

Identification of origin-linked products: methodology and web tool now on line!

As part of FAO's Quality&Origin Programme, [a methodological participatory approach](#) has been developed to identify products of origin-linked quality to be used as levers for sustainable rural development, through the virtuous circle to which they could give rise. A [related web tool](#) is being provided in order to facilitate the identification of the link between a product and its geographical origin as well as the strengths/weaknesses of an origin-linked product entering to contribute to sustainable production and consumption.

Whether at local, regional or national level, stakeholders and policy-makers in agricultural and rural development often wonder about the existence of an agricultural and food heritage and the possibility of developing a strategy based on the optimization of typical products. These questions generally arise from the search for local development strategies that capitalize on local resources (by means of labels for products or tourism activities) or, where geographical indications (GIs) are concerned, on the benefits of identifying origin-linked products in order to obtain recognition for them and preserve them. In this phase of regional- or national-level reflection on general strategy, tools are needed for identifying products, drawing up an inventory and assessing their potential, not only in terms of economic value creation, but also of preserving and enhancing the cultural and environmental heritage, in order to select pilot case studies and support a local dynamic.

Within a zone (territory), defined as the geographical production area for an origin-linked product, local stakeholders and especially producers may equally hope to assess their product's link to geographical origin and define a territorial preservation and enhancement strategy.

The main aim of this methodological approach is to offer a method and a tool to help the stakeholders involved to identify food and agricultural products that could become the pivotal elements in a virtuous circle of origin-linked quality through a territorial strategy for preservation and promotion. The enhancement of a product of origin-linked quality can have positive effects that are reinforced over time in terms of the economic viability and preservation of the natural and cultural heritage.