

What's in a name?

On April 1, a registry to protect the geographical uniqueness of foods and beverages will kick in. The names of products in the registry will be protected and cannot be used to label similar goods made elsewhere. The European Union has shortlisted more than 190 names for which it intends to apply for protection in Singapore. The Straits Times checked out the retail prices of some of these items imported from places that bore their names and similar products from elsewhere.



Cognac

Cognac brandy

- XO from France:

\$268

- Cordon XO from unknown country:

\$25

Prosecco white wine

- Extra dry prosecco from Conegliano Valdobbiadene, Italy:

\$27

- Prosecco from King Valley, Australia:

\$34



German sausage

- Nurnberger bratwurst from Nuremberg, Germany:

\$11

- Nurnberger bratwurst from Singapore:

\$7.50



Parmesan cheese

- Parmigiano-Reggiano from Parma, Italy:

\$16

- Parmesan from Australia:

\$10



Feta cheese

- Feta from Greece:

\$8.90

- Fetta from Australia:

\$6

GREECE



Bologna sausage

- Mortadella Bologna from Italy:

\$8

- Italian bologna from Singapore:

\$2.90

Lombardy



Italian cured ham

- Prosciutto di Parma from Parma, Italy:

\$16 per 90g

- Prosciutto from Australia:

\$7 per 100g

Air-dried beef ham

- Bresaola della Valtellina from Lombardy, Italy:

\$15 per 100g

- Bresaola Valtellina from Australia:

\$7.65 per 100g

LISTING A PRODUCT ON THE REGISTRY

Anyone can apply for their item to be protected. But others may oppose the listing too, leading to a legal process that may take nearly a year.

- 1 The Intellectual Property Office of Singapore (Ipos) will review the application, and if approved, the listing will be published on its website.
- 2 The listing will come into effect within six weeks, unless someone opposes it within this time and provides evidence.
- 3 The original applicant will give a counter-statement, due in six weeks, and the opponent has a month to respond with evidence.
- 4 Both parties will have to attend a review or hearing conducted by Ipos to determine whether the food or beverage should be geographically protected.
- 5 Ipos will make a decision a month after the final hearing on whether the application can be granted. The decision will take effect a month later, unless either side lodges an appeal, leading to a longer legal process.

EU-SINGAPORE GOODS TRADE STATISTICS

When the EU-Singapore Free Trade Agreement is ratified later this year, nearly all trade tariffs between the two jurisdictions will be removed.

	2017	2018
EU exports to Singapore	€33.2b	€37.1b (S\$57 billion)
Singapore exports to the EU	€20.1b	€21.1b (S\$32 billion)