



FAQs for UK Geographical Indication (GI) Scheme

Frequently Asked Questions on the UK GI Scheme for Scottish Food and Drink Producers

1. What is a Geographical Indication (GI)?

A GI is a designation for products that have a specific geographical origin and qualities inherent to that location and method of production. Having a GI ensures that only products genuinely originating from that place with certain characteristics can use the approved name. It is different from a trademark, which belongs to an individual business. An individual or business does not own a GI. Any producer can make and sell a product under a registered product name if they follow the product's specification and are verified to do so by the control body.

2. What are the benefits of obtaining a GI?

GI status can enhance the awareness and market value of your product, protect it from imitation, and promote economic growth by highlighting the unique qualities of your product. It distinguishes your product in a crowded marketplace, including export markets, and demonstrates that the product is premium, supporting higher margins.

3. How do I know if GI is right for my product?

Consider whether your product evokes something about the area in its final form, ingredients, or method of production. Compare with existing GI products to see if there are similarities. It's crucial that all producers of the product can agree on a specification, as competing producers may object during the application process.

4. What makes for a successful GI product?

Successful GI products are tightly defined, already known and used in the market, have clear characteristics agreed upon by all producers, and have a clear link to a specific area. Producers should have a long-term commitment to protecting and promoting the product name.

5. How do I apply for a GI?

Once you have an agreed specification and relevant producers on board, [apply](#) to DEFRA with detailed specifications of your product, including production methods and geographical origin. Your application will be reviewed, and if approved, your product will be listed in the UK GI register. Note that UKGI protection must be secured before applying for GI schemes abroad.

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6. What are the types of GI protection?

There are three possible types of GI to apply for, as listed below. PDO is the most stringent, whilst PGI is the most common, with Scotch Whisky, Scotch Beef and Lamb, and Stornoway Black Pudding all PGI protected.

- a. **PDO (Protected Designation of Origin):** Requires all production stages in the specified area.
- b. **PGI (Protected Geographical Indication):** Requires at least one production stage in the specified area.
- c. **TSG (Traditional Speciality Guaranteed):** Requires traditional methods or recipes, not tied to a specific area.

7. What logo would I put on my product?

The appropriate logo depends on the category of GI that has been awarded, whether PDO, PGI or TSG, with each shown below. For some products (e.g. spirits) the use of a logo is optional.



8. What are the inspection requirements?

Products must undergo regular inspections by an accredited control body to ensure they meet the registered specifications. Scottish producers can use local authorities or UKAS-accredited bodies for these checks.

9. What happens if my product fails to meet the specifications?

If your product does not meet the required standards, the control body will notify you and provide a timeframe to make improvements. Failure to comply can result in the loss of the GI status and possible fines.

10. How often do I need to renew my verification?

Verification must be renewed at least every three years through regular inspections by the chosen control body.

11. Can you provide examples of successful GIs?

Examples of successful GIs include Scotch Whisky, Scotch Beef and Lamb, Stornoway Black Pudding, and Arbroath Smokies. These products have increased market appeal, protected authenticity, and driven sales both domestically and internationally.

12. Where can I find more detailed guidance?

For more detailed guidance on the UK GI scheme, including application procedures and compliance requirements, visit [the DEFRA website](#).

For initial, pre-application enquiries, contact either:

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