

'Alphonso' mangoes from Karnataka make Maharashtra farmers see red

May take legal action over GI tag violation

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Mango farmers associations in Maharashtra are exploring legal options against the sale of a certain variety of mangoes being sold as Alphonso mangoes from Karnataka. Such mangoes have started arriving in the Pune market and are fetching up to ₹1,200 per dozen.

Alphonso or Hapus mangoes are extensively cultivated in Maharashtra and last year four districts in the State received a Geographical Indication (GI) tag from the Geographic Indication Registry, which operates under the Office of the Controller General of Patents, Designs and Trade Marks.

Mislabelling charge

As mangoes from the four districts have received a GI tag, mangoes from other States with similar features, cannot be sold as



Alphonso or Hapus mangoes. Such mislabelling of mangoes can attract penal action under the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999. Violation of the act attracts a jail term of six months and ₹50,000 penalty.

Vivek Bhide, Horticulturist and Chief of Konkan Hapus Amba Utpadak Ani Vikrate Sangh, said that selling of mangoes from

Karnataka as Alphonso is definitely a crime, therefore the Sangh is exploring all legal options.

Intellectual property expert Ganesh Hinghmare said such selling is a violation of the law and a fraud on customers.

Geographical Indications of Goods are defined as an aspect of industrial property, which refers to the geographical indication referring to a country or a place of

origin. Such a name conveys an assurance of quality and distinctiveness, which is essentially attributable to the defined geographical locality.

In international trade, under articles of the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, geographical indications are covered as an element of Intellectual Property Rights.

Arrivals have commenced

Rohan Ursal, a fruit merchant from Pune APMC, who has been sourcing mangoes from Karnataka and other states of South India, said pre-season Hapus Mangoes in small quantities from Karnataka have started arriving in the Pune market. About 20 dozen mangoes have been bought by his trading company, he said

Ursal said that selling of the Karnataka varieties would not be a violation of the law as the local farmers have been cultivating such mangoes in Karnataka for many decades.