

February 2012

Study on the identification of Geographical Indications (GI) almost complete

Saint Lucia and other Member States of the OECS received assistance to prepare a strategy on geographical indications. The overriding objective of this project which runs from January to March of this year is to identify potential geographical indications and develop feasible implementation strategies.

The Project will also assist in raising awareness and building capacity, analysing the laws and regulations affecting geographical indications, identifying lessons for the OECS and advising trade negotiators. The results expected from the project are the identification of five potential GI products with draft specifications and implementation strategies, a country strategy paper for Saint Lucia, proposals for revision of laws and regulations which affect geographical indications and recommendations on the use of Saint Lucia's approach as a model for other OECS Member States.

The findings of the study will be discussed at a meeting of trade and intellectual property stakeholders to be held in March in Saint Lucia.

A geographical indication (GI) is a name or sign used on certain products which corresponds to a specific geographical location or origin (e.g. a town, region, or country). The use of a GI may act as a certification that the product possesses certain qualities, is made according to traditional methods, or enjoys a certain reputation, due to its geographical origin e.g. "cheddar cheese" this type of cheese is associated with a particular location in the UK. The GI designation helps to distinguish the product and can be used in advertising campaigns.

Funding to undertake the study was provided by Tradecom which is a facility established by the European Union to assist African Caribbean and Pacific States.

The Trade Policy Unit assist St. Kitts/Nevis assess its implementation of trade agreements

The Trade Policy Unit participated in a two-day workshop on the role of Government Ministries and institutions in the effective implementation of trade agreements held during 27 - 28 February in St. Kitts/Nevis. The workshop programme included the role of the Ministry of Trade, the importance of consultation, an overview of the agreements to which St. Kitts/Nevis is a party and how the relevant stakeholders can play a more effective role in trade policy implementation.

Representatives of the Trade Policy Unit and Hub and Spokes Project made presentations on the operation of the OECS Economic Union and the CARICOM Common External Tariff.

The workshop was targeted at officials and other stakeholders who are involved in the facilitation of trade and implementation of trade policy and was organized by the Ministry of International Trade of St. Kitts/Nevis.

Next month's issue of UpDate will inter alia discuss regional and international trade issues.

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An Update from the OECS Trade Policy Unit on Trade Matters of Importance to the Sub Region