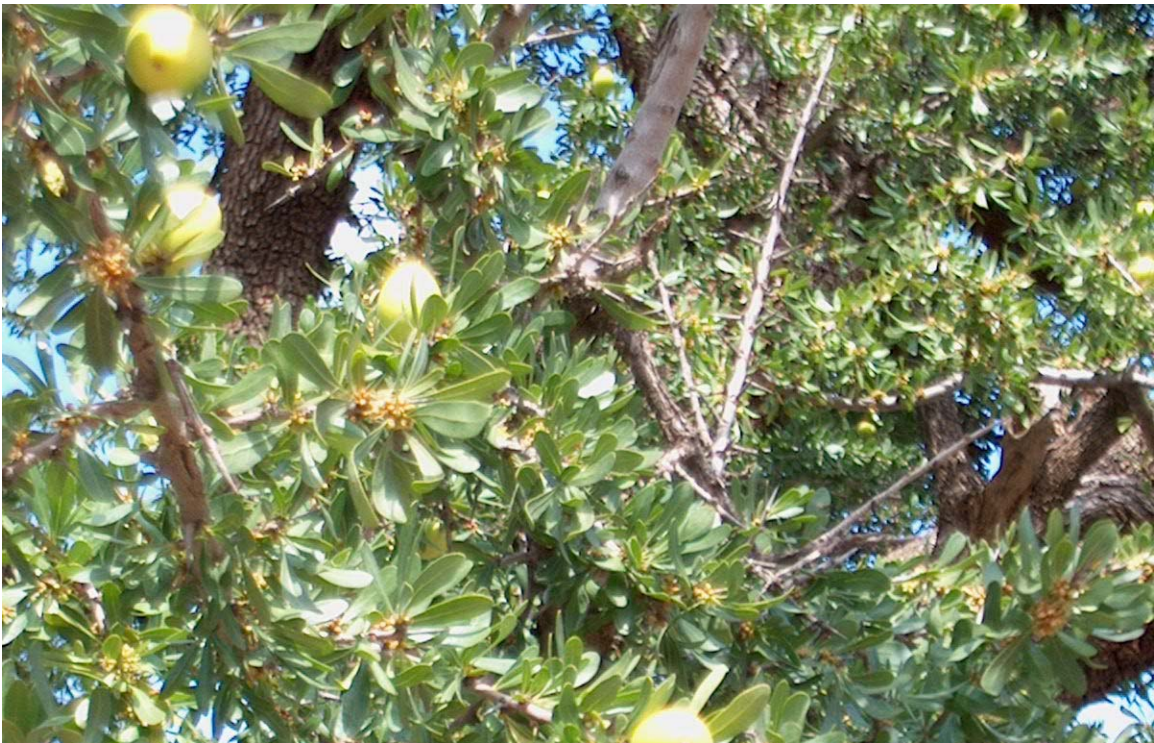




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ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF A GI SYSTEM

TOOLS AND LESSONS LEARNED FROM MOROCCO



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ACRONYMS

EU	European Union
FICOPAN	Moroccan Federation of Canned Foods
GI	Geographical Indication
IP	Intellectual Property
OMPIC	Moroccan Office of Industrial and Commercial Property
ONSSA	Moroccan National Office of Sanitary and Secure Food Products
TRIPS	Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
UNIDO	United Nations Organization for Industrial Development
USAID	United State Agency for International Development
USPTO	United States Patent and Trademark Organization
USTR	United States Trade Representative
WTO	World Trade Organization

SECTION I

WHAT IS A GI?

Geographical indications (GIs) are protected by a number of international agreements. For example, appellations of origin, a particular type of GI, are protected under the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property¹ and the Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration,² and all GIs are protected under the World Trade Organization's Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS).³ According to the TRIPS Agreement, GIs are:

“indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a Member, or a region or locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographic origin.”⁴

While TRIPS mandates protection for GIs used on goods, GIs are not inherently limited to goods and may be applied to services where those services otherwise meet the definition.

Under the TRIPS definition, a sign must meet a few essential elements to be considered a GI. First, the sign identifies the products as originating in a particular geographic location. Second, the products that bear the sign are from that geographic location. Third, the products possess a quality, characteristic, or reputation that is essentially attributable to the geographic location where the product originates. The quality, characteristic or reputation may result from natural factors, such as climate, soil composition, etc., or from human factors, such as know-how.

Most commonly, a GI consists of the name of the geographic location where the goods originate and may also incorporate a design. However, a GI may consist of a design without any wording or even non-geographic wording. The key is that the sign identifies the product as originating in a particular geographic location and signals to consumers that the goods feature a quality, characteristic, or reputation that is essentially attributable to that geographic source. Thus, a GI is simply a tool that helps consumers differentiate between products by leveraging the reputation of the geographic location as a production

¹ Although the Paris Convention has no specific provisions for the protection of GIs, Article I includes appellations of origin (a particular type of GI) among the types of industrial property that the agreement is intended to protect, and they are covered implicitly by various unfair competition provisions. Where GIs are implemented as trademarks (including certification and collective marks), they would be guaranteed further protections under the Articles particularly directed to trademarks.

² The current revision of the Lisbon Agreement creates an international registration system for appellations of origin only. When the newly adopted Geneva Act of the Lisbon Agreement goes into effect, it will expand the system to include all GIs, not just appellations of origin.

³ TRIPS Articles 22-24.

⁴ TRIPS Agreement Article 22.1.

site for goods that have particular desirable qualities such as a particular taste, smell, texture, longevity, high quality, etc.

In this regard, the function of a GI is very similar to that of a trademark. Both are signs used to help consumers differentiate between products. A trademark is “any sign, or combination of signs [that are] capable of distinguishing the goods or services of one undertaking from those of other undertakings.”⁵ They are used to inform consumers as to the source of the goods, and the particular source of the goods informs consumers as to certain qualities or features of the product. For example, a consumer who purchases a Coca-Cola brand beverage knows, based on prior experience with the product or its advertising, that it consistently will have a particular taste. The chief difference is that because a trademark can consist of any sign that distinguishes the source of the goods, a trademark can leverage the reputation of an individual, institution, government entity, producer collective, any other form of commercial enterprise, or even the geographic location of the goods. Therefore, the marketing choice in new product development is between the use of a GI or a non-GI source identifier, not between a GI or a trademark; and a key factor in that choice is which reputation that is the most valuable to leverage: the reputation of the geographic location where the goods are produced or the reputation of the producer.

⁵ TRIPS Article 15.1.

SECTION II

HOW GIs ARE PROTECTED

While TRIPS mandates protection for GIs, it does not dictate the particular means by which the protection must be implemented. Currently, there are two primary approaches to implementing GI protection. One is the *sui generis* GI system, a regime specifically established for the protection of GIs. The key distinguishing feature of a *sui generis* GI system is the level of government involvement in the registration and enforcement of the GI. Typically, the application process will require submission of technical information about the production standards as well as the defined geographic area identified by the GI. The government then evaluates the GI-ness of the product, i.e., evaluates the information submitted with the application to ensure that the GI meets the technical requirements for registration. The government typically also provides *ex officio* enforcement of the GI. The GI holder may be required to report infringing products, but the government typically undertakes the burden of evaluating the validity of the infringement claim and removing infringing goods from the market. The government may also conduct quality control testing to ensure that the GI protected products continue to meet the product standards listed in the registration.

Advantages of protecting GIs through a *sui generis* system include (1) the cost of registering and enforcing the GIs is borne by the public at large, rather than the product consumers (reflected in the price), therefore providing a substantial subsidy to users of the system; (2) government expertise in agricultural production, product development, and international marketing can be leveraged to assist producers who are less adept in these areas; and (3) where on-going testing and evaluation of GI products is undertaken by the government, it allows for more competitive pricing by shifting the quality control costs to the government. Disadvantages include (1) it requires significant on-going investment of public resources since all of the significant costs are borne by the public coffers; (2) it incurs additional costs in educating consumers about how to navigate a separate system for geographic brands; and (3) it can result in conflicts with trademarks because they are contained and maintained in separate systems.

The other approach is to protect GIs via the use of the trademark system. When GIs are protected via the trademark system, there typically is much less government involvement in the registration, maintenance, and enforcement process because GI marks are treated like other trademarks. Because GIs are treated like all other marks, there is no need for the government to undertake an analysis of GI-ness; the protection and enforcement mechanisms are the same for all marks. The owner of the mark is responsible for setting the production standards, ensuring that the products adhere to those standards, and for enforcing the right. In a GI context the mark typically would be owned by an entity representing the interests of the government and/or the producers, such as an Agency, Board, Commission or a producer collective.⁶ Therefore, if a government entity owns the

⁶ However, if the entirety of a geographic location were owned by an individual, that individual could own the associated GI, assuming all of the other legal requirements are met.

mark, that entity would be responsible for developing and maintaining the standards as well as enforcement. However, unlike a *sui generis* system, these functions are not part of the registration process and are not performed by the registration authority (the Trademark Office).

When GI protection is implemented via the trademark system, GIs typically are protected via one of two special kinds of marks – collective marks or regional certification marks. A collective mark is used by the members of a collective to identify that the particular goods emanate from the collective, and it signals that the goods were produced by someone who meets the collective’s criteria for use of the mark. The collective owns the mark and may advertise or promote the goods, but the members (producers) sell the goods. In a GI context, a collective mark generally is used to identify a producer collective, and the standards for admission to the collective generally contain the geographic location in which the goods must be produced as well as quality control standards that the goods must meet. Quality control standards are developed and policed by the collective, either directly or through a third party, such as a government agency or an independent testing facility.

A regional certification mark is used by an authorized user to indicate that the goods have been certified by the mark owner as originating in a specific geographic region and usually also that the goods meet certain production standards. The owner of the certification mark may not use the mark on its own goods, and its promotional activities must be limited to promoting the certification program. Its role is to certify (and signal to consumers) that the goods bearing the mark have been tested and meet the standards for use of the mark. The owner of the certification mark may not discriminate. All goods meeting the specified standards must be permitted to use the mark. In some jurisdictions, such as the United States, applicants are required to submit a copy of the certification standards with the application for registration⁷ as well as a statement that it is not engaged in the production or marketing of the goods to which the mark is applied except to advertise or promote recognition of the certification program or recognition of the goods or services that meet its certification standards.⁸ In a GI context, a government agency or a collective may own the mark and perform the certification function. The certification standards associated with a regional certification mark commonly specify the precise geographic location from which the goods originate as well as quality control standards relating to production methods.

Finally, although rare, a GI may be protected via a trademark. As noted above, a trademark serves to identify and distinguish the source of goods or services for consumers. Any type of legal person (i.e., individual, government agency, producer collective, corporation, etc.) may own a trademark. However, as already noted, in a GI context the mark identifies goods originating in a particular geographic location so it typically would be owned by an entity representing the interests of the government and/or

⁷ See, USPTO *Trademark Manual of Examining Procedure* §1306.03(b), citing 37 C.F.R. §2.45(a)(4)(i)(B)

⁸ See, USPTO *Trademark Manual of Examining Procedure* §1306.03(c), citing 37 C.F.R. §2.45(a)(4)(i)(C).

the producers.⁹ If the entity is owned by the producers, the income returns would be distributed to the producers as dividends. If the entity is owned by a government agency, board or other public body, the income would be distributed through any number of public mechanisms. The advantage of using this type of mark is that it is easiest to use in a cross-licensing or merchandising scheme (i.e., uses on goods other than those for which GI protection is sought).

Selection of the appropriate type of mark is driven by a number of factors. Perhaps the most important consideration is whether consumers *in the target markets* already recognize the geographic location as a desirable source for the particular goods due to the unique qualities, characteristics, or reputation of goods originating there or whether the reputation will need to be developed. A universally accepted exception to trademark protection is that geographic terms that convey no information about the goods other than their geographic origin are not protectable. However, when the use of a geographic term on goods conveys additional information to consumers, such as information about particular qualities, characteristics or the reputation of the goods, the wording may be protectable as a trademark because it has acquired distinctiveness as a source identifier. If a geographic term has not yet acquired distinctiveness (i.e., there is no established reputation with consumers in the target market), a regional certification mark may be the better option. The purpose of these marks is to certify regional origin of the goods and thus are considered inherently distinctive regardless of the level of consumer recognition for goods emanating from the particular geographic location.

Another key consideration is the type of quality control scheme that will be implemented. If there is sufficient funding to establish and maintain a certifying organization, a regional certification mark may be a good option. If there is not sufficient funding to maintain a consistent, formal certification program and the producers can be organized into a collective, a collective mark may be a good option. In this framework, quality control standards would be implemented as requirements to maintain membership in the collective and therefore use the collective mark. However, it is also possible to implement effective, self-policing quality control standards since maintaining a reputation for consistent quality goods is necessary for securing a better price and sustaining long-term profitability. Implementing consistent quality control measures is a core practice of every successful mark owner, not just GI owners.

Advantages of protecting GIs via a trademark system include (1) public money is not diverted to establishing a separate system and producers, consumers, and government actors do not need to learn a new system; (2) international registration and maintenance can be obtained via the Madrid system among the 97 Madrid member countries; and (3) the equities of all types of brand holders are conserved and respected since all types of brands are protected in a single system. Disadvantages include (1) all business costs are borne by consumers (reflected in the price) rather than the general public unless another type of subsidy is put into place to lower the cost of production, such as business development assistance, international marketing and export assistance, standards

⁹ However, if the entirety of a geographic location were owned by an individual, that individual could own the associated GI, assuming all of the other legal requirements are met.

development and testing assistance, “self-help” based enforcement mechanisms, and/or pro bono legal assistance; (2) most jurisdictions require use of the mark to maintain and enforce the right; and (3) marks consisting of deceptive or generic matter are subject to cancellation in most, if not all, jurisdictions.

Table 1. Comparison of GI Protection in *Sui Generis* and Trademark Systems

<i>Sui Generis</i> System	Trademark System
Heavy government involvement in the registration process	Government involvement in the registration process is the same as for non-GI marks
<i>Ex officio</i> enforcement	Enforcement is the responsibility of the right holder (same for non-GI marks)
Requires submission of defined geographic area of production and the production standards as part of the registration processes	Application requirements depend on the type of mark: Certification marks require submission of standards used for certification which include defined geographic area and production standards. Collective marks may require submission of standards that must be met for membership in the collective – for GIs would include the defined geographic area of production and production standards. Trademarks do not require submission of the defined geographic area or the standards. These aspects are controlled by the owner and may be incorporated into the organization’s Bylaws or other governing documents.
The government evaluates the product for compliance with national law as to GI-ness	The government does not evaluate the product for GI-ness. In this system, GIs are treated like all other trademarks and are not given special benefits. Therefore, there is no reason for the government to evaluate GI-ness.
Term of protection: Set according to national law, but commonly there is no time limit on the term of protection.	Term of protection: Set according to national trademark law, but TRIPS dictates that registrations are granted for terms of at least 10 years and are renewable in perpetuity provided the mark continues to meet the legal requirements.
Grounds for Opposition or Cancellation: Set according to national law. Most jurisdictions allow for opposition and/or cancellation on the ground that the GI does not meet the legal requirements. Many also provide grounds based on prior good faith rights in a trademark or tradename or based on genericness - that the GI is the common commercial name of the goods.	Grounds for Opposition or Cancellation: The grounds for all trademarks apply: prior rights, genericness, abandonment, etc. Additionally, a GI may be cancelled on deceptiveness grounds if the goods no longer emanate from the place identified in the GI. Certification marks may be cancelled if the certification authority discriminates – i.e., refuses to allow use of the mark on all products that meet its standards.

SECTION III

CHOOSING BETWEEN A GEOGRAPHIC AND A NON-GEOGRAPHIC BRANDING STRATEGY

Most people, including those who are engaged in offering goods in commerce, have little actual knowledge about intellectual property. It is likely that producers are more familiar with the use of the term “brand” than they are with the word “trademark.” The likelihood that there is any familiarity with the term “geographical indication” is very low and even lower for those who understand that a GI is simply a particular type of brand. However, consumers do not really need to understand the technical distinctions. Regardless of the branding strategy selected, consumers will choose products they like at “fair” prices, and the perceived fairness of the price will largely depend upon the reputation of the goods. Goods that have a reputation for consistent high quality generally sell for higher prices. Therefore, quality control is a crucial component of any successful business, regardless of the brand strategy selected.

As discussed earlier, a GI is simply a tool that helps consumers differentiate between products by leveraging the reputation of the geographic location as a production site for goods that have particular desirable qualities such as a particular taste, smell, texture, longevity, high quality, etc. By contrast a non-geographic trademark leverages the reputation of the producer, whether it be an individual, corporation, institution, government entity, producer collective, any other form of commercial enterprise. Therefore, a key factor in the choice between a GI and a non-geographic source indicator is which reputation is the most valuable or has the potential to be the most valuable: the reputation of the geographic location where the goods are produced or the reputation of the producer.

If the geographical location already enjoys a strong reputation in the target markets, then a geographic branding strategy is likely a good idea from a marketability perspective. If the geographic location is relatively unknown to consumers or if the goods emanating from the location have not yet developed a reputation for exceptional qualities or characteristics, then more consideration must be given to the marketability of the geographic name in target markets. Is the name easy to spell and pronounce? Does it require knowledge of a language that is not spoken in the target markets? What impression does the name create with consumers in the target markets? Does it convey an idea of high quality or exceptionalism to consumers?

Another important consideration is availability of resources to fulfill the more stringent requirements that are key to implementing a GI successfully. Does the owning entity (government agency, producer cooperative, etc.) have the resources to develop production standards, to persuade sufficient numbers of producers to adopt those standards, to monitor compliance with the standards, and to take action when the standards are not being met?

It is also important to determine whether the product is of a type that consumers would pay a higher price in exchange for a higher quality product. In order for a GI to be profitable, consumers must be willing to pay a price differential that covers the cost of implementing the GI controls. If consumers do not value the higher quality sufficiently to pay the GI premium, due consideration must be given to whether a GI branding strategy makes sense.

Finally, it is wise to consider whether the controls implemented for GI quality standards hamper productivity to the extent that producer income will actually decline. If the GI standards restrict available production, the price premium earned by the GI must be able to compensate the producers for the lost volume. Otherwise producers will abandon the GI program.

SECTION IV

ADOPTING A GI BRANDING STRATEGY IN A DEVELOPING ECONOMY

The general parameters of a GI for products originating in a particular region or locale includes the fact that the product does have certain qualities, characteristics, or reputation that are essentially attributable to the geographic origin of the product. This raises questions as to how this occurs. Focusing on the products themselves, the desire to market goods under a GI brand has significant implications for the producers or growers.

DEFINING THE GEOGRAPHIC AREA

First, the particular geographic area must be designated and agreed to by those who wish to implement a GI brand. The importance of defining the geographic area when using the geographic reference regarding products is an important part of GI protection. Within a *sui generis* GI registration system, such as the one implemented by the EU, providing specific information about the defined geographic area generally is part of the application process that includes the identification of “natural factors” relating to the products and the quality, characteristics or reputational factor that may arise from the defined area. In the EU, the need to define the area is necessary whether it is an agricultural product, e.g. honey (“Miel des Cévennes”)¹⁰, or a meat product from animals, e.g. ham (“Jamón de Serón”)¹¹. Within a trademark-based GI system, such as the one implemented by the US, the information about the defined geographic area may or may not be part of the application process. If protection is sought via a geographic certification mark, the defined geographic area of production would be included among the certification standards submitted with the application.¹² However, if protection is sought via a collective mark or a trademark, the defined geographic area of production may be included in the application, but this information may not be required in the application.¹³

¹⁰ 2014 Official Journal of the European Union (C 412) 4 (19/11/2014).

¹¹ 2014 Official Journal of the European Union (C 101) 10 (5/4/2014).

¹² See, e.g., U.S. Trademark Registration No. 1896683 for the certification mark PARMIGIANO-REGGIANO, registered by the Consorzio del Formaggio Parmigiano-Reggiano Consortium Italy in 1995. The certification statement in the application indicates that “[t]he certification mark, as used by persons authorized by Certifier, certifies that the goods originate in the Parma-Reggio region of Italy, specifically the zone comprising the territory of the provinces of Parma, Reggio Emilia, Modena and Mantua on the right bank of the river Po and Bologna on the left bank of the river Reno.”

¹³ See, e.g., U.S. Trademark Registration No. 4152952 for the collective mark MOZZARELLA DI BUFALA CAMPANA, registered by the CONSORZIO PER LA TUTELA DEL FORMAGGIO MOZZARELLA DI BUFALA CAMPANA in 2012. The applicant did not specify the particular membership requirements (i.e., the defined geographic area and production standards) but instead simply states that the “Applicant’s bylaws or other written provisions specify the manner of control.” This is acceptable.

If the GI is protected via a trademark system, the IP Office typically is not involved in evaluating the standards or monitoring compliance.

LENTIL GROWERS ATTEMPTS TO MITIGATE RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH A GI SYSTEM

The Moullablad Agricultural Development Association (Association Moullablad de Developpement Agricole) indicated that it is seeking a GI for lentils originating in the Zaar region. The head of the association noted that he and other producers grow many other products, but have decided to pursue a GI only for lentils. Due to growers' lack of previous experience or knowledge of GIs however, even if the GI for Zaar lentils is approved, many have indicated that they would provide only a small portion of their production for marketing under the GI and the remaining production volume would be marketed and sold as it has been in the past, either independently or through third parties with no branding. So, even if growers adopt growing, cultivating, and recordkeeping practices required to meet the GI standards, only a small portion of lentils produced in the region would actually carry the GI. It appears that growers in the region who are working to qualify for the GI, are also attempting to preserve their current marketing and sales channels and limit exposure to any risks of a GI system.

The advantage of having a defined area and using the geographic brand in connection with a particular product is that it leverages the reputation of the geographic location as a production site for the particular goods. Having the GI for the defined area also provides those within the GI's defined territory the exclusive legal right to use it and prevent others beyond that area from using a sign that might cause consumers to confuse goods from outside the defined area with those from the defined area. Therefore, it is extremely important that the defined geographic area accurately reflects the complete area in which all goods having the particular qualities, characteristics or reputation can be grown or produced. If the goods are grown in an area that does not lend itself well to a singular geographic designation, it may be more profitable to adopt a non-GI branding strategy to achieve full monetization of all the available production.

Producers and growers also should be aware of the fact that the same products may still be produced and marketed in the defined geographical area by others that do not participate in the GI scheme as long as they do not market goods bearing a sign that can cause confusion with the approved GI. In fact, there likely will be others who are competing successfully with the GI branded products by marketing non-GI branded products, even from the same region. This is illustrated in the Zaar lentils examples below.

It is important to be cognizant of the fact that whether it is olives grown in a particular region, or animals raised and fed for production of meats and dairy products, these products are already being produced and marketed for sale to consumers; and this has been occurring for many years without the use of GIs. The decision for those in these sectors is whether they continue to conduct business as they have been or change to and adopt the changes in production methods that will be imposed if they want to use a GI. Therefore, careful consideration must be given to product development and evaluation of the GI as a profitable branding strategy.

PRODUCT STANDARDS AND GUIDELINES

In order to have a particular sign accepted as a geographical indication, a group of producers/growers would have to agree on a set of guidelines relating to practices or methods for growing, raising, producing and/or collecting the product that is to be protected. Are there unique qualities or characteristics about the product from a particular region that warrants a GI? What is the basis of any reputation that is attached to a particular product in a region?

The actual use of a GI can lead to specific requirements for products. For instance, the reference to Jamón de Serón above is instructive for purposes of meats that are protected by a GI. In this particular case, those who wish to use the GI “Jamón de Serón” must be aware of and comply with a number of requirements. These include, for example, that

- The ham comes from the hind legs of pigs;
- Meat is sourced from specifically identified breeds of pigs;
- The pig meets a minimum weight requirement before slaughter and bleeding;
- Meat meets a specified fat thickness;
- Different categories of marketed hams meet specific weight requirements and preparation time requirements;
- Meat meets salt content requirements;
- Meat meets a minimum weight reduction; and
- Meat meets other technical requirements.¹⁴

The details listed above are not unusual for submissions in the EU for those hoping to obtain and use a GI. The non-exhaustive list above for a particular meat protected by a GI is worth comparing to another type of product in order to understand the degree of detail the guidelines and standards might require for purposes of marketing and selling under a protected GI.

One sector that is prominent and has a number of protected GIs is dairy. It is useful to look at some of the guidelines and practices that may be required of a dairy product. Those cheese makers who use the “Gruyère” GI are subject to as many, if not more, production rules. For example, producers must adhere to the following:

- Ensure that cow’s milk is used;
- Ensure the milk must be from specifically listed traditional local dairy cow breeds that are adapted to the soil;
- Guarantee a close link between the soil and the product through specific feed for the cows from the geographical area;
- Maintain the traditional practice of grazing (farm production systems where all the feed is supplied in troughs are forbidden);
- Ensure the mandatory minimum annual grazing period of 150 days;

¹⁴ 2014 Official Journal of the European Union (C 101) 10 (5/4/2014).

- Preserve the milk quality by requiring that the duration of the collection from the first milk producer to the time when the milk is unloaded at the cheesemaker's may not exceed six hours; and
- Ensure a minimum maturation period of 120 days.¹⁵

The above is not a complete list, but is indicative of the guidelines involved for those using this particular GI. The fact that there are some specifics as to animal grazing as well as to the cheese making process is instructive in that the use of the GI requires adherence to rules that address both the dairy cows and the cheese making process.

Finally, the Idaho certification mark for potatoes provides an example of a GI applied to an unprocessed agricultural product.¹⁶ Following are some of the standards submitted by the State of Idaho Potato Commission in the U.S. application:

- Must be U.S. No. 2 or better grade;
- Round Red varieties must be at least 1-7/8 inches in diameter;
- All other varieties must be at least 2 inches in diameter or 4 ounces minimum weight provided that at least 40% of the lot is 5 ounces or heavier;
- All varieties must have a cleanliness rating of “fairly clean;”
- Minimum maturity requirements dictate that White Rose and red skin varieties must be “moderately skinned” from August 1 through December 31 with no maturity requirements during other periods and that all other varieties must be “slightly skinned;” and
- Potatoes packed in cartons (except when used as a master container) shall be either: (i) US No. 1 grade or better, except potatoes of US Extra No. 1 grade shall be no smaller than 110 size nor larger than 60 size or (ii) US No. 2 grade in one-piece 50-pound fiberboard cartons of natural kraft color, provided the cartons are permanently and conspicuously marked as to grade.

The detailed list of standards/guidelines for a particular product GI is useful for those who wish to market products under the particular GI. An *advantage* for the producers/growers of a protected GI is that, regardless of how many people are producing a particular product, compliance with the established standards should contribute to marketing a product that is consistent.

Another *advantage* of some products bearing GIs is that the products have benefitted from centuries of production methods that deliver consistent quality that has given the product a reputation, which contributes to the strength of GIs derived from the products' reputation. For example, Gruyère is noted as having been produced for several

¹⁵ 2010 Official Journal of the European Union (C 298) 14 (4/11/2010).

¹⁶ U.S. Registration No. 4221403. The file record can be viewed here:

http://tsdr.uspto.gov/#caseNumber=4221403&caseSearchType=US_APPLICATION&caseType=DEFAULT&searchType=documentSearch. Last accessed 3/6/2016.

centuries.¹⁷ Similarly, the reputation of Jamón de Serón is linked to certain practices of raising pigs and dates back to the 16th century.¹⁸

The *disadvantages* may also be clear. For producers and growers in countries where a GI system is not well established, there is a need to create and to agree upon standards or guidelines regarding the product that is to be protected by a GI. One disadvantage is that this has the possibility of excluding some producers or growers in a particular geographic area from using a protected GI. The potential exclusion of some producers or growers may be due to the fact that compliance with a set of agreed standards or guidelines is burdensome or simply not realistic. For example, under one set of guidelines adopted for a GI that protects honey in the EU, beekeepers and production sites are identified, registered and checked, implying that there are recordkeeping obligations because the production sites must be within the defined geographic area and there must be the ability to trace the honey by examining records of labels against harvest declarations and stocks.¹⁹ In a developing country, a producer or grower may not have the capacity or means to make the necessary changes in the practices or methods dictated by the new standards or guidelines. In addition, the imposition of obligations to begin maintaining detailed records may not be practical for some producers or growers. As is illustrated in the Fromage de Chevre Chefchaouen example below, GI requirements may not be realistic for a particularly disadvantaged or even illiterate population.

Another disadvantage is the lack of any reputation associated with new GIs in a new GI system. Unlike GIs in an established system like that of the EU, in a country like Morocco where domestic GIs either have not existed or have just been issued for use, there may be no reputation associated with the new GI. In this situation, careful consideration must be given to whether a GI branding strategy would be the most profitable way to bring a product to market.

While the Morocco situation is somewhat difficult to detail due to the various responses about the drafting and approval of standards, some information is available and hints at the challenges of creating GI system in a developing economy.

Example 1: Lentils

The President of the Moullablad Agricultural Development Association (*Association Moullablad de Developpement Agricole*) explained that a government commission exists to provide assistance in getting GI standards certified. For this Association's members who are seeking to obtain a GI for Zaar lentils, some new requirements would be:

- Eliminating bulk sales;
- Identifying smaller packaging sizes for sales;
- “Traceability” by land coding/tracking; and
- Record keeping as to treatment of the land (e.g. use of pesticides, fertilizer, etc.).

¹⁷ Id.

¹⁸ 2014 Official Journal of the European Union (C 101) 10 (5/4/2014).

¹⁹ 2002 Official Journal of the European Union (C 71) 10 (20/3/2002).

There are likely to be additional requirements but the above were mentioned as some of the basic requirements to qualify for use of any future GI.

Example 2: Honey

The GI issued for honey, “Miel D’Euphorbe Tadla Azilal,” does have a detailed booklet that explains the standards that must be adhered to in order to use the GI designation. Like the standards for many EU protected GIs, this GI for honey identifies the geographical areas where the honey is obtained. More importantly, and similar to EU standards detailed above, the standards for this GI lists the specific characteristics of the honey and requires that there is a 60 percent content of pollen from the Euphorbia plant. Additionally, use of the GI would require the following:

- Location of hives in relation to plants (proximity);
- New honey collection requirements; and
- Plant “treatment” procedures, i.e., potential limits/restrictions on use of pesticides, etc.

While the government has listed this GI, it is yet to be used because of a lack of awareness among the beekeepers who require training on the detailed standards that must be followed.

Example 3: Cheese

The GI, “Fromage de Chevre Chefchaouen,” seems to have been issued, but as of early 2015 it has never been applied to any cheese products. This does not mean however, that no cheese products are being made by the cooperative. In fact, a visit to the cooperative showed that it is making, packaging, and selling cheese from goat milk. The issues with the application of the GI stem from goat herders who will not or cannot adhere to the standards that must be met to qualify for use of the GI. A few of the requirements not being met include maintaining:

- Records on goat herds;
- Veterinary records; and
- Records on feed for goat herds.

One of the biggest obstacles is low literacy rates among the goat herders. Therefore, they would need additional staff to meet the new record keeping requirements.

GIs AND PRICES

From a marketing and product promotion perspective, there may be advantages in the ability of producers and growers to increase the price of their GI branded products. The first consideration is whether there is a market for a higher quality version of the product. For example, there are established markets for higher quality agricultural products such as vanilla, capers, and cinnamon; but the Zaar lentils example above indicates that there may not be a market for GI-grade lentils. The market demand for a higher quality version of a commonly available product must be established before adopting a GI branding strategy for such a product. Otherwise, producers will never be able to set a price on the goods that covers the cost of the GI production controls.

If a market exists for a differentiated (higher quality) product, growers and producers who adopt a GI branding strategy are able to point to the standards and guidelines as creating a set of criteria that they must adhere to regarding their practices and processes in making the product. This serves as a signal to consumers that the product has been verified to have a particular quality or characteristic. Finally, if products bearing a GI sign are ultimately the result of government approval of the standards and guidelines created for the products, consumers may see this as an additional assurance of the quality of the goods. This, in turn, could persuade consumers to pay a higher price for the product than its non-GI branded competitive alternatives.

All producers and growers would like to sell at higher prices and increase profit margins. There is no guarantee, however, that increased prices of GI-bearing products translate to increased profits. There can be no guarantee that there will be increased sales. The simple act of increasing prices has a built-in disadvantage, which is that a product that sold for a particular price one day is more expensive the next day simply due to a GI sign applied to it. There is also no guarantee that consumers will pay a price that sufficiently covers the cost of implementing the GI standards, which can be expensive. In addition to the labor costs of compliance, producers and growers may need to reinvest more of their revenues in materials or equipment to comply with recordkeeping, labeling, or tracking requirements as is illustrated in all three GI examples above. There is also no guarantee that consumers will prefer the final product more than its non-GI branded competitors or that they would be willing to pay a sufficiently higher price for it. Essentially, a major disadvantage could be lost sales to the less expensive product.

As is shown in the Zaar lentils example above, small producers and growers whose incomes are limited view the stricter standards and guidelines required for GI branding as a gamble. The situation for a number of growers and producers in several sectors in Morocco is that they may be willing to take a risk with some portion of what they produce, but they are not willing to subject most or all of what they produce to a system that is new and unproven. For example, conversations with representatives from a cooperative that has a GI for olives and the head of an association seeking to obtain a GI for lentils indicated reluctance on the part of their member growers to subject significant amounts of their products to the process that would qualify the goods for GI protection.

Interestingly, the representatives from Dari and Tajini explained that they could not envision Moroccan consumers paying higher prices for Moroccan products bearing GIs as there is a complete lack of consumer awareness of GIs. Perhaps more importantly, the general economic situation in Morocco does not give consumers the ability to choose to pay higher prices for goods when a perceived similar product is offered at a lower price.

The dairy cooperative in northern Morocco is an interesting example when considering the issue of price for the “Fromage de Chevre Chefchaouen” GI. First, the inability of most of the goat herders to understand and maintain the records necessary would likely mean increased expenses as it would require hiring another person to assist in collecting and maintaining the information. Second, as fees to use government laboratories are high,

the cooperative now needs to operate its own laboratory to verify the source and quality of the goats' milk. Third, some promotional effort must be undertaken in order to raise awareness of the specific GI once it comes into use. Thus, an increase in prices necessitated by meeting standards and promoting the GI among consumers may work against the cooperative's member goat herders who may want to use the GI if the price consumers are willing to pay for the goods does not cover these costs.

CONSUMERS

Ultimately, all products are placed into commerce in the hope of generating sales and revenue for the producer/manufacturer. The challenge is to sway consumers to purchase.

GIs are supposed to communicate to consumers that purchasing a product bearing a GI will deliver the advantages of an increased level of consistency and quality compared to the same goods that do not bear a GI because they are produced in a particular location. The success of the GI depends upon consumer awareness of the inspection, testing, and certification to which the GI branded products are subjected. Otherwise, the consumer will not pay a higher price for the product. This requires not only familiarity with GIs but also effective marketing of the GI on the product. This is a real concern in Morocco where the GI mark is easy to overlook as it is not often prominently displayed.

Another key issue is the price sensitivity of consumers. Do consumers have sufficient incomes to choose a higher priced product? This is especially important if lower-priced, non-GI branded products are available. No amount of advertising or investment in product packaging will persuade such a consumer to choose the higher-priced good.

SECTION V

CONSIDERATIONS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES IN ADOPTING A GI SYSTEM

Determining the type of GI protection system to implement should be undertaken with consideration of a series of issues as they affect those engaged in producing and growing as well as the consumers. Some of the issues that are recommended for consideration are discussed below. This is not intended to be an exhaustive discussion, but may be the basis for a more detailed study as to whether a *sui generis* GI protection system is warranted.

As already noted, the key distinguishing feature of a *sui generis* system is the role of government in the registration and enforcement of GIs. The government maintains a separate GI register and takes on the role of evaluating whether the applied-for GI meets national law requirements as to GI-ness – whether the geographic boundaries are appropriately set, whether the goods have a particular quality, characteristic or reputation that is essentially attributable to the production location, whether the production standards are sufficiently stringent, etc. The government also may undertake the role of periodic testing and evaluation of GI branded products to ensure that they are produced consistently with the production standards. The government also undertakes *ex officio* enforcement of registered GIs. This function may be implemented administratively, through the registration office; or it may be implemented through one or more agencies charged with different aspects of enforcement. Because GIs are simply a type of branding strategy, conflicts with trademarks sometimes arise. Therefore, the government will need to develop mechanisms to provide transparent communication and conflict resolution between the GI and trademark systems. Because it is a separate system, it requires an on-going commitment of resources to maintain it as a separate institution. Developing countries need to consider the costs associated with the form of implementation in light of available resources.

In evaluating whether it is prepared to absorb the costs of implementing and maintaining a separate GI institution, a government should consider whether doing so would restrict its ability to provide the necessary supportive services incident to modernizing agricultural and business sectors. For example, the government will need to train producers to use the GI system. Will the government need to provide support services for identifying the appropriate geographic boundaries or for developing the best production standards? Will government involvement be necessary to organize the producers into a cooperative to pool their resources? Will the government need to subsidize the testing and evaluation function to ensure consistent quality? Will the government need to train producers in business-related best practices such as record keeping? Will government assistance be required to develop business and marketing plans, i.e., identify target markets, determine whether a proposed brand (GI or otherwise) is marketable in those

markets, and determine whether consumers would be willing to pay more for a differentiated (higher quality) product. Will government assistance be required to fund advertising and promotion of the GI products? All of these functions are incident to both *sui generis* and trademark-based GI systems. If these incidental functions must be provided by the government, are sufficient resources also available to establish and maintain a separate GI institution?

The Government should be aware that by taking an overly active role, it may stretch itself thin and find itself overly committed in the future and unable to fulfill what producers may believe are Government promises and commitments. For example, the head of the Moullablad Agricultural Development Association (*Association Moullablad de Developpement Agricole*) explained that when a GI is issued for the Zaar region lentils, a cooperative would be formed. Under a national law governing coops, the Government would then provide support and assistance to the cooperatives which, in turn, would assist the farmers. The cooperative would be able to use Government support to purchase machinery.

The Government itself should be aware that it could reach a tipping point where it may not be able to support all of the cooperatives and other organizations that obtain GIs. In fact, the Government should make clear at the outset that there is an expectation that the cooperatives overseeing those who qualify for use of a GI reach a point where they can self-sustain their efforts.

In addition, the government should be clear in identifying the government agencies that will be involved in the GI system. First, who approves of the standards and guidelines that must be complied with by any producer or grower hoping to reap the benefits of any particular GI? In view of the many different GIs that may be applied for and the many different products that can be covered by GIs, are there any professional requirements of the people who will approve of the standards and guidelines? Is there sufficient expertise within the government itself to examine the standards and guidelines and make such decisions? Based on the wide variety of crops, plants, livestock and other factors that are involved, is it a simple matter of the Ministry of Agriculture being involved? Does the government have the resources to undertake these functions or should they be performed by third parties?

Upon the issuance of a GI, the GI must be enforced or the right is meaningless. In a *sui generis* system, this function is performed by the government. Does the government have sufficient resources to do so? If resources are limited and a *sui generis* system is implemented, the government should consider its enforcement budget when making decisions about the number of GIs it chooses to develop and register.

Because the government plays a role in the standards approval process, issuing the GI, and in maintaining a registry and enforcement of the GI in a *sui generis* system, it is critical to the system's success that there is transparency as to which specific agencies are involved and what their specific duties are so that cooperatives, collectives, unions, and producers have a clear understanding of the system.

Finally, perhaps the most challenging role the government may have is promoting GIs among consumers. It is critical to the success of any GI that consumers associate it with a higher quality, more desirable product. In order to make any progress at rural development and improve the economic situation for those using GIs on products, an even greater investment in education must be targeted to those who make spending decisions.

SECTION VI

CASE STUDY: A SUI GENERIS GI SYSTEM IN MOROCCO

In the Moroccan economy, there are many more small and medium sized operations than larger corporations in the agricultural sector. Discussions with various members in the agricultural sector indicate a fundamental misunderstanding of the nature of GIs. The purpose of a GI is to signal to consumers that the goods to which it is applied have a particular quality, characteristic or reputation that is essentially attributable to the geographic location identified by the GI. As such, decisions about employing GIs in a marketing strategy should be based entirely on the profitability of using the GI. This necessarily begins with a consideration of the marketability of the GI in the target market, whether the GI already has a reputation with the relevant consumers, and the costs associated with employing the GI strategy over a non-GI marketing strategy. However, in Morocco, members of the agricultural sector are making business decisions with respect to GI branding strategies based largely on differences in the sizes of their organizations and revenue streams.

Representatives from larger industrial sized operations that have already reached a level of success that supports national and international sales report that they see no need for GIs. First, they perceive GIs to be the exclusive marketing domain of cooperatives or collectives. Therefore, because they have no need to be a member of a cooperative or collective, they see no advantage to or role for themselves in using a GI branding strategy for their goods. Second, companies such as Dari Couspate and Tajini are successfully marketing their products and competing using trademarks. These companies source materials for their products from many different farmers and producers. Companies with industrial-sized operations budgets to build brand loyalty via marketing and advertising are competing with others using their trademarks to distinguish their goods from those of their competitors. In their view, the trademarks are working so there is no need to employ a GI branding strategy.

By contrast, most of the producers and growers who have joined cooperatives, unions, and collectives that have registered a GI or are seeking to register a GI are small.

Individually, these growers:

- Do not have sufficient capacity to increase production or meet market demand,
- Do not have a budget to promote and advertise their products,
- Must pool their product output/resources to have commercial volume for a larger market,
- Must pool resources to consider the possibility of a marketing and advertising campaign, and
- Look to external sources, i.e., the government, for subsidies or outright grants to enable them to pursue these efforts.

In a number of cases in Morocco, the plight of the small producer/grower is such that some cooperatives have been issued a GI, but no products have yet to be marketed using the GI. The reasons for the lack of product marketing under an issued GI include:

- Lack of certification by the certifying body,
- Absence of record keeping by growers/producers who might be eligible, and
- Inadequate literacy rates of producers/growers.

LIMITS OF GIS IN MOROCCO IN FOOD PRODUCTION

Dari Couspate (www.couscousdari.com) is a major industrial-size producer of couscous and pasta in Morocco. As a major producer, distributor, and exporter, Dari needs significant supply of cereal grains for its couscous and pasta products. The sheer quantity of raw materials needed to make its products limits Dari's ability to source grains from GI-certified sources. From Dari's perspective, one of the limitations of the single GI for couscous is that GI-certified products must be made or sourced from a highly select group of grains. Dari points out that the smaller growers who produce these grains and who are eligible to use GIs, belong to cooperatives that produce insufficient volume to meet the needs of a company like Dari, but lack an effective retail network of their own. Because of these limitations on supply of GI-certified inputs, Dari's products are not GI-certified and cannot take advantage of the exclusive marketing and distribution platforms available to GI-certified products. Rather, Dari relies on its trademark to brand and market its products, both nationally and internationally.

Due to these challenges, oftentimes the use of GIs in Morocco is dictated by the economic status of producers and growers, but this is misguided in its focus on the collectivization piece, rather than the marketing potential of the GI.

A large private company may have no need to participate directly in a cooperative or a collective but nonetheless may want to incorporate a profitable GI into its branding strategy. For example, a company may want to include a GI branded product as an ingredient in its goods if it perceives that use of the GI will boost the marketing potential of its product. However, as shown in the Dari Couspate example above, the decision to incorporate a GI branded product as an ingredient ultimately turns on whether the GI branded ingredient is available in sufficient quantities at an attractive price point.

While cooperatives and collectives generally are associated with GI branded goods because they allow small producers to pool their resources, choosing this organizational form does not dictate the adoption of a GI branding strategy. They are free to adopt non-GI source indicators, and indeed in some cases it may be more profitable to do so. For example, where the GI has no established reputation with the target consumer groups, where the GI shows poor marketing potential in target export markets, or where the regulatory framework implementing GIs is cost prohibitive, it may be more cost effective to implement a non-GI branding strategy. In no case, however, does the use of a GI branding strategy alleviate the producer from the need to employ a marketing plan to promote the brand with consumers in all of the target markets. Failure to do so will limit the profitability of the undertaking, regardless of the branding strategy adopted.

The following examples indicate that GIs are being granted but are not being utilized in the market. They strongly suggest that Morocco's GI system is overly cumbersome or that GIs are being registered that are not the best choice for marketing purposes.

Example 1: Processed Foods

Tajini is a Moroccan company (www.tajini.com) that makes and distributes various sauces, using a variety of agricultural products. Some of these inputs could be subject to GI protection, e.g., olives and saffron, but due to the fact that they are processed into sauces that cannot be GI-certified, purchasing agricultural products grown to GI standards provides no value-add. Tajini is concerned, however about the use of pesticides and other treatments on the agricultural inputs it uses in its products. Tajini competes in the market through its trademark promotion (branding and use of its logo) (Moroccan trademark registration Nos. 115858 and 115859).

Example 2: Grains

Another example of the importance of trademark registration is Dari Couspate's U.S. trademark registration that went into effect in 2014 (US Registration No. 4612135). Dari's corporate size and production volume supports its ability to compete internationally.

Example 3: Capers

In the Meknes region, local caper growers are taking steps to obtain a GI, but creating an acceptable set of standards has been slow and challenging. In addition, most growers are small and belong to cooperatives that market a variety of products in addition to capers including olives, honey, grains for couscous, and cactus oil. While there is currently no GI for capers, one of the economic interest groups in the region that represents several of these cooperatives, has taken steps to obtain a common trademark that can be used by any member grower, on any product. The strategy is to use a single trademark to market capers, honey, couscous, cactus oil, etc. This would alleviate the problem of small production by any single producer and grower and avoid any issues regarding standards that would have to be met in order to use a particular GI.

Example 4: Olive Oil

The economic interest group, Femmes du Rif, indicated that while it has a GI for olive oil, the GI has not been applied to any products. It does however, have the registered trademark, Farida® (Moroccan trademark registration number 83799). Thus, while the future use of a GI would subject olive growers to meet standards with regards to the collection of olives, method of oil extraction, etc., the use of the trademark and criteria for its use may be much less stringent even when the olives are grown on trees that are side-by-side.

SECTION VII

DEVELOPING ECONOMIES AND INTRODUCING GIs

To the extent that Morocco represents challenges for the introduction of GIs and such challenges would be similar in other national markets, a government contemplating a GI sui generis system should undertake a significant survey of both the consuming public and the producers and growers. It is important to be aware of the base level of familiarity and understanding of what a GI is among those who will put goods into commerce and the consuming public.

In Morocco, the comment most often heard from larger, private enterprises is that Moroccan consumers have no idea about GIs, and there will be no value added by complying with GI standards. Those comments create a divide between the private sector and the government officials who appeared to have accepted as fact that GIs will improve the economic situation for farmers and that by complying with standards and using GIs, they will benefit from higher prices.

The benefits of GIs in a developing economy setting are at present only speculative. Absent great efforts by the government at public education as well as significant investment in producer/grower education and sector modernization, it is difficult to see how the optimistic government statements will become a reality. While the government provides significant funding, machinery, and infrastructure to several cooperatives to compensate for lack of income, this model is not sustainable. Without demand from consumers, it is difficult to see how producers and growers who agree to comply with GI standards will recoup their investments in new practices and processes. Therefore, solid business analytics with attention to marketing appeal of the GI brand, consumer demand for differentiated (higher quality) alternatives, the total cost of implementing the GI strategy, and consumer price sensitivity must be employed when making decisions about whether to implement a GI branding strategy.

ANNEX A. PROTECTING GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS: THE GI REGISTER AND QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

A Geographical indication (GI) is a type of intellectual property (IP) that is required to be protected under the World Trade Organization’s Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS, Arts. 22, 23). Although GIs must be afforded protection, TRIPS **does not** require that a *sui generis* system of protection be created, i.e., a system separate and apart from an existing trademark registration system. It is because of the flexibility in TRIPS that there can be the coexistence of *sui generis* systems of registering and protecting GIs separate and apart from trademarks (like the one adopted by the European Union) and systems in which GIs are protected within the trademark system (like the one implemented by the United States).

According to the TRIPS Agreement, GIs are:

“indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a Member, or a region or locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographic origin.”²⁰

For example, agricultural products typically have qualities that derive from their place of production and are influenced by specific local factors, such as climate and soil. However, a geographical indication also may be applied to products whose qualities, characteristics or reputation are derived solely from human factors, such as know-how.

Having rights in a GI enables those who have the right to use the indication to prevent its use by a third party whose product does not conform to the *applicable standards*.

A protected GI **does not** enable the holder to prevent someone from making a product using the same techniques as those set out in the standards for that indication.

There are two major approaches to protecting GIs:

- *Sui generis* systems (i.e. special regimes of protection [EU²¹]) and
- Trademark systems, using certification marks, collective marks, and (in some circumstances) trademarks [U.S.²²].

²⁰ TRIPS Agreement Article 22.1.

²¹ See, e.g., EU GI register, Dossier No. FR/PDO/0217/0131 (Protected Designation of Origin, “Roquefort”) and Dossier No. FR/PDO/0017/0110 (Protected Designation of Origin, “Brie de Meaux”).

²² USPTO Trademark No. 3530137 (“Certified Grown in Idaho 100% Idaho Potatoes”), Certification mark owned by State of Idaho Potato Commission.

The main distinguishing characteristic between these two approaches is the level of government involvement in evaluating the “GI-ness” of a product, in ensuring compliance with the selected standards, and in enforcing the right. A *sui generis* system requires the dedication of resources to establish and maintain a separate institution for the purposes of fulfilling most or all of these functions. By contrast, a trademark system implementation leverages the existing resources of the trademark system to protect the GIs while the evaluation and enforcement functions are handled by third-party actors. However, both approaches can be used to establish rights for use by a producer or grower collective on goods that comply with defined standards.

INFRASTRUCTURE

It is likely that most governments have a system of trademark registration in place as opposed to a *sui generis* GI registry system. To the extent that governments have a trademark registration system in place, governments are advised to consider what changes would be necessary to an existing system to provide for the required protections for GIs.

Trademark registration systems have significant similarities from country to country. For the most part there are:

- Rules for application filing (requisite documentation, identification of the goods and services for which the registration is sought, and fees),
- Rules for the examination of trademark applications,
- Procedures governing communications with the IP Office to address issues that may arise during examination,
- Procedures for evaluating whether the proposed mark complies with statutory requirements such as distinctiveness requirements or conflicts with prior rights, and
- Procedures for seeking review of a contested decision, such as petitions for review and appeals.

An existing trademark registration system can be adapted to add the GI evaluation elements in order to avoid the creation of an all new administrative structure and the related expenses that may accompany the need to evaluate the registrability of a GI. Many of the administrative procedures for trademarks can be applied to determining the eligibility of a GI, but would require some additional rules and training for those assigned to examining applications to register a GI.

If a new and separate *sui generis* GI registration system is being considered, it is worth undertaking an assessment of the sectors that might pursue GI protection. In addition, an initial assessment of interest in pursuing GIs may provide some insight into the human resource needs of the government entity that would have responsibility for GI registrations. It is a “given” that rules will have to be implemented that give guidance to those who will seek GI registration and protection.

INTERNAL ASSESSMENT

The following lists of questions should be viewed as non-exhaustive. It may assist in providing a starting point for an internal assessment as to whether it would be beneficial for a government to create a sui generis GI registry separate and apart from its trademark registration system or whether an existing trademark registration system can be adapted to incorporate the protection of GIs.

Other more relevant questions may arise during any assessment process and may make some or all of the questions below irrelevant. Thus, the questions provided below are offered simply as a starting point for possible inquiry.

In an effort to evaluate the need for a separate sui generis GI registration system, governments considering the possibility of such a system, especially if an existing trademark registration system exists, might wish to engage in an internal evaluation of the need for a separate GI registration system.

GI REGISTRATION SYSTEM INTERNAL ASSESSMENT: QUESTIONS TO DETERMINE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF A SUI GENERIS GI REGISTRY	
1. WHAT ARE THE EXPENSES RELATED TO CREATING A SUI GENERIS SYSTEM VERSUS ADAPTING AN EXISTING TRADEMARK REGISTRATION SYSTEM?	
a.	A large new professional and support staff?
b.	Drafting new procedures?
c.	A parallel system of application examination?
d.	Establishing an authority that has the relevant technical expertise in every sector to evaluate an application as to whether it meets the definition of a GI
e.	A new information technology system just for GIs? (And related equipment?)
f.	Setting up an ex officio enforcement mechanism?
g.	Other?
2. WHAT GOVERNMENT AGENCY OR AGENCIES WILL HAVE THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY OF EVALUATING AND ISSUING A GI CERTIFICATION?	
a.	If a separate sui generis GI registry is the path chosen, will the duties be in an agency separate and apart from the Trademark operations?
b.	If so, how will communications be managed between the respective agencies and how will conflicts be resolved?
3. DOES THE GOVERNMENT HAVE THE RESOURCES TO PROMOTE THE GIS OR WILL THIS BE UNDERTAKEN BY THE RIGHT HOLDERS AS IS DONE WITH TRADEMARKS?	
4. DOES THE GOVERNMENT HAVE THE RESOURCES TO ENGAGE IN CREATING THE STANDARDS/CRITERIA FOR EACH GI THAT MAY BE SOUGHT BY THOSE IN THE VARIOUS INDUSTRY/AGRICULTURAL SECTORS?	
5. HAS THE GOVERNMENT DETERMINED WHETHER PRODUCERS/FARMERS ARE FAMILIAR WITH EITHER GIS OR TRADEMARKS?	
6. TO THE EXTENT THAT DOMESTIC PRODUCERS/GROWERS ARE NOT FAMILIAR WITH GIS, DOES THE GOVERNMENT HAVE SUFFICIENT RESOURCES TO PROVIDE EDUCATION AND TRAINING OR PAY FOR THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR PRODUCERS/GROWERS OF PRODUCTS THAT MAY BE PROTECTED BY GIS?	

**GI REGISTRATION SYSTEM INTERNAL ASSESSMENT:
QUESTIONS TO DETERMINE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF A SUI GENERIS GI REGISTRY**

7. IF A SEPARATE GI REGISTRATION SYSTEM WILL BE CREATED, HAS THE GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED THE FEES THAT IT WILL IMPOSE ON THOSE SEEKING A GI?

8. WHAT COSTS/EXPENSES ARE RELATED TO:

- a. Obtaining a GI certification (preparing criteria/standards for use of the GI)?
- b. Applying for a trademark (certification or collective mark)?
- c. Who pays for the costs/expenses related to preparing criteria and standards for use of the GI?

9. TO THE EXTENT THAT GIS, GENERALLY, ARE NOT KNOWN TO CONSUMERS,

- a. What specific actions/steps will the government undertake to raise awareness of the GI?
- b. Will the government take marketing, promotional actions for all GIs that are certified by the government?

10. PROMOTE GIS THAT ARE REGISTERED FOR THE DOMESTIC MARKET, WILL THE GOVERNMENT CREATE A BUDGET AND PROMOTE ITS DOMESTIC GIS FOR TARGETED FOREIGN MARKETS IN AN EFFORT TO RAISE AWARENESS OF THE GI IN A FOREIGN MARKET?

- a. Can the government provide financial assistance for marketing/advertising in foreign markets for all the GIs?
- b. If not, how will the government decide which GIs to financially support through promotion in foreign markets?

11. WILL THE GOVERNMENT ENSURE THAT THE CERTIFYING PROCEDURES FOR ALL GIS ARE RECOGNIZED BY THE EU IF IT HAS ENTERED INTO A TRADE AGREEMENT WITH THE EU?

Beyond the concerns related to the role of government, there should be a degree of inquiry and assessment of the industry/agricultural sectors that might benefit from GI protection. The following is a non-exhaustive list of questions for stakeholders in the relevant sectors that may assist in evaluating whether a GI branding strategy would be profitable.

**GI REGISTRATION SYSTEM INTERNAL ASSESSMENT:
QUESTIONS FOR STAKEHOLDERS IN RELEVANT SECTORS**

1. DO(ES) THE CROP(S) GROWN OR ANIMALS RAISED IN YOUR AREA HAVE ANY SPECIAL CHARACTERISTICS ABOUT THEM THAT ARE DIFFERENT/UNIQUE WHEN COMPARED TO THE SAME TYPES OF PRODUCTS GROWN OR ANIMALS RAISED BY OTHERS IN A DIFFERENT AREA?

If yes, follow up, identify what are any unique elements, characteristics that make them different than those in other regions.

- a. Are the unique/different characteristics something that makes the product better than those of others?
- b. Are these differences selling points that should be advertised/promoted?
- c. Are these characteristics appreciated by consumers who would be willing to pay higher prices?

2. IS THERE A PARTICULAR TERM OR SIGN THAT COMPLETELY ENCOMPASSES THE AREA IN WHICH THESE SPECIAL GOODS ARE GROWN OR PRODUCED? ARE THEY PRODUCED IN AN AREA THAT IS NOT FULLY DELIMITED BY A GEOGRAPHIC NAME?

3. WOULD THE GEOGRAPHIC NAME OR INDICATOR BE A GOOD BRAND?

a. Does it already have a reputation with consumers?

i. Domestic and/or international?

b. Is it easy to spell and pronounce?

c. Does it suggest high quality or exceptionalism?

d. Would the brand have market appeal in foreign markets?

i. Does it require knowledge of foreign language to understand its meaning in relation to the product or does it look and sound like a high quality brand to foreign consumers in the target markets?

4. WOULD THE PRODUCT BE SUITABLE FOR EXPORT?

a. To which markets?

b. Is there an established demand for your product in those markets?

5. WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO CHANGE YOUR METHODS OF PRODUCTION IN ORDER TO COMPLY WITH THE STANDARDS SET BY THE UNION/COOP?

a. Are there factors that would impact your decision?

i. How much work is involved

ii. How much it will cost to implement

iii. Will the standards result in a superior product

iv. Will it decrease the amount of goods I can produce

v. Will the price of the goods cover the additional expenses and trade-off in quantity produced

6. REGARDING YOUR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS, DO YOU KEEP RECORDS REGARDING:

a. Details of the types of seeds?

b. How much land is planted with the particular seeds and when did planting occur?

c. Type of fertilizer and how much is used with regard to each of the types of seeds/plants?

d. Use of pesticides or other agrochemicals?

e. Watering and irrigation?

f. When and how harvested?

g. Crop yields?

h. Other information?

7. REGARDING LIVESTOCK, DO YOU KEEP RECORDS REGARDING:

a. Veterinary care for each animal?

b. Breed types?

c. Dates of birth?

d. Animal feed?

e. Any other information?

8. IF YOU ARE NOT KEEPING DETAILED RECORDS, BUT HAD TO BEGIN TO DO SO, WOULD YOU BE ABLE TO COLLECT THE INFORMATION OR WOULD YOU NEED OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE TO CREATE A SYSTEM TO COLLECT THE DATA?

a. What would be the impact on your production costs if you had to do so?

9. DO YOU PROMOTE/ADVERTISE YOUR PRODUCTS UNDER A TRADEMARK?

a. If so, do you feel you are competitive with other alternatives on the market?

b. How successful do you feel that your branding strategy has been?

10. GIVEN THE CURRENT PRODUCTION LEVELS, WHAT STEPS/ACTIONS ARE YOU WILLING TO TAKE IN ORDER TO INCREASE PRODUCTION IF IT MIGHT RESULT IN INCREASED INCOME/REVENUES?

a. Are there specific factors/limitations that would drive your decision?

11. BASED UPON THE STEPS/ACTIONS IDENTIFIED, WHAT CHANGES WOULD THIS REQUIRE IN YOUR CURRENT PRODUCTION PRACTICES/METHODS?

12. WOULD YOU BE INCLINED TO TAKE THE STEPS TO COLLECT THIS DATA IN ORDER TO SELL YOUR GOODS UNDER A COMMON GEOGRAPHIC INDICATION WITH OTHERS?

13. WHAT FACTORS WOULD CAUSE YOU TO WORK WITH OTHERS TO MARKET YOUR GOODS UNDER A COMMON GEOGRAPHIC INDICATION?

14. DO YOU USE A LOGO/BRAND NAME (REGISTERED TRADEMARK) TO PROMOTE YOUR PRODUCT?

a. If you do use a logo/brand name is it registered with your IP Office?

b. Are you aware of the benefits of registering with IP Office?

15. DO YOU WORK WITH OTHERS IN A COOPERATIVE/COLLECTIVE/UNION TO SELL/MARKET YOUR PRODUCT?

If yes, has the concept of a GI been discussed for any specific product that you provide to the coop/collective/union?

16. HAS ANY GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL (NATIONAL OR LOCAL LEVEL) SUGGESTED THAT YOU SEEK GI PROTECTION FOR YOUR PRODUCTS?

If yes, follow up, for example, what have they said to encourage you to work with others to get GI protection?

a. Has anyone explained what a "GI" is?

b. Do you understand that the individual growers/farmers would not "own" the GI (unlike a registered trademark that is owned by a legal person (either individual or enterprise))*?

c. Has the government (local/regional/national) offered to provide financial support if you were to work with others to get GI protection (what specific financial support)?

d. Did they explain that changes in your working practices/methods would be required? If yes, did the government officials indicate that the government would cover those expenses?

e. Who will prepare guidelines for the products that would be protected by the GI?

f. Have they indicated that GIs would increase your revenues/income?

i. Did they explain how the use of GIs would cause your revenues/income to increase?

ii. Did you understand what a GI is and how it is different from a trademark?

17. HAVE YOU CONSIDERED THAT IF YOU MADE CHANGES TO YOUR PRACTICES/METHODS THAT YOUR REVENUES/INCOME MIGHT CHANGE EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE A GI?

18. HAS ANYONE DISCUSSED OR EXPLAINED THE ALTERNATIVE OF USING TRADEMARKS AND PROMOTING YOUR INDIVIDUAL BRAND OF PRODUCTS?

*A GI protected as a certification or collective mark is not owned by an individual, but a certifying group or collective, see footnote 22 above regarding Idaho potatoes.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

Essentially, a sui generis GI registration system is intended to subsidize GI branding strategies for growers/producers by providing publicly-funded standards evaluation, quality control, and enforcement. It is worth bearing in mind that if growers/producers in a particular country are not established or are very small with limited capacity, the costs associated with implementing a GI branding strategy are much higher due to gaps in sector modernization that must be filled as part of the GI implementation process. Moreover, if the reputation of the GI is not already established, there will be significant costs in promoting the GI to consumers. Therefore, governments adopting this system must critically evaluate products for marketability and profitability before investing limited public resources in implementing a GI branding strategy.

ANNEX B. GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS SELF-ASSESSMENT

INTRODUCTION

The following self-assessment is intended to gauge the understanding that various stakeholders have regarding geographical indications and the systems to protect GIs. In view of efforts to promote GIs as a tool for economic development, it is important to understand whether government officials and private sector stakeholders have a clear understanding of the preconditions and factors necessary to effectively use GIs as a tool for economic growth. It is noteworthy that a member of the European Union Delegation to the U.S. described the *sui generis* GI system in Europe as a protectionist tool to promote rural development as opposed to a tool for market access, adding that it is also aimed at instilling confidence in agricultural products.²³ A *sui generis* system provides subsidies to the agricultural sector in the form of public support for evaluation of standards, compliance testing, and enforcement of agricultural goods that exhibit particular qualities, characteristics or reputation essentially attributable to their production site. In view of the fact that most countries already have a trademark registration regime in place, it may be useful to determine the level of GI familiarity that exists among those who would be most affected: those who grow crops of various types and raise livestock that produce dairy and meat products.

SCORING SYSTEM

Questions are organized thematically, and the self-assessment can be completed using the entirety of questions or only one sub-sets. The self-assessment should be a facilitated discussion led by one facilitator. The group may be a group of mixed stakeholders or from one interest group, such as the private sector or a specific ministry. The facilitator should pose the question to the group, discuss as a group, and then select a score for each answer. At the end of each section the facilitator will tally the scores for that section and use the following scoring guide:

>4—An average score above 4 indicates that the stakeholder group is adequately informed to make significant policy decisions around the use and protection of GIs.

2-3.9—A score in this range indicates that the stakeholder group should seek additional information, technical assistance, training, or studies before engaging in policymaking, negotiations, or decisions around the use and protection of GIs.

²³ Washington Trade Daily, Vol. 24, No. 56 (Mar. 19, 2015). Referencing remarks by Giulio Menato.

<2—A score of less than 2 indicates that the stakeholder group requires immediate technical assistance, advice, training, or studies. Making any policy decisions around the use and protection of GIs would be risky with such limited preparation.

These self-assessment questions are organized into the following sections:

- *Questions 1-6* focus on governmental organization and transparency in regards to trademarks and geographical indications. Scores below 3 indicate that assistance is necessary to help the public sector communicate and/or organize itself to effectively implement its GI/trademark system.
- *Questions 7-18* focus on impact that the use of a GI may have on producers and growers, and the level of awareness that exists on their behalf. Scores below 3 indicate the need for technical assistance for producers and growers to understand and/or effectively operate within a GI/trademark system.
- *Questions 19-22* focus on the communication of GIs and trademarks to consumers. Scores below 3 indicate that some level of marketing is likely necessary in order to reap the full benefits of a GI/trademark system.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

The protection of trademarks and geographical indications is approached in different ways. The World Intellectual Property Organization Countries notes that countries have taken one of three possible approaches. There is the “sui generis” system similar to that in the European Union. Another is a system similar to the one in the U.S. that incorporates GI protection in a trademark registration system by granting collective or certification trademarks. A third way is to focus on business practices that provides protection through administrative product approval schemes. Regardless, a beginning point is for both the government and private sector stakeholders to be aware of some basics. The first several questions are aimed at gauging familiarity with government activities regarding GIs and intellectual property, specifically trademarks.

The following questions will ask you to rank your answer by choosing a number that best describes your opinion as:

1=strongly disagree;

2=disagree;

3=neither agree nor disagree; or do not have sufficient knowledge to answer the question

4=agree;

5=strongly agree.

SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	DISAGREE 2	NEUTRAL/UNKNOWN 3	AGREE 4	STRONGLY AGREE 5
1. YOU ARE ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE GOVERNMENT AGENCY THAT RECEIVES AND PROCESSES APPLICATIONS TO REGISTER TRADEMARKS				
1	2	3	4	5
2. YOU ARE ABLE TO IDENTIFY THE GOVERNMENT AGENCY THAT HAS THE PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY FOR DECIDING ON THE ISSUANCE OF GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS				
1	2	3	4	5
3. THE GOVERNMENT HAS ENGAGED IN AN EDUCATION PROGRAM TO EXPLAIN THE BENEFITS OF OWNING A REGISTERED TRADEMARK				
1	2	3	4	5
4. THE GOVERNMENT HAS ENGAGED IN AN EDUCATION PROGRAM TO EXPLAIN WHAT A GI IS AND THE BENEFITS OF MARKETING AND SELLING PRODUCTS UNDER A PROTECTED GI				
1	2	3	4	5
5. THE GOVERNMENT'S LEGAL PROTECTION OF GIS SHOULD BE PART OF THE TRADEMARK SYSTEM				
1	2	3	4	5
6. THE GOVERNMENT'S LEGAL PROTECTION OF GIS SHOULD BE A SYSTEM SEPARATE AND APART FROM TRADEMARKS				
1	2	3	4	5
7. PRODUCERS AND GROWERS UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS A DIFFERENCE IN WHO CAN OWN A TRADEMARK (FOR EXAMPLE, TRADEMARKS CAN BE OWNED BY AN INDIVIDUAL OR SINGLE ENTERPRISE, INCLUDING GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, PRODUCER COOPERATIVES, AND OTHER TYPES OF COMMERCIAL ENTITIES) AND WHO CAN OWN A GI (CAN BE OWNED BY A GOVERNMENT ENTITY OR COLLECTIVE GROUP)				
1	2	3	4	5
8. THE PRODUCERS AND GROWERS IN THE AGRICULTURE INDUSTRY VOLUNTARILY DECIDE IF THEY WANT TO OBTAIN PROTECTION OF A PARTICULAR GI				
1	2	3	4	5
9. YOU UNDERSTAND THAT THE BENEFITS OF COLLECTIVIZING (POOLING OF RESOURCES, IMPOSING QUALITY STANDARDS, ETC.) ARE NOT UNIQUE TO GIS AND CAN BE IMPLEMENTED IN ANY BRANDING STRATEGY				
1	2	3	4	5
10. WHAT YOU GROW OR RAISE IN YOUR REGION HAS CHARACTERISTICS THAT ARE UNIQUE DUE TO THE PLACE WHERE THEY ARE GROWN OR PRODUCED, AND THESE UNIQUE CHARACTERISTICS JUSTIFY A GI FOR WHAT IS GROWN OR RAISED				
1	2	3	4	5

STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	DISAGREE 2	NEUTRAL/UNKNOWN 3	AGREE 4	STRONGLY AGREE 5
11. THE QUALITY STANDARDS FOR PRODUCTS GROWN OR LIVESTOCK RAISED AND PROTECTED BY A GI SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED BY THE PRODUCERS/GROWERS WHO ARE INVOLVED IN RAISING THE LIVESTOCK OR GROWING THE PRODUCTS				
1	2	3	4	5
12. THE QUALITY STANDARDS FOR THE PRODUCTS GROWN OR LIVESTOCK RAISED AND PROTECTED BY A GI SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED BY A GOVERNMENT AGENCY				
1	2	3	4	5
13. PRODUCERS AND GROWERS UNDERSTAND THAT THEY MAY HAVE TO ADOPT MORE RIGOROUS PRACTICES AND RECORD KEEPING IF THEY WANT TO USE A GI				
1	2	3	4	5
14. PRODUCERS AND GROWERS ARE WILLING TO UNDERTAKE THE COSTS OF MORE RIGOROUS PRACTICES AND INCREASED RECORD KEEPING IN ORDER TO PRODUCE AND MARKET GOODS UNDER A PROTECTED GI, EVEN IF THESE PRACTICES LOWER TOTAL PRODUCTION				
1	2	3	4	5
15. PRODUCERS AND GROWERS ARE WILLING TO UNDERTAKE THE WORK AND EXPENSES RELATED TO MORE RIGOROUS PRACTICES AND INCREASED RECORD KEEPING BECAUSE THIS WILL JUSTIFY HIGHER PRICES AND INCREASED REVENUES FOR THEIR GOODS				
1	2	3	4	5
16. THERE HAS BEEN A MARKET STUDY THAT INDICATES THAT COMPLYING WITH GI STANDARDS AND MARKETING UNDER A GI WILL RESULT IN INCREASED REVENUES FOR PRODUCERS AND GROWERS				
1	2	3	4	5
17. THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD PROVIDE FUNDING TO PROMOTE GIS AND PROVIDE FUNDING FOR MARKETING AND ADVERTISING OF ALL NEW GIS IN THE COUNTRY				
1	2	3	4	5
18. THE DECISION TO COMPLY WITH ANY STANDARDS FOR A PARTICULAR GI IS MADE BY A PRODUCER/GROWER; AND THEREFORE IT IS THE PRODUCER/GROWER WHO SHOULD CONTRIBUTE TO A COOPERATIVE OR UNION'S PROMOTIONAL, MARKETING, AND ADVERTISING BUDGET, NOT THE GOVERNMENT				
1	2	3	4	5
19. PRODUCERS AND GROWERS UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS NO ASSURANCE OF INCREASED REVENUES (INCREASED PROFITS) IF THEY COMPLY WITH HIGHER STANDARDS TO MARKET GOODS BEARING A GI				
1	2	3	4	5

STRONGLY DISAGREE 1	DISAGREE 2	NEUTRAL/UNKNOWN 3	AGREE 4	STRONGLY AGREE 5
20. CONSUMERS IN DIFFERENT REGIONS OF THE COUNTRY ARE AWARE OF THE UNIQUE AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS OFFERED BY LOCAL PRODUCERS/GROWERS IN THE REGIONS WHERE THEY RESIDE				
1	2	3	4	5
21. CONSUMERS IN THE DOMESTIC MARKET ARE AWARE OF TRADEMARKS THAT APPEAR ON GOODS AND/OR PACKAGING AND MAKE PURCHASING DECISIONS BASED ON THE TRADEMARKS THEY SEE ON GOODS AND/OR PACKAGING				
1	2	3	4	5
22. CONSUMERS IN THE DOMESTIC MARKET ARE AWARE OF WHAT A GI IS AND ARE WILLING TO PAY HIGHER PRICES FOR GI PROTECTED PRODUCTS REGARDLESS OF WHERE IN THE COUNTRY THE GOODS ARE PRODUCED				
1	2	3	4	5
23. CONSUMERS IN FOREIGN MARKETS WOULD BE FAMILIAR WITH GIS FROM YOUR COUNTRY				
1	2	3	4	5

ANNEX C: LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

Name	Title	Organization	Organization Type
Abdelilah Chami	Consultant	N/A	N/A
Radouan Mounir	General Manager	African of Agriculture	Producer/exporter
Sara Mouhsine Carvajal		AgrupaMarca	Producer/packer/distributor
Ali Ben Mokhtar	Consultant		Exporter
Mina Ait El Moudden	Association Director	Argan's	Argan oil cooperative
Khadija Errais		Argania Velvetine	Argan oil cooperative
Karim Moullablad	President	Association Moullablad the Developpement Agricole	Lentil producer
Lhoussaine Agouzoul	Chief, Research Department	Center for the Promotion of Moroccan Exports	Government agency
Rachida Ouaddi	Export Advisor, Marketing Section	Center for the Promotion of Moroccan Exports	Government agency
		Cooperative Tyout Chiadma	Olive oil cooperative
Hassan Khalil	Director General	Dari Couspate	Grain producer/packer/exporter
Meryam El Ouafi	President	Entrelles Entrepreneures	Association of female entrepreneurs
Abdellatif Bannannni		Federation of Canned Foods (FICOPAN)	Industry association
Sadek Cherif	Director	Fenagri	National Federation of Agribusiness
Errati Zinebaprine		Fromage de Chevre Chefchaouen	Dairy cooperative
Christophe Gribelin		Groupe Domaine de la Zouina	Wine producer
Hanan Lachehab		Groupement d'Interet Economique	Women's economic interest group
Loukili Bensalem	President	Groupement d'Interet Economique Produit de Terroir Walili	Economic interest group representing Walili
Said Bendimrad	Head, Office of Commercialization and Exportation	Maroc Taswig	Public support group for small producers
Allal Chibane	Chief of Label Promotion	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries	Government agency
Moulay Benaissa Samia	Chief of the Division of Market Development	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries	Government agency
Souad Bennani Kheir Eddine	Head of Europe & America Division	Ministry of Industry, Trade, and New Technologies	Government agency
Dounia El Ouardi	Director of Client Relations	Moroccan Office of Industrial and Commercial Property (OMPIC)	Government agency
Nafissa Belcaid	Director of Distinctive Signs	Moroccan Office of Industrial and Commercial Property (OMPIC)	Government agency
Mohammed El Belkacemi	Director of Controls for the Protection of Vegetables	National Office of Sanitary and Secure Food Products (ONSSA)	Government agency

Houda Juessous	Owner	SICOPA	Exporter of olives, capers, tomatoes, and sweet peppers
Jamil Benhassain	General Manager	Tajini	Sauce/tapenade producer and exporter
Hassan El Allali		United Nations Organization for Industrial Development (UNIDO)	Donor
Ebe Muschiali		United Nations Organization for Industrial Development (UNIDO)	Donor
Ahmed Boukhamen	President	Union des Cooperatives Apicoles Tadla Azilal	Beekeepers cooperative
Jamila Idbourrous		Union Des Cooperatives Des Femmes De L'Arganerie	Women's argan oil cooperative
Rabia El Alama		United States Chamber of Commerce	US Government Agency

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