

Symposium on Geographical Indications

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Key Themes

- Importance of global brands and trademarks
- Concerns about future use of generic products
- Concerns about the interaction of geographical indications and trademark protection



GMA Member Companies



The Power of Brands

- Brand name products
 - Inspire loyalty by
 - Conveying reputation of product
 - Quality of product
 - Consistency of product
- Valued by companies who invest billions of dollars to create global brands
- Protected by trademarks



Globalization and the Food Industry

- Domestically and internationally products reflect ethnic diversity of populations
- Products formulated to reflect new cultural needs
- As in past, many new products have antecedents in other countries (home to immigrants)

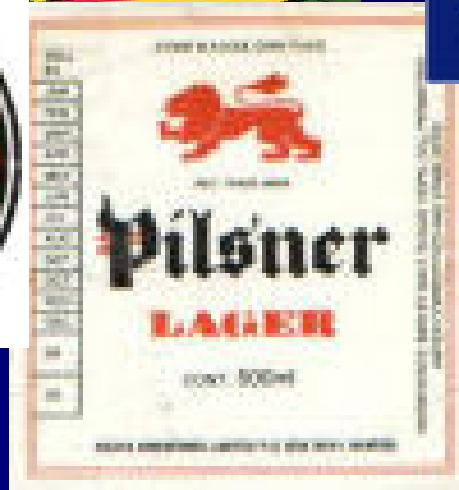
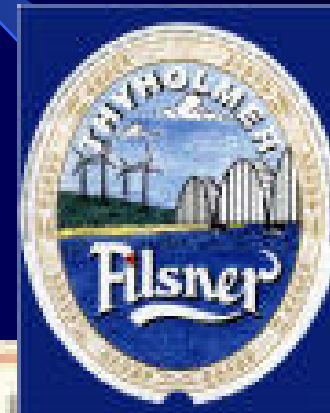
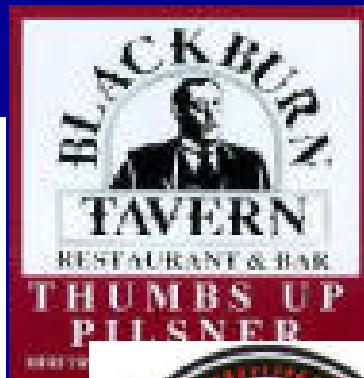


GI Concern: Generic Products

- Call for absolute protection in agriculture negotiations could restrict use of commonly known products.
- Result is reduced choice and consumer confusion as known products are withdrawn from the market
- Impact on exports to third markets as definition of generic is subjective



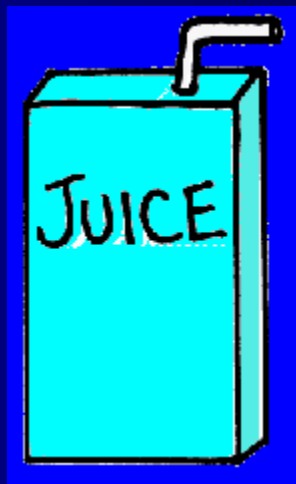
Generic products: Pilsner?



GI Concern: Trademarks and Priority

- Potential to diminish value of trademarks and global brands
- Possibly reduce innovation and investment in new food products
- Example:

➤ “Nice” Juice



GI Solutions

- Key question is not whether to protect geographical indications but how to protect them
- Options:
 - Enhance facilitation and registration of trademarks/GIs
 - Assistance to smaller producers to defend trademark rights
 - Broaden notification for maximum global understanding of protected products



Conclusions

- Food is different from wines and spirits in terms of number of producers and globalization of food production
- Existing rules already protect against misleading use of geographical indications
- What is needed is better enforcement of existing rules not new rules

