



Defending Common Names Defending Common Sense

The Consortium for Common Food Names

The Consortium for Common Food Names (CCFN) was founded 10 years ago with one main goal in mind: to ensure that everybody has the right to common names when marketing well-known foods.

Over the last decade, the CCFN has worked with leaders in agriculture, trade, and intellectual property from around the world to promote a common-sense approach that protects both legitimate geographical indications (GIs) and generic food names.

To safeguard U.S. food and agricultural exports, it's crucial that USTR and USDA establish with our trading partners robust protections for specific common food and beverage terms, utilizing trade discussion forums, letter exchanges, and/or Memorandums of Understanding with key export markets.

What's at Stake

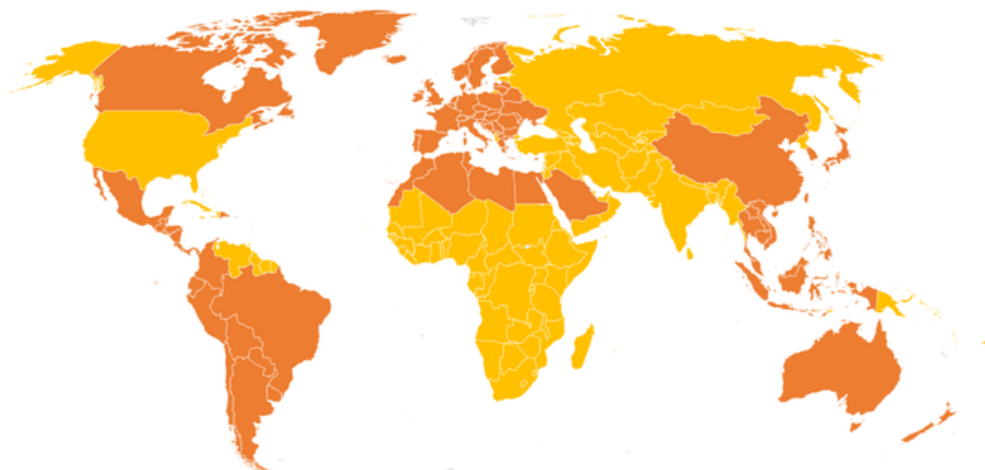
The right to use common names in marketing well-known, favorite foods is under threat.

GIs are used to describe specialized products made in a specific region, such as Idaho Potatoes. Potatoes on their own, however, are a common term that anyone can use. Over the last decade, the European Union has used its economic influence to impose provisions in trade agreements to abuse GI protections and block U.S. agricultural products from reaching important global markets.

These unfair trade practices monopolize generic food names to the advantage of foreign producers and have real and lasting effects, especially during times of economic unease and inflation.

Farmers suffer lower demand, food producers and exporters lose consumer awareness and marketing investments, consumers face fewer choices and retailers take the brunt of those reduced sales.

Where Common Names are Most At-Risk



Orange = High Risk
Yellow = Medium Risk