

# Geographical Indication (GI) Protection System in Japan



**MAFF**

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

In Japan, there are many regional brand products which have obtained high quality and reputation as a result of unique production methods and natural characteristics such as regional climate and soil conditions.

Geographical Indication (GI) Act, which entered into force in June 2015, protects the interests of producers through establishment of the system that the government protects the name of such products as GI, thereby contributing to the sound development of the agricultural, forestry and fishery industries as well as to ensure the interests of consumers.

## What is GI ?

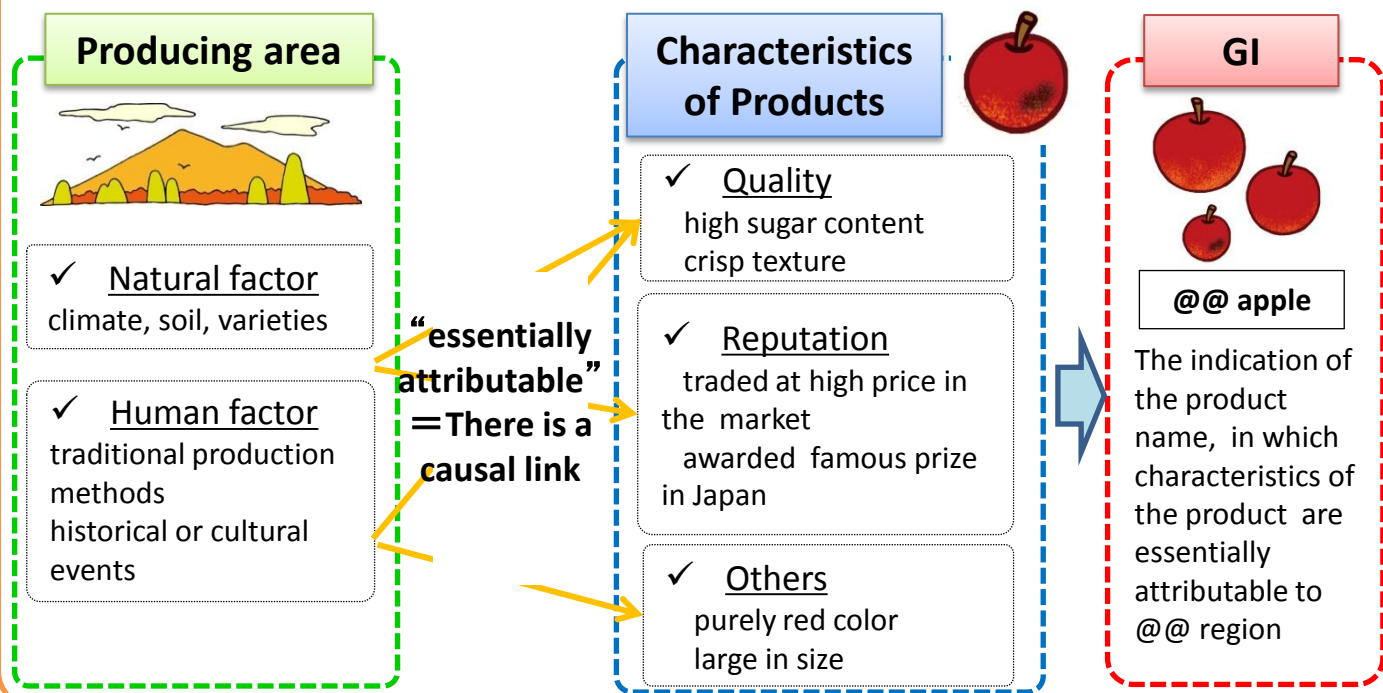
### Geographical Indication

- GIs are ... indications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a Member, or a region or locality in that territory, where a given quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin. [TRIPS Agreement Art.22.1]

(Example)

@@ + XXXX  
**Region** + name of products

### Image of GI : example of @@ apple (fictional product)



## Registered Symbol “GI Mark”

○GI Mark must be affixed with registered GIs. It proves that the product is a genuine one whose established characteristics are essentially attributable to its producing area.



農林水産大臣登録第XXXX号 (\*Registered No.)

The large red disk of the GI Mark symbolizes the rising sun above Mt. Fuji and water surface, and the main color is red and gold: the color of Hinomaru (rising sun) and Japanese formal and traditional color. Such design of the mark clearly shows that the mark is used for genuine Japanese GI products and express “Japanese Style”.

## What Japan’s New GI System Expects to Achieve

[Benefits of introducing the GI protection system]

- Differentiation as a regional brand product which is **reflected in the pricing**
- ※ Only products that abide by specific quality standards can receive GI status, which **guarantees the quality** of regional-branded products

Regional brand protection and utilization leading to revitalization of rural vilages

- Since the **injunction** against illicit use is **made by the government**, which **enables producers to protect their own brands without legal expenses**

Inheritance of traditional food culture

- Only products which abide by quality standards are **introduced to the market**

Protection of consumer’s benefits

- ※ GI mark helps differentiate the products



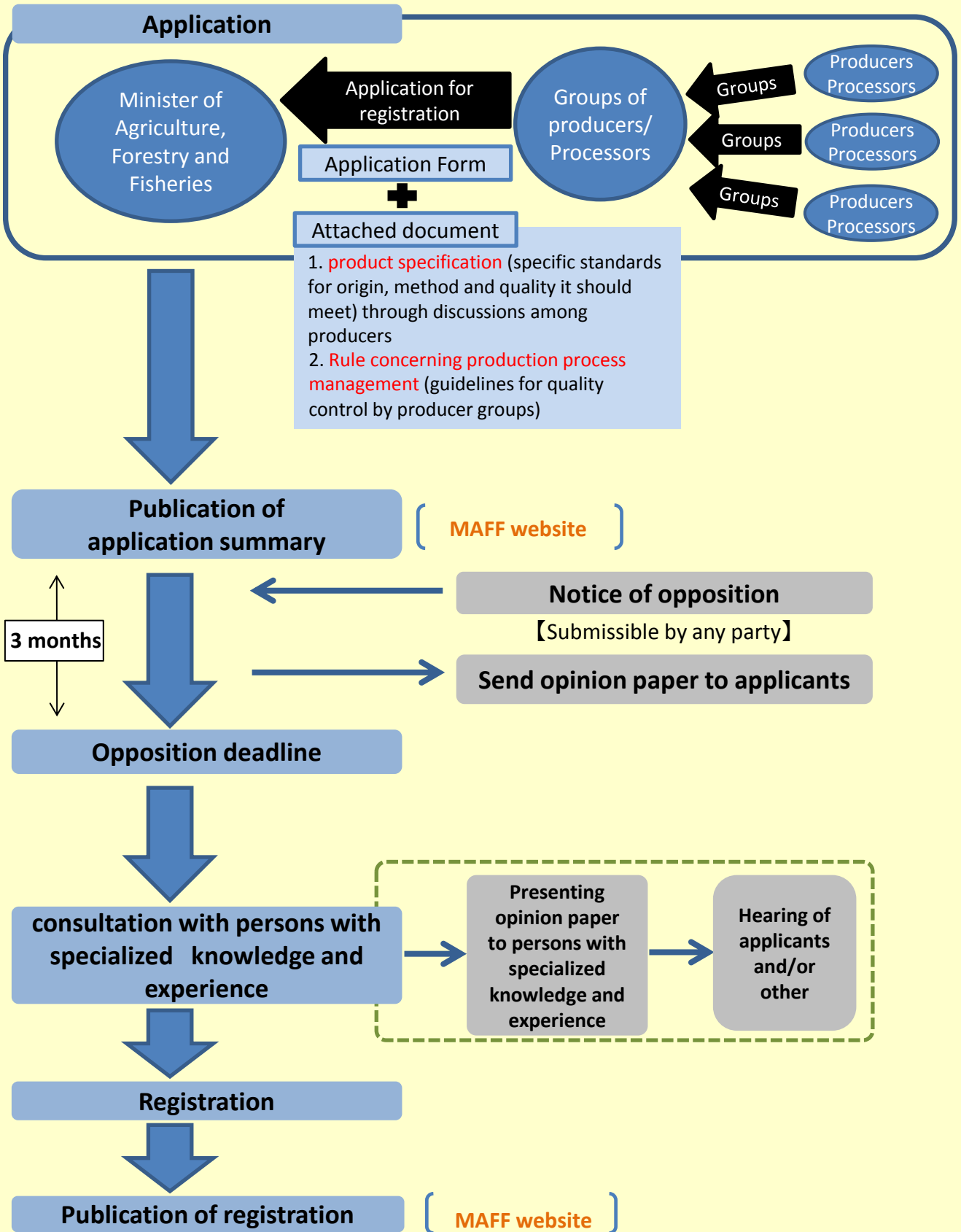
- **Overseas expansion** of truly Japanese local produce

Spur export of agricultural, forestry and fishery products and foodstuffs

- ※ By attaching GI mark on to GI registered products, truly Japanese local produce will be evident, and differentiated in the destination country of export

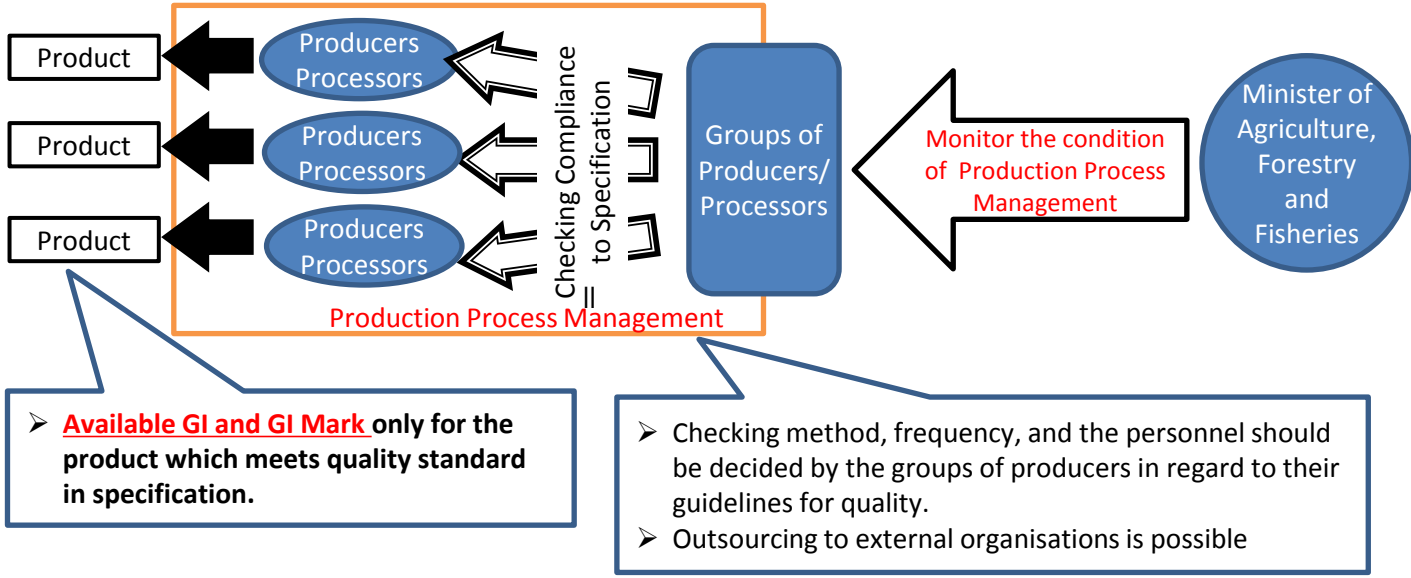
Introducing the GI protection system

# How to register



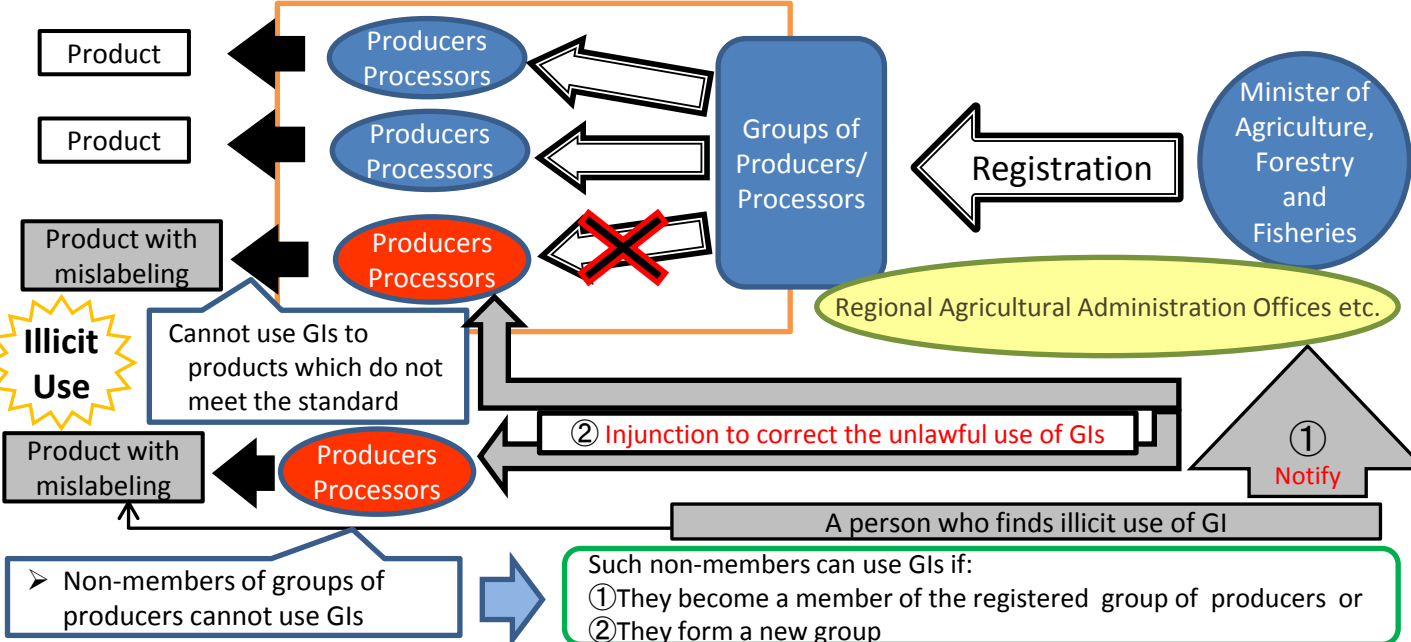
# Quality Control after Registration

- ① Groups of producers/processors provide guidance or conduct inspection to comply with production method stipulated in the specification, based on rule concerning production process management.
- ② Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries regularly monitors if the production process management of producers/processors groups is conducted appropriately.



# Measures against Illicit Use

- ① Members of the registered group of producers selling the products with GIs, which do not meet the GI standard
  - ② Producers/processors who do not belong to the registered group of producers, selling the products as GI
- A person who finds these illicit uses may notify it to Minister (Ministry) of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
- Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries may issue an injunction to correct the unlawful use of GIs by producers/processors.
- when they do not comply, penal provisions are imposed.



Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

# Government of Japan

URL : [http://www.maff.go.jp/e/japan\\_food/gi\\_act/index.html](http://www.maff.go.jp/e/japan_food/gi_act/index.html)



**Japan.**  
"Oishii"  
to the world.  
*Washoku*