

## Recognition of the Geographical Indication of Argentine Yerba Mate

The Ministry of Agroindustry, in accordance with the objective as set forth by the minister, Mr. Ricardo Buryaile, of enhancing the position of Argentine food products in the world, by promoting the added value at the source, awarded a commemorative plaque and a certificate of recognition of the Geographical Indication "Argentine Yerba Mate" to the petitioning group, represented by the Chairman of the National Institute of Yerba Mate (INYM, Instituto Nacional de la Yerba Mate), Mr. Luis Prietto.

Via Resolution SAV 13/2016 of March 15th, as published in the Official Bulletin, Argentine yerba mate received the recognition which bestows legal protection and recognition on an age-old infusion that was born in our country, Argentina, and the use of which is deeply rooted in the daily life of millions of people. The stamp assures that its quality is linked to the geographical point of origin and it enables the user to obtain more valuable information at the time of choosing a product.

The Secretary of Added Value, Nestor Roulet, was the person to deliver the plaque. He declared to be proud of the fact that Argentine yerba mate would receive such recognition and he affirmed that "this is adding value, showing the world the advantageous features of this product. This stamp means that we are producing high quality yerba mate, that we are protecting the environment, and that there are many families making a living with this activity, and it is undoubtedly necessary to enhance it".

On the other hand, the Chairman of the INYM pointed out, during his address, that "this is clearly a distinctive milestone in the production of yerba mate", and he added that "we have a huge potential, which gives us a great comparative advantage over other producing countries".

The secretaries of Family Farming, Oscar Aloatti, and of Coordination and Territorial Development, Santiago Hardie participated in the event. The undersecretaries of Food and beverages, Mercedes Nimo; of Agriculture, Luis Urriza; of Territorial Development, Felipe Crespo; the INYM authorities; groups of producers; ambassadors and yerba mate producers were also present.

Yerba mate was used by the Guarani community way before it ever existed in our country. The present producing area covers Misiones and the northeast of Corrientes. At present it is one of the most important regional agroindustries and it is a strategic crop which boosts both the manufacturing sector and the industrial and commercial sector, especially from the labor point of view.

### **Why should there be a Geographical Indication stamp?**

Because the usage of yerba mate is long-dated; because its history was made by both the native and immigrant population; because it has its own features that allow to differentiate it from the ones in Paraguay and Brazil; because it adds value to the product and the region and because it insures its point of origin and the attributes which make it possible to differentiate the yerba mate product.

The chain of production of yerba mate is made up by very small producers (more than 17,000 enrolled), who every day put in substantial effort into improving the quality of their product and making it known and appreciated around the world.

Only three countries in the world produce economically significant yerba mate: Argentina is the one provided the largest cultivated area with over 165,000 hectares (408,000 acres), Brazil has 85,000 ha (210,000 acres), and Paraguay has 35,000 ha (86,500 acres).