

# GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS

A GUIDE TO THE POTENTIAL  
IMPACT ON AUSTRALIAN DAIRY



## **What are Geographical Indications?**

A Geographical Indication (GI) identifies a product as originating in a specific region where a particular quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is attributable to that geographic origin.

This is best illustrated with examples from the wine industry, where champagne and burgundy are both now protected GIs. This means that Australian wine producers are not able to call wines by these names.

### **An agreement on GIs as part of an Australia–EU FTA could have two possible impacts:**

- 1 Restricted use of common food names, including names of cheeses commonly produced in Australia.
- 2 Restricted use of packaging and labelling that are judged to evoke an image of a particular EU product in the mind of the consumer e.g. flags, colours or images that evoke European nations.

The impact of a strict agreement on GIs will be keenly felt by farmers, processors and consumers. The Australian dairy industry seeks to ensure the ongoing use of common food names, particularly given Australia's rich migration history.

## Geographical Indications

As part of the Australia-European Union Free Trade Agreement (FTA), common names for some of our favourite Australian dairy products could be forced to undergo a name change to satisfy EU demands as part of the FTA deal.

Local products with estimated annual aggregate sales of over \$650 million are at some commercial risk if dairy Geographical Indications (GIs) are built into any agreement.

The Australian dairy industry seeks to ensure the ongoing use of common food names that are part of the public domain. An agreement as part of the FTA could mean that names such as feta and parmesan could not be used by Australian producers. These names have been used by Australian manufacturers for generations.

## Have your say!

The industry needs your voice heard in a three-month consultation period on GIs so the Australian Government can fully represent dairy in the FTA negotiations.

Speak to Australian Dairy Farmers, Australian Dairy Products Federation, Dairy Australia or your State Dairy Farmer Organisation to find out how they are engaging on your behalf.

So make a submission at [dfat.gov.au/aeufta/pop](https://dfat.gov.au/aeufta/pop) by 13 November 2019.

### FACT #1

The EU has listed more than **50 cheese names** that they want to protect

### FACT #2

**Feta** and **parmesan** are at **highest risk** with over 70 Australian brands of feta and 30 brands of Australian parmesan currently in market

### FACT #3

The **potential impact** on **Australian dairy manufacturers** from lost sales and marketing by a strict enforcement of GIs could initially cost **\$70–90 million per year**

### FACT #4

It's not just cheese names the EU wants to protect, it's **packaging, labels** and **colours** that evoke European countries that are also under threat

### FACT #5

A strict GIs regime could see **dairy employment decline** by up to **1000 people**



"These common brands were established years ago, our lives have been built around these names – this is our livelihood.

We have invested a lot of hard work and capital to build the name recognition we now have in the marketplace.

If we were to lose the ability to use common names, I seriously doubt if we would survive, and more than 60 years of family heritage and tradition would be lost."

Florida Cheese Director  
*Mauro Montalto*

### AUSTRALIA'S ENDANGERED DAIRY LIST

FETA • PARMESAN • GRANA PADANO  
HALOUMI • HAVARTI • PECORINO  
ROMANO • NEUFCHATEL • TALEGGIO  
GRUYERE • ASIAGO • GREEK YOGHURT





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