

Geographical Indications of Vegetables, Spices and Plantation Crops

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SUMMARY

Our country has a mega-diversified climate and fruitful soil for cultivation, providing significant prospects for vegetable production expansion. The most difficult issue in the current circumstances is to be self-sufficient in production in order to feed the ever-increasing human population. In order to compete in both the domestic and international markets, increased output per unit area requires the incorporation of technology. Many variety of diverse vegetable crops flourish in India under specific climate and climate zone conditions. This particular environment is responsible for providing some distinctive qualities to that particular species of fruit veggie produce. In this sense, the notion of geographical indications promotes data about product quality and other criteria. Fruit crops received the most GIs (36) out of 86 horticulture items, followed by vegetable crops (11). Plantation crops and spices each have eight GI tags, whereas blooming plants and medicinal and aromatic plants have five and two GI tags, respectively.

INTRODUCTION

Intellectual property is a creation of the human mind and intellect and is hence referred to as "intellectual property." A geographical indication (GI) is a sign or label given to specific items that relate to a specific geographical location (WIPO). It is an exclusive right that recognises the importance of climate and location in distinguishing the produce on the basis of distinct qualities. It is also a useful method for reinforcing traditional knowledge linked with them. The use of GI of the items represents a certain quality or has a certain reputation in their geographical area. It is mostly used to identify manufacturing, handicrafts, cuisine, natural commodities, and agricultural goods from a specific location that has earned market trust. The geographical indicator is often owned by a community that is located in a certain geographical area. Geographical Indication of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act 1999 governs GI in all Indian jurisdictions.

Geographical indication (GI) of vegetable, plantation and spice crops

Since the passage of the GI Act, 108 agricultural products have been listed with a GI tag, with horticultural items accounting for more than 75% of the total. Among horticulture goods, the chilli has the most GI tags, followed by brinjal and onion. Nagaland's tree tomato and a unique species of bean from Maharashtra are also on the list of registered GIs. For geographical considerations, tea is the most important plantation crop. Surprisingly, Darjeeling tea was the first item to receive a GI label in 2004. Apart from tea and coffee, coconut and cashew are also on the GI list. For geographical indicators, cardamom is the most important spice crop, followed by pepper. Elite clones of ginger, turmeric, and bay leaf have GI tags as well.

Table 1 — List of GI tags accorded to vegetable, spice and plantation crops

Crop	Name	State	Specific character
Vegetable Crops			
Chilli	Naga Mircha (<i>Capsicum chinense</i>)	Nagaland	High pungency
	Guntur Sannam Chilli (<i>Capsicum annum</i>)	Andhra Pradesh	Pungency, colour
	Byadagi Chilli (<i>Capsicum annum</i>)	Karnataka	Colour, mild pungency, Oleoresin
	Mizo Bird's Eye Chilli (<i>Capsicum chinense</i>)	Mizoram	Pungency
Tree tomato	Bhiwapur Chilli	Maharashtra	
	Naga Tree Tomato (<i>Cyphomandra betacea</i>)	Nagaland	Pickle, Chutney
Brinjal	Udupi Mattu Gulla Brinjal	Karnataka	Unique taste
	Jalgaon Brinjal	Maharashtra	
Onion	Bangalore Rose Onion	Karnataka	Bulb shape and pungency
Bean	Waghya Ghevada	Maharashtra	Taste and rich in protein

	Lasalgaon Onion		Maharashtra	Aroma, shelf life, colour
Spices				
Cardamom	Sikkim Large Cardamom (<i>Amomum subulatum</i>)		Sikkim	Pod quality
	Alleppey Green Cardamom (<i>Elettaria cardamomum</i>)		Kerala	Pod quality, oil content
	Coorg Green Cardamom		Karnataka	Fruit quality
Pepper	Malabar Pepper		Kerala	Berry flavour
Turmeric	Waigoan Turmeric		Maharashtra	
Ginger	Assam Karbi Anglong Ginger		Assam	Flavour and pungency
	Tellicherry Pepper		Kerala	Aroma and pungency
Bay leaf	Uttarakhand Tejpatt		Uttarakhand	
Plantation crops				
Tea	Darjeeling Tea(word & logo)		West Bengal	Flavour
	Kangra Tea		Himachal Pradesh	Flavour
	Nilgiri (Orthodox) Logo		Tamil Nadu	Quality
	Assam (Orthodox) Logo		Assam	
Coffee	Monsooned Malabar Arabica Coffee			
	Monsooned Malabar Robusta Coffee		Kerala	Bean quality and aroma
Cashew	Vengurla Cashew		Maharashtra	Nut quality
Coconut	Eathomozhy Tall Coconut		Tamil Nadu	Nut quality

Significance of Geographical indication in vegetable, plantation and spice crops

- It can restrict other states or locations from using registered geographical indications without permission.
- It provides legal protection to GI items, increasing their export potential.
- It is an essential component of rural development capable of effectively advancing commercial and economic goals such as tradition and culture.
- It can also improve corporate clustering and rural supply chain integration.
- GI can keep an eye on product quality, traceability, and food safety.

Lack of Post-GI Protection Mechanism

The lack of an efficient post-GI mechanism to prevent unscrupulous marketing is perhaps the most serious worry. There has been some success in giving GIs to agricultural items, but simply registering goods does not meet the act's aims unless it is backed up by a strong enforcement system in both local and export markets. Because most producer groups lack the money and knowledge to properly defend or promote their GI brand, the role of government is critical in ensuring that registered commodities are protected from unfair competition.

CONCLUSION

Geographical indications are a new area of intellectual property. India has diverse agro-climatic conditions, which have supported the production of a variety of vegetable, plantation, and spice crops. Each vegetable, spice, and plantation crop cultivated in India has a specific characteristic that distinguishes it from crops grown in other countries. These distinguishing characteristics simplify crop registration under GI, although the number of registered crops under GI is far less than the number of crops eligible for registration. As a result, there is an urgent need to raise community/farmer awareness on the relevance of GI. It is vital to maintain low quality standards through the use of effective farming practices. Being given a GI image for a site does not mean everything to farmers in that location; yet, distinctive measures such as offering an online stage and a foundation for GAP implementation are urgently needed. The GI tag will improve the branding and marketing of products in both international and domestic markets.

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