
Complexities in interesting New World producers in Old World GI customs

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Résumé

There are some well-known global divisions in the level of interest in geographical indications (GI). "New World" countries – Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, just to start alphabetically – are less supportive of strong GI protection than European countries and India. Within Europe, Mediterranean countries are much stronger advocates of GI systems than their Nordic and North Atlantic neighbors. These differences are often traced to self-interest – Mediterranean countries being home to many of the most famous geographical names for foodstuffs and New World countries being populated significantly with immigrant communities who came from those same areas. But there are other complexities in trying to interest New World producers in GIs and, concomitantly, any legal regime that offers GIs strong protection. These may include differences in forms and levels of entrepreneurship as well as desire for diversification. For example, in the past twenty years the United States has seen an explosion of artisanal cheesemaking. One might reasonably think that would significantly increase interest in GIs and their protection, but it does not appear to have done so. Another complexity for "New Worlders" is that many New World geographical names, either famous by themselves or known for agricultural production, trace back to indigenous communities – Jujuy, Kurna, Maipu, Miami, Nantucket, Okanagan, Peramangk, and scores more. The proper, respectful use of these geographical names by principally non-indigenous producers is a complex social, ethical, and political issue that has no parallel for Mediterranean countries where GI protection first flourished. This talk is a first attempt to look at these puzzles.

Mots-Clés: GI New World

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