

Protection of Geographical Indications

- The EU Protection System of Geographical Indications and Introduction of a Protection System in Japan -

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Summary

The EU and many other countries have established protection systems of geographical indications (GIs). In Japan, there are emerging interests in such a system to promote branding of agricultural products and foodstuffs. The EU system emphasizes the link between products and geographical environment, and it is a kind of quality assurance system with official compliance controls regarding product specifications. It is observed that GI products have been sold at higher prices in the market. Japan has a regional collective trademark system to protect regional brands, but it is not sufficient to assure quality to the consumers and enhance the value of brands.

In order to contribute to the consideration of the establishment of a protection system of GIs in Japan, this paper makes clear the details of the EU protection system by analyzing materials such as Council Regulation of GIs, reviewing existing research, and comparing the EU system to the Japanese regional collective trademark system. Through these analyses, much implication could be got from the EU protection system of GIs with official compliance controls regarding product specifications to establish a protection system of GIs for agricultural products and foodstuffs in Japan.