Linking Pride Profit People and Place: Do GIs have potential as regional development tools?

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What are Geographical Indications of Origin?

- **A geographical indication (GI)** is a name or sign used on certain products which originate in a specific geographical location (e.g. a town, region, or country)

- The use of a GI may indicate that the product:
  - has particular qualities
  - is made according to traditional methods
  - enjoys a certain reputation

  …due to its geographical origin

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Three Important Agreements…

- 1883 - The first multilateral treaty dealing with GIs dates back to 1883 (Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, March 20, 1883)

- 1958 - Lisbon Agreement for the Protection of Appellations of Origin and their International Registration, October 31, 1958).

- 1994 - Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) of April 15, 1994, (in operation from1995),

GIs and Regional Development

- GIs in the EU context act as instruments of rural and remote development through concentrating resources around product specialisation in a particular region (Dagne, 2010)

- If product has special characteristics derived from particular geographic and human factors, then GIs might create optimisation, whether historically developed or more scientifically identified (Alonso and Northcote, 2009; Galtier et al., 2008)

- GI schemes potentially encourage producers to adopt the most sustainable and adapted production and associated processing standards for an area.

GIs and Regional Development

- GI schemes may influence choices for rural and remote producers – providing some structure and incentive to engage in certain forms of production in particular ways (Bramley and Kirsten, 2007)

- A GI scheme regulates agricultural production, without amounting to a system of central or national planning or control

- A GI scheme depends crucially on:
  - local initiative
  - the knowledge by locals of local conditions of production
  - ambitious pursuit of goals by private, if collaborative, individual producers to some degree

- Done well, a GI system offers communities within a region the chance to develop a local governance of shared economic opportunity

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The Australian Context

- Australia's response to GIs has been driven by perceptions of possible trade gains and losses

- Signed Agreement between the European Community and Australia on trade in wine (1994; replaced 2008, effective from 2010)

- Australia currently remains opposed to extending GIs beyond existing trade in wine, arguing
  - current level of protection is adequate
  - enhanced protection would be a burden
  - it would disrupt existing legitimate market practices

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Our Research Project

- Preparatory journal article to provide background rationale (in press, Journal of Economic and Social Policy)

- Small pilot project in northern NSW and southern Qld to:
  - Examine existing regional branding strategies
  - Check effectiveness of existing (wine) GI and any 'spin-off' effects
  - Test awareness of GIs with regional food producers
  - Understand pros and cons of potential implementation of non-wine GI

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Study Area

- Small pilot study in Northern NSW and Southern Qld
  - Nimbin, Byron Bay, Bangalow
  - Granite Belt Wine Region, Sunshine Coast

Study Areas

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Granite Belt

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What We Found and What it Means…

- Varied Success with regional branding strategies
- Trademarks incorporating place names
- Several instances of consumer deception
- 'Free Riding' is alive and well (+ive and –ive)
- Several failed attempts at cooperative marketing
- Wine GI is creating local benefit
  - For winemakers
  - For niche food producers
- Little awareness of GIs outside of wine producers
- Existing institutional arrangements and current Australian markets may create issues for large producers BUT
- Potential for small and niche producers who are already value adding
  - Shorten value chain
  - Value Chain becomes more 'local'

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