ANSA will have a Guideline on official control of Geographical Indications, developed with the EU support

What is the main objective of verification of compliance of products and foodstuffs which have registered name as protected geographical indication (PGI), protected designation of origin (PDO) and traditional specialties guaranteed (TSG)? What competencies do have inspectors who are carrying out verification of compliance with specifications? Why do national producers need an ex-officio control and what benefits does this control offer to consumers? These are just some of the topics covered in a guide being developed by the experts of the EU project “Support to Enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights” that will help the National Agency for Food Safety (ANSA) specialists in official control of PGI, PDO and STG products.

In this respect, project’s international experts, Izabella Kamińska and Dariusz Goszczyński met on February 27th with representatives from ANSA to agree on the structure and content of the guide.

The aim of the Guideline is to present the system of official controls dedicated to agricultural products and foodstuffs which have registered as a geographical indication (PGI), protected designation of origin (PDO) and traditional specialties guaranteed (TSG).

“*The added value of the geographical indications and traditional specialties guaranteed is based on consumer trust. It is only credible if accompanied by a verification that a product complies with the corresponding product specification and monitoring of the use of registered names to describe product placed on the market. In this respect, the competent authorities to verify compliance with the legal requirements related to the quality schemes must offer adequate guarantees of objectivity and impartiality, and shall have at their disposal the qualified staff and resources necessary to carry out their functions*”, said Izabella Kamińska, Head of Supervision of Certification Bodies and Production Department at the Main Inspectorate of Agricultural and Food Quality in Poland.

In turn, the project’s expert, Dariusz Goszczyński states: *“Food quality schemes aim to help producers to communicate the product characteristics and its uniqueness to consumers, thereby ensuring fair competition, respect for intellectual property rights and the integrity of the internal market. So, before placing geographical indications on the market, producers must request from ANSA a certificate confirming that the product corresponds to its brand and its qualities”.*

“*As a competent authority with the food safety control function, we need this guide for official control on the protection of geographical indications. Applying the knowledge of this aide memoir in our activity we will ensure the efficiency of official controls and will protect both national producers and will offer safe products to consumers*”, believes Ela Malai, Head of the Audit Service at ANSA.

The publication will have two chapters which will include information on the verification of compliance process, the purpose of ex officio controls, and international case studies. Thus, the chapter 1 will describe the system of verification of compliance of products with registered names as PGI PDO and TSG with their specification. This chapter will deliver also practical examples of each step of the system of control – from planning, through carrying out, to reporting. And the second chapter will give information of ex officio controls and will present case studies from the EU member states on identified infringements and effective actions taken by competent authorities in order to eliminate unlawful practices in this field.

"*We currently have some geographic indications that have already been registered, but in order to be placed on the market they need the right to use, and the most optimal solution would be the ANSA involvement. In order for this process to work, there must be a guide and other procedural documents, and simultaneous training of inspectors. As a result, producers will be able to benefit from the geographical indication system, which would bring them recognition and profit*", says Simion Levitchi, Head of AGEPI's Brand and Industrial Design Directorate.

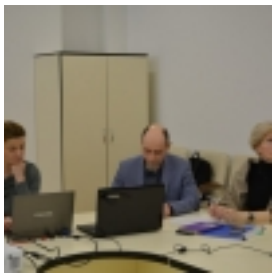
The Guideline on official control in the scope of the designation of origin (PDO), the protected geographical indication (PGI) and traditional specialties guaranteed (TSG) predicts will be published in the spring of this year.

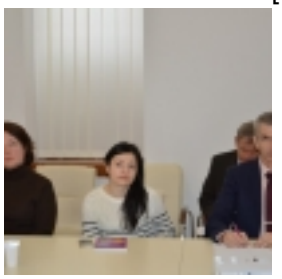
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The following Geographical Indications and Appellations of Origin are registered in Moldova: Divine GI, Stefan Voda GI, Trajan's Tide wine and Codru wine, Zabriceni GI for dry plants and fruits, Calarasi roses jam GI, Nimoreni apricot brandy GI, AO Ciumai for sweet red and naturally red dessert wine, Romanesti AO for red wine and the AO Cheese from Popeasca.

The technical assistance project EuropeAid/137467/DH/SER/MD "Support to enforcement of the intellectual property rights" was launched in November 2016, with a two-year implementation period, one of the basic objectives being the improvement of the geographical indication system in the Republic of Moldova.

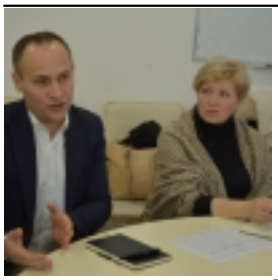
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