GREEN is a brand that has received huge appreciation and a great demand.***

The quality and novelty that we see today in COORG GREEN is the product quotient of the natural gift of the attributes of the place of origin coupled with the competence, skill and zeal

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from the labourers. It is the distinctness of Coorg that conferred the particular characteristics to this variety of cardamom. COORG is a synonym for cardamom and both together a symbol of quality. Thus Coorg and cardamom are so meshed together that they cannot be separated. If the crop is of the requisite quality, the farmers wherever they be, are benefited as their produce will fall in the category of COORG GREEN, bringing in consumers as well as massive returns.. So Coorg Cardamom along with being a brand ambassador of the place of origin is a cartel in cardamom trade. The Spices Board, the sole protector and conserver of spices, by seeking protection is aiming at protecting farmers engaged in production of cardamom irrespective of their location and also to secure cardamom trade. Thus immediate protection becomes the call of the hour.

INSPECTION BODY.

THE Core Consultative Group of the applicant comprising of experts will review and certify the standards and conformity to the authentic method of cultivation and processing of COORG GREEN CARDAMOM. Along with the Statement of Case in class 30 in respect of Cardamom in the name(s) of SPICES BOARD whose address is SPICES BOARD, Ministry of Commerce and Industry, SUGANDHA BHAVAN, N.H Bye-Pass, P.B. No.2277, Palarivattom, Cochin 25, Kerala, India, who claim to represent the interest of the producers of the said goods to which the geographical indication indicates and which is in continuous use in respect to the said goods.

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The application shall include such other particulars called for in Rule 32(1) in the Statement of Case.

All communications relating to this application may be sent to the following address in India:

Mr. SATISH MURTI
M/s. MURTI & MURTI, ADVOCATES
PATENT & TRADEMARK ATTORNEYS
KRISHNASWAMY ROAD, KOCHI-682035

ON BEHALF OF SPICES BOARD

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DIRECTOR-MARKETING

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