



## **Input for the National Trade Estimate Report on Foreign Trade Barriers**

RE: 80 FR 50377

To Whom It May Concern:

The Grocery Manufacturers Association (GMA) appreciates the opportunity to submit comments in response to the above-referenced Federal Register Notice. We hope these comments will be useful as the United States compiles updated National Trade Estimate (NTE) reports on foreign trade barriers. In all cases, GMA strongly encourages trade liberalization and policies that support regulatory convergence and minimize unnecessary barriers to trade. For the purposes of this comment, we are including particular priority concerns that warrant special attention, due to either the extreme nature of the barrier imposed or the importance of the market in question.

Based in Washington, D.C., GMA is the voice of approximately 300 leading food, beverage and consumer product companies that sustain and enhance the quality of life for hundreds of millions of people in the United States and around the globe. Founded in 1908, GMA is an active, vocal advocate for its member companies and a trusted source of information about the industry and products consumers rely on and enjoy every day. In keeping with its founding principles, GMA helps its members produce safe products through a strong and ongoing commitment to scientific research, testing, and evaluation and to providing consumers with the products, tools, and information they need to achieve healthy diets and active lifestyles.

### **European Union (EU)**

#### *Geographic Indications (GI)*

GMA shares the concern expressed in the 2015 NTE that the EU's system applies GI protections to an over-broad swath of food products and negatively impacts trademark protection and market access for U.S. products with generic names. The European Union has been pursuing increasingly aggressive bilateral and multilateral strategies to restrict the use of common cheese names by non-EU producers, which GMA urges the United States to strongly oppose.

#### *Measuring Table Tariff Codes*

GMA notes the U.S. comments in the 2015 NTE remain relevant and concerning:

“Many processed food products, such as confectionary products, baked goods, and miscellaneous food preparations, are subject to a special tariff code system in the EU.

Under this system, often referred to as the Meursing table, the EU charges a tariff on each imported product based on the product's content of milk protein, milk fat, starch, and sugar. As a result, products that the United States and other countries might consider equivalent for tariff classification purposes sometimes receive different rates of duty in the EU depending on the particular mix of ingredients in each product. The difficulty of calculating Meursing duties imposes an unnecessary administrative burden on, and creates uncertainty for, exporters, especially those seeking to ship new products to the EU.”

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