



PROTECTION AT INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

Beyond its borders, the EU takes many steps to protect product authenticity and ensures that European quality products are recognised throughout the world. This is important, as products with a geographical indication account for around 15% of EU agricultural exports. GI protection helps combat counterfeited products, which threaten the reputation of authentic, local and regional products and the livelihoods of their producers.

PROTECTION AGAINST IMITATION:

The quality schemes outlined before imply significant legal protections against the counterfeiting of world-renowned EU products such as *Φέτα/Feta cheese*, but also *Prosecco wine and other specific grapevine products*.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON RECOGNITION OF QUALITY PRODUCTS:

The EU also negotiates standalone agreements. For instance, an EU-Switzerland agreement includes a provision whereby the geographical indication *Genièvre/Jenever/Genever* is protected in Switzerland. This protection applies, in return, to Swiss *Gruyère* cheese sold in the EU. Likewise, a range of product names are protected under the EU-Japan economic partnership agreement such as *Cava* in Japan, and *Kobe beef* in the EU.

EU quality schemes help protect the heritage of Europe's agricultural sector and enhance consumer recognition of quality products all over the world.

Look out for EU quality logos next time you are shopping or on holiday around the EU.

EU - CHINA GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS AGREEMENT

The EU-China bilateral agreement, protecting geographical indications (GIs) in China and Europe entered into force on 1 March 2021. The agreement protects around **200 iconic European and Chinese agri-food names against imitation and usurpation**, bringing mutual trade benefits and introducing consumers to guaranteed, authentic products from two regions with a rich culinary and cultural tradition. Within four years after its entry into force, the scope of the agreement could expand to cover an additional **175 GI names from both sides**.

FIND OUT MORE

About the EU's quality schemes:
ec.europa.eu/quality-schemes-explained

EU quality food and drink:
https://ec.europa.eu/info/food-farming-fisheries/food-safety-and-quality/certification/quality-labels/eu-quality-food-and-drink_en

Search for quality products:
<https://ec.europa.eu/info/e-ambrosia-database>

Search for Geographical Indications across the European Union and beyond:
<https://www.tmdn.org/giview>

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A SIGN OF AUTHENTICITY: EU QUALITY SCHEMES THAT PROTECT AUTHENTIC AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS



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Agriculture
and Rural
Development

In the European Union, **quality schemes cover over 3,300 products**: cheeses and other dairy products, meat, fruit and vegetables, wines, spirits and more. EU symbols have been established to publicise these products. These symbols appear on product packaging, making it easier to identify these products on the market. **They guarantee that an EU product is authentic, not an imitation or counterfeit, and serve to reinforce its international recognition.**

GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS PROTECTING ORIGINS

Geographical indications apply to various food, agricultural products, wines, aromatised wines and spirit drinks produced in identified regions. They protect the reputation of specific product names, the regional and traditional production processes or other essential elements (such as local breeds or plant varieties) that shape culinary heritage throughout Europe. These processes and elements are detailed in a product specification, which is available for each item included in the scheme.

PRODUCT NAMES

What's in a name? EU quality schemes highlight the unique link between a product's registered name and the place where it is made. These include **protected designation of origin (PDO)**, **protected geographical indication (PGI)** for food and wine, and **geographical indications** for spirits and aromatised wines (GI).

FOOD



A protected designation of origin (PDO) is reserved for the names of products with the strongest link between its characteristics and its geographical origins. Raw materials and production steps all take place in the specific geographical area, and the final product is determined by these local ingredients and producers' know-how.

- ▶ **Roquefort PDO** cheese can only be called 'Roquefort' if it is made from the milk of the local Lacaune breed of sheep and ripened and aged in the natural caves of Roquefort-sur-Soulzon in southern France.
- ▶ Since the 1700s, Latvian farmers have cultivated dried field peas (**Latvijas Lielie Pelēkie Zirņi PDO**). This type of legume is grown in nearly all of Latvia, with a distinctive marbled pattern, greyish hue and especially large size, and features in local festive dishes.



The PDO logo is mandatory for all PDO-registered food and agricultural products. These products cannot be legally produced elsewhere under the same name.

A protected geographical indication (PGI) also links a product to a geographical area, through quality characteristics and/or reputation. PGI registration requires at least one of the production, processing or preparation processes to take place in the specific region. However, the ingredients do not need to come from that region.

- ▶ Slovenia's Karst region has a century-long local tradition of **Kraški Pršut PGI** cured ham. Butchers select the best quality raw material (which may be from outside this coastal region) and dry the whole hind legs using only the coarse sea salt of the Kras (Karst), which accounts for the cured ham's authentic flavour.
- ▶ **Lammefjordsgulerod PGI** carrots are harvested from the sandy soil of the Lammefjord in Denmark. This nutrient-packed reclaimed seabed of the fjord is the key prerequisite for the product's production and great taste.



The PGI logo is mandatory for all PGI-registered food and agricultural products. These products cannot be legally produced elsewhere under the same name.



WINES AND SPIRIT DRINKS



Geographical indications also apply to Europe's wine and spirit sectors. Wines can be stamped with **PDO** and **PGI** logos, while the **'geographical indication' (GI)** can apply to aromatised wines and spirits distilled or manufactured in the EU.

- ▶ The **PDO** logo on the **Maltese Gozo wine** means that the grapes are exclusively from Gozo, one of Malta's three islands. Whereas, the **PGI** logo on **Rheinischer Landwein** means that at least 85 % of the grapes have come exclusively from Germany's Rheinhessen wine region.
- ▶ **Irish Whiskey GI** has been brewed, distilled and matured in Ireland since the 6th century. As with the PGI scheme, its production takes place on the emerald island from the brewing to the maturation of this exquisite beverage.



PDO, PGI and GI logos are optional for wines and spirit drinks, unlike food and agricultural products, which are required to have these logos.