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Araştırma Makalesi/ Research Article

## Determination of the Usage Status of Food Products with Geographical Indications in Menus: Nevşehir Example

### Coğrafi İşarete Sahip Gıda Ürünlerinin Menülerde Kullanım Durumunun Belirlenmesi: Nevşehir Örneği

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#### Abstract

This study aims to determine whether first-class restaurants and gastronomy businesses with tourism business certificates in Nevşehir province include food products with geographical indications in their menus. The data obtained as a result of the interviews were evaluated using the content analysis method. The research findings determined that 60% of the businesses do not include food products with geographical indications in Nevşehir in their menus. As a result, it was understood that food products with geographical indications are not common in menus in Nevşehir and awareness should be increased on this issue.

**Key Words:** Geographical Indication, Nevşehir Cuisine, Gastronomy, Regional Development

#### Öz

Bu çalışmada Nevşehir ilinde birinci sınıf restoran ve turizm işletme belgeli gastronomi işletmelerinin menülerinde coğrafi işaret tescilli gıda ürünlerine yer verme durumlarının tespit edilmesi amaçlanmıştır. Yapılan görüşmeler sonucunda elde edilen veriler içerik analiz yöntemi kullanılarak değerlendirilmiştir. Araştırma bulgularında işletmelerin %60'ının Nevşehir'in coğrafi işaretli gıda ürünlerine menülerinde yer vermediği belirlenmiştir. Sonuç olarak Nevşehir'de coğrafi işaretli gıda ürünlerinin menülerde yaygın olmadığı ve bu konuda farkındalığın artırılması gerektiği anlaşılmıştır.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Coğrafi İşaret, Nevşehir Mutfağı, Gastronomi, Bölgesel Kalkınma

## Extended Summary

### Purpose

The aim of this study is to determine the geographically indicated food products and the promotional potential of geographically indicated products in the menus of tourism enterprises operating in Nevşehir province.

### Background

Cappadocia is a cultural tourism center that has many distinctive features as a destination in Türkiye and significantly affects tourism statistics. Nevşehir province, which hosts the natural beauties of the country, is a region where tourism activities are intensively implemented and frequently visited by tourists thanks to its location. Nevşehir is also a rich province in terms of regional product diversity. For this reason, branding, promotion and marketing of local products in a coordinated manner is important in terms of increasing the economic return of Nevşehir. Accordingly, there are a total of nine geographically indicated products in Nevşehir province, including four names of origin and five indications of origin. In general, although there are many products specific to the region in Nevşehir, it can be said that the number of geographically registered products is low. Increasing the number of these products and including them in the menus of restaurants in the region can make significant contributions to the attractiveness of regional gastronomy. For this reason, in this article, it was necessary to determine how often geographically indicated products appear on the menus of restaurants in the region. Although Nevşehir province has its own characteristics and diversity in terms of food and beverage culture, it is seen that it has not yet received sufficient attention within the scope of gastronomy. Although numerous studies have been conducted throughout the country in the literature review on the subject of the study, no study was found to determine the status of use of geographically indicated food products in menus for the province of Nevşehir.

### Method

The establishments to which data will be collected in the study were accessed from the list of facilities with ministry certificates at the official address of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2024). According to the 2024 data of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, there are a total of 6 food and beverage establishments with tourism operation certificates, referred to as 1st Class restaurants (2) and 4 gastronomy facilities (4) in Nevşehir province. The universe of the study consists of 6 1st Class restaurants and gastronomy facilities food and beverage establishments with tourism operation certificates located at Region of Nevşehir. The entire universe number of 6 was reached in the study and a full count was performed. However, as a result of the interviews obtained, it was thought that more data should be obtained and for this reason, the first 9 highest scoring restaurants in Nevşehir on the TripAdvisor site were included in the study. 15 food and beverage business (chef, business owner and manager) were interviewed. For this reason, face-to-face interviews were conducted. In addition, a semi-structured interview form was used, consisting of a total of 5 open-ended questions. The questions used in the study were created as a result of literature review, examination of previous studies on the subject, and recommendations of academicians specialized in the field. The interviews with the participants were conducted between 06.01.2025 and 31.01.2025 within the borders of Nevşehir province. The obtained data was tried to be presented with content analysis.

## Findings

The research findings revealed that 60% of the businesses did not include Nevşehir's geographically indicated food products in their menus. Nevşehir Testi (pottery) Kebab, Kaymaklı Kaymağı (dry clotted cream) and Derinkuyu White Kidney Beans (cooked in tandoor) stood out as the most frequently included geographically indicated products in the menus. Among the reasons why the participants did not include geographically indicated food products, factors such as scarcity of raw materials, transportation difficulties and lack of demand due to working with foreign customers were prominent.

## Results

It was emphasized that in order for geographically indicated food products to find more space in menus, support should be given to domestic production, the diversification and use of geographically indicated products should be increased, and training and promotion activities should be strengthened. The findings of the research show that the participants are highly aware of the products with registered geographical indications, but the rate of using them in their businesses is low. As a result, it is understood that geographically indicated food products are not widespread in menus in Nevşehir within the scope of the study and that awareness should be increased in this regard. The aim of this research is to address the potential of geographically indicated products for the tourism sector and the importance of using these products in menus. This study can form the basis for further research and practice aimed at promoting geographically indicated products in the context of regional development and cultural heritage.

### 1. Introduction

Food culture is an element that varies from region to region (Solmaz and Altiner, 2018). It is an important issue to transfer regional foods and beverages to future generations as they are, to maintain and protect traditions (Küçükyaman et al., 2018). The concept of geographical indication enables the registration of products that are associated with and famous for a specific region. The geographical indication process, which includes the production of local foods, paves the way for consumers to understand and recognize products (Meral and Şahin, 2012). Geographical indication symbols are the key to distinguishing between similar foods, as well as containing the cultural structure of the country or region where they are located (Dimara et al., 2004). When the right to receive a geographical indication is earned, the production processes and manufacturing locations of well-known and branded products are guaranteed. Geographical indication registration helps prevent unfair competition for producers who protect and transfer local flavors, and has a protective effect against the formation of non-original foods (Şimşek, 2020). Geographical indications not only convey to consumers the characteristics of the product but also provide information about its culture, allowing inferences to be made about the region. Türkiye's cultural diversity and the fact that its rural areas are spread over a wide area reveal the importance of geographically indicated products and also contribute to the discovery of regional riches. Geographical indication registration, which aims to protect the values that have become the subject of traditions and customs integrated with the region, also contributes to the continuity of agricultural activities and creates a sustainable environment (Şentürk, 2011). The fact that the product is identified with the region it belongs to creates a sense of curiosity in people and provides motivation to visit the product in the geography where it is located (Mercan and Üzülmöz, 2014).

Nevşehir province, which hosts the natural beauties of the country, is a region where tourism activities are intensively implemented and frequently visited by tourists thanks to its location. Although Nevşehir province has its own characteristics and diversity in terms of food and beverage culture, it is seen that it has not yet reached

sufficient interest in gastronomy. As a result of the literature review, although many studies have been conducted throughout the country, no study was found to determine the level of use of geographically indicated food products in menus for Nevşehir province. At the same time, this study provides significant contributions to the literature by examining the use of geographically indicated food products in the menus of tourism enterprises in Nevşehir province and the promotional potential of these products. The value of geographically indicated products in terms of regional development, protection of cultural heritage and the tourism sector is increasingly coming to the fore. However, the rate of adoption of these products by tourism enterprises varies in line with regional differences and the dynamics of the sector. This study, conducted on the example of Nevşehir, presents original data on the use of geographically indicated food products in tourism enterprises from a regional perspective.

Based on this point, the aim of the study was to determine the usage levels of geographically indicated food products in menus in Nevşehir province. With the study conducted in line with the determined target, the usage level of food products with geographical indications in Nevşehir's food and beverage establishments was determined and inferences were made for the sector.

## **2. Review of the Literature**

### **2.1. Geographical Indication**

Destinations have the potential to gain competitive advantage by utilizing gastronomic products within the framework of branding strategies (İçigen et al., 2023: 680; McKercher et al., 2008: 137;). Local gastronomy products are an important instrument for a region to stand out from others (Aydoğdu, et al., 2016). In this context, local dishes can contribute to the differentiation of a region by adding originality to a particular destination (Aslan et al., 2014: 4). Gastronomic products can be effectively used as brand elements in destinations by being supported by geographical indication registration. The Turkish Trademark and Patent Office (2024a) defines geographical indication as "a quality mark that shows and guarantees to consumers the source of the product, its characteristic features and the connection between the said characteristic features and the geographical area." The only thing that is taken into account for a product to have a geographical indication is that the product subject to registration has a "distinctive" quality. Geographical indication registration aims to protect the quality, tradition and raw material obtained from the region of products that have gained a certain reputation due to local characteristics. Unlike other products, products that are identified with a region, area or country and that have natural and human elements that are unique to that geographical location are registered as origin. Again, it is necessary for a product to be traded within that geographical area or to perform at least one of the operations to be performed for the registration of the indication of origin (The Turkish Trademark and Patent Office, 2024a).

The tourism sector, which is an important element in contributing to national economies, has focused on the promotion of local, cultural and traditional values (Yönet Eren and Sezgin, 2021). Geographical indications, thanks to their strong ties to the origin of the product, stimulate tourism by encouraging people to travel to the production area and highlight local products (Mercan and Üzülmmez, 2014). Therefore, geographical indication registration serves as a tool for revitalizing the regional economy (Suh and MacPherson, 2007), preserving traditional knowledge and production methods (Rangnekar, 2004), and preserving cultural heritage (Zografos, 2008).

As of April 2024, there are 1,563 products registered as geographical indications in Türkiye. Of these geographical indications, 1,167 are registered as source and 387 as origin. As for traditional products, a total of 6 products are registered as traditional products in Türkiye (The Turkish Trademark and Patent Office, 2024b). It is observed that the number of registrations has increased after 2020, when the geographical indication registration was accepted at least in 1998. According to the Turkish Patent and Trademark Office's April 2024 data, the provinces with geographical product indications in Türkiye are listed as follows; Gaziantep (105) is in the first place, Konya (73) is the second and Diyarbakır (56) is the third. In terms of the distribution of geographical indications by region in Türkiye, Nevşehir ranks fourth among the provinces with the least geographical indications, with a total of 263 registered products belonging to the Central Anatolia region. These provinces are Kırıkkale (3), Niğde (7), Yozgat (8) and Nevşehir (9), respectively. Geographical indications can be used as an effective marketing tool to attract tourists' attention thanks to their unique qualities (Çekiç et al., 2023: 246). Keskin (2019), in his study investigating the effects of geographically indicated local foods on tourist destination marketing, concluded that the greater inclusion of such products in the promotion of destinations would yield positive results. In addition, in a study conducted by Eren and Sezgin (2022), It has been determined that the knowledge of visitors to the Cappadocia area about geographically indicated products positively affects their perceptions of gastronomy destinations. These findings support the positive effects of geographical indications on tourism.

In their study, Yağmur and Kardeş (2023) stated that the concept of geographical indication has been intensely discussed for the last three years. When looking at the study topics; the effects of geographically indicated products on restaurant brands (Kaçan and Özet, 2024), tourists' travel motivation (Karataş and Akay, 2024), branding perception (Çakaloğlu and Çağatay, 2017; Uygurtürk and Güner, 2021), quality perception (Kan and Belveren, 2022), purchasing behavior and perceptions (Yılmaz, 2022; Topcu and Çavdar, 2022), willingness to pay more (Toklu, 2016), contribution to the local economy (Arslan and Furtana, 2021), importance in sustainable gastronomy (Baran and Karaca, 2021; Çekal and Doğan, 2022; Kart et al., 2022). In line with these studies, it can be said that the use of geographically indicated products has a positive contribution to businesses, the regional economy and sustainability. However, for a more effective gastronomy tourism, it is not enough to just protect local dishes with geographical indication registration and determine these effects. At the same time, these products need to be included in the menus to ensure their sustainability.

A small number of studies have been identified in the literature on determining the use of geographically indicated products in business menus (Ateş et al., 2024; Özmen and Deniz, 2024; Yılmaz and Sünnetçioğlu, 2024; Yavuz and Özkanlı, 2019; Yazıcıoğlu et al., 2019). In line with these studies, it can be said that geographically indicated products are limited in restaurant menus. In previous studies, no study was found to determine the use of geographically indicated products in business menus in Nevşehir province. This study aimed to determine the use of geographically indicated products in local business menus in Nevşehir province.

## **2.2. Geographically Indicated Products of Nevşehir**

Nevşehir is a village called "Muşkara" during the Seljuk and Ottoman periods (Güldemir and Işık, 2011: 2). The city, which began to develop after the construction activities of İbrahim Pasha, who married the sultan's daughter and became the Grand Vizier, took the name Nevşehir (Neapolis), meaning "new city". (Bayrak, 2005: 249; Çuhadar, 1997: 38). The history of the Cappadocia region dates back to 3000 BC and

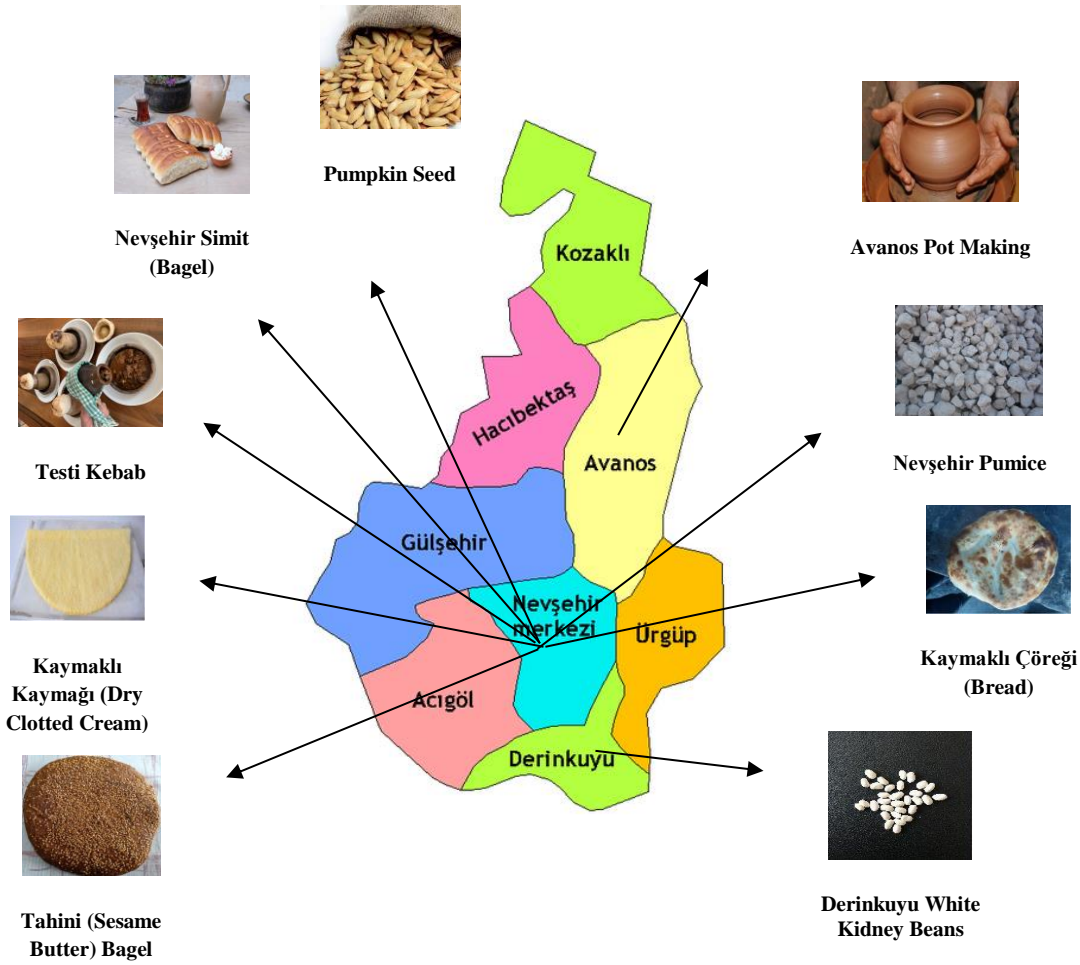
has a deep-rooted past dating back to the Assyrian and Hittite civilizations. Nevşehir hosted many civilizations such as the Persian, Roman, Byzantine, Anatolian principalities, Seljuk and Ottoman (Keskin et al., 2019: 341). Nevşehir, which gained the province status on July 20, 1954 with the law numbered 6429, is the center of the Cappadocia Region, where cultural tourism is intensely experienced in Türkiye (Büyükkuru and Aslan, 2015: 339).

Cappadocia is a cultural tourism center that has many distinctive features as a destination for Türkiye and significantly affects tourism statistics. When the 2018 tourist exchange figures are examined, the increase, which was 5.14% worldwide, was 17.93% in Türkiye. The increase in Cappadocia in the same year was 25.2%. It was stated that 870,976 tourists entered Cappadocia between January and April 2023 (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2019; Cappadocia Region- Nevşehir 2021-2025 Tourism Promotion Strategy and Action Plan, 2023).

The Cappadocia region has a rich history and culture as it has hosted many civilizations. Nevşehir has been declared as a "Brand Culture Tourism City" in the 2023 Strategies of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (Yorgancı, 2018: 25). Nevşehir is also a rich province in terms of regional product diversity. Therefore, the branding, promotion and marketing of region-specific products are of great importance for the regional development of Nevşehir. Accordingly, there are a total of nine geographically indicated products in Nevşehir province, including four names of origin and five indications of origin. These products are Avanos pot making (designation of origin), Nevşehir pumpkin seed (designation of origin), Nevşehir bagel (designation of origin), Nevşehir tahini (sesame butter) bagel (designation of origin), Nevşehir testi (pottery) kebab (designation of origin), Derinkuyu white kidney beans (designation of origin), Kaymaklı dry clotted cream (designation of origin), Kaymaklı çöreği (bread) (designation of origin) and Nevşehir pumice (designation of origin). There are two pending designations of origin and one designation of origin products at the application stage. These products are Topaç garlic (designation of origin), Nevşehir finger (long) grapes (designation of origin) and Nevşehir pickled grapes (designation of origin) (The Turkish Trademark and Patent Office, 2024b).



**Figure 1:** Distribution of geographically indicated products of Nevşehir province according to districts



Studies in the literature have also revealed other local dishes and foods that can be subject to geographical indication in Nevşehir province. These are; Derinkuyu creamy bread, Nevşehir tandoori bread, Nevşehir tava (sautéed meat), Nevşehir sanayi pilaf (Burghul pilaf with vegetables), Nevşehir zerde pilaf (Saffron added rice pilaf), Nevşehir stuffed dried cucumber, Nevşehir dıvılı (Burghul ball with sauce), Nevşehir sızgıtı (braised lamb meat cubes browned in its own fat), Nevşehir tandoori ağpaklası (White kidney beans), Nevşehir bitirgen apricot stew, Nevşehir gendime (herise) (Wheat meal with meat), Nevşehir aside (Grape molasses with flour), Nevşehir dolazı (Grape molasses with flour and honey), Nevşehir köftürü (Grape molasses with flour and starch), Nevşehir bulamacı (Grape molasses with flour - Pudding) and Nevşehir stuffed quince can be listed as (Bozdoğan, 2010; Culture Portal, 2024a; Eren, 2023; Güldemir and Işık, 2011; Güngör, 2019; İşçen, 2004; İlhan and Doğan, 2016; Örgün et al., 2020).

The soups are listed as düğü (Granule of burghul) soup, katma (Cracked wheat) soup, kesme (small cut noodle and green lentil) soup, beet soup, potato soup, tandır soup, tarhana soup, green lentil soup (Aslan et al., 2014; Güldemir and Işık, 2011;

Şahin et al., 2019). Potatoes, lentils, wheat, beans, chickpeas and squash grown in the Nevşehir region form the basis of dishes cooked in this region. In Nevşehir cuisine, which is a regional cuisine, the use of meat and meat products is high due to the effect of its geographical location. In addition to the widespread consumption of meat dishes, where lamb meat is generally at the forefront, pastries are also preferred due to their suitability to the palate and being filling (Özer and Esen, 2019: 808). The agricultural and animal husbandry activities carried out in Nevşehir province directly affect the culinary culture of the city. Since viticulture is highly developed in the region, products obtained from viticulture such as grape leaves and molasses, as well as grains and legumes, constitute a large part of the local culinary culture (Aslan et al., 2014; Şahin et al., 2019). Cappadocia has an important position in grape cultivation in Türkiye with its vineyards (Belber and Karataş, 2023: 322). The most well-known grape species in the region are Bulut, Emir, Dimrit and Çavuş grapes (Yorgancı, 2018).

The region's special soil and cooking tools are used. Original regional dishes such as beans, Nevşehir tava, stuffed vine leaves in a casserole are made in these earthenware pots and jugs (Buyruk, 2022). One of the dishes prepared using the unique cooking method and tools of the Nevşehir, Cappadocia region is testi kebab. Testi kebab (Pottery kebab) is a dish formed around the tandoor culture. Turkish Language Association defines tandoor as "a type of oven made by digging a hole in the ground" (Turkish Language Association, 2024). Today, in addition to tandoors, it is also made in ovens and open hearths. Traditional testi kebab is prepared by putting meat and ingredients into earthenware pots called testis and pottery produced in the Avanos district and cooking them in a tandoor (Culture Portal, 2024b).

Winter preparations hold an important place in the culinary culture of traditional families in the Nevşehir region. When we look at the winter preparations made in Nevşehir; grape harvest, molasses making, koftur making, sweet tarhana, broom grape molasses, pumpkin jam, burghul boiling, tomato paste, pickle making, dried cucumber making, menemen (sautéed vegetables), spicy paste making, grape leaf pickle making, yoghurt tarhana, pot cheese, sızgit (sautéed meat) making, yufka (handmade dough), mantı (ravioli) and dry small cut noodle making can be listed as (Örgün et al., 2020: 625; Yolcu, 2018: 8-15). Although there are many products specific to the region in Nevşehir in general, it can be said that the number of geographically registered products is low. Increasing the number of these products and including them in the menus of restaurants in the region will help that region to stand out more in terms of gastronomy. Therefore, it is important how often geographical products are included in the menus of restaurants in the region.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Aim and Importance of Research**

Purpose of the research to determine the usage levels of geographically indicated food products in Nevşehir province, to determine the potential benefits of these products for the region and to develop an opinion on increasing their usage in regional restaurants. Geographically indicated food products are quality products that reflect the identity of a region and are specific to that region. Such products are important for local people and tourism businesses. Therefore, it is thought that the study will offer concrete suggestions on what can be done to ensure that geographically indicated food products find more place in menus in Nevşehir province, provide guidance for the more effective use of geographically indicated products in menus, and will make a useful contribution to regional tourism. The reason for choosing Nevşehir province in the research is that it is a cultural tourism center that has many distinctive features as a destination in Türkiye and significantly affects tourism statistics (Nevşehir Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, 2019; Cappadocia Region- Nevşehir 2021-2025



Tourism Promotion Strategy and Action Plan, 2023). The businesses to be collected data in the research were accessed from the list of facilities with ministry certificates at the official address of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (2024). According to the 2024 data of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, there are a total of 6 food and beverage businesses with tourism business certificates in Nevşehir province, referred to as 1st Class restaurants (2) and gastronomy facilities (4). The universe of the research consists of 6 1st Class restaurants and gastronomy facilities food and beverage businesses with tourism operation certificates in Nevşehir province. The entire universe number of 6 was reached in the research and a full count was made. However, as a result of the interviews, it was thought that more data should be obtained and for this reason, the first 9 highest rated restaurants in Nevşehir on the TripAdvisor site were included in the study. A total of 15 people working in the food and beverage business (chef, business owner and manager) were interviewed.

Unlike quantitative studies based on generalizations, qualitative studies do not require large and extensive samples. In qualitative studies, which are generally conducted based on observations and interviews, the interviews and observations will begin to repeat themselves. This process of repetition is referred to as saturation. In such a situation, the new sample will begin to provide the same data as the sample in the previous part of the study. Thus, the fact that the participant responses begin to resemble each other to a large extent and the termination of the data collection process are expressed as a related situation. Saturation is one of the important criteria in determining the sample size in qualitative studies and is frequently used by researchers (Baltacı, 2019; Yağar and Dökme, 2018). There are different expressions of various authors in terms of specifying the sample size. In the study conducted by Boddy (2016), it was stated that 12 participants would be sufficient if the participants were homogeneous. In the study conducted by Bertaux (1981), it was emphasized that the number 15 was acceptable. Therefore, the number of 15 participants interviewed in the study is sufficient in terms of both reaching saturation and meeting the minimum number specified in the literature.

Since the research requires interviewing certain people, the data obtained is limited to the opinions of these interviewees.

In this study, interview technique was used to obtain the necessary data. Face-to-face interviews were conducted and a semi-structured interview form was used in these interviews. A semi-structured interview form consisting of a total of 5 open-ended questions was prepared in the study. The research questions used within the scope of the study were taken from the previous study conducted by Can and Keskin (2025).

The research questions included in the interview form are as follows:

RQ.1-Demographic Information (gender, age, education level, professional experience, position and working period in the business)

RQ.2-What does the concept of geographical indication mean?

RQ.3-What are the views of business managers about the potential of Cappadocia (Nevşehir province borders) food products with geographical indication?

RQ.4-Which geographical indication food products from Cappadocia (Nevşehir province borders) are included in business menus? Why? / or why are they not included?

RQ.5-. What can be done to include more geographical indication food products in Cappadocia (Nevşehir province borders) in menus?

It was decided to use the interview technique method, which is one of the qualitative research methods in the research.

The opinions of business owners, chefs and managers regarding the use of geographically indicated food products in menus were tried to be revealed with the interview technique and content analysis. In this study, firstly a detailed literature review was conducted. Then, primary data were collected by conducting detailed interviews with a semi-structured interview form and evaluated with content analysis in line with the obtained data. The interviews with the participants were conducted within the borders of Nevşehir province between 06.01.2025 and 31.01.2025. In order to record the data more accurately and not to take too much of the participants' time, permission was requested for audio recording, and the interviewed participants granted permission for audio recording.

Content analysis technique was used in the research analysis. In this study, the answers collected from the participants were evaluated and interpreted by classifying according to the questions in the interview form about the reasons for whether geographically indicated products of Nevşehir were included in the menus and what could be done to include them in the menus. The descriptions in the content of the text were systematically given as percentages and frequencies using the Word program. The study was carried out with permission and subject to the approval of the ethics committee of Osmaniye Korkut Ata University Ethics Committee Presidency with the registration number E.209946 and dated 26.12.2024.

#### 4. Research Findings

Table 1 shows that 73.4% of the participants are male and 26.6% are female. When looking at the age levels, it is determined that the youngest participant is 26 years old and the oldest participant is 56 years old. In terms of education, it is determined that the majority of participants have a bachelor's degree (46.6%) and their experience is at least 6 years and at most 36 years. When looking at the job descriptions of the participants, it is seen that the majority are kitchen staff.

**Table 1:** Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Code	Gender	Age	Level of Education	Length of professional experience	His/Her duty in the business	Duty period in the business
P1	Male	50 age	Primary school	36 yrs.	Head Chef	16 yrs.
P2	Male	34 age	Bachelor's degree	7 yrs.	Section Chef	4 yrs.
P3	Male	43 age	High school	20 yrs.	Water Chef	9 yrs.
P4	Male	56 age	High school	40 yrs.	Head Chef	5 yrs.
P5	Male	32 age	Secondary school	10 yrs.	Hot Chef	3 yrs.
P6	Female	35 age	High school	20 yrs.	Restaurant Chef	4 yrs.
P7	Female	26 age	Bachelor's degree	6 yrs.	Head Chef	3 yrs.
P8	Female	36 age	Associate's degree	10 yrs.	Cold Chef	2 yrs.
P9	Male	40 age	Bachelor's degree	20 yrs.	Manager	20 yrs.
P10	Female	32 age	High school	8 yrs.	Pastry Chef	8 yrs.
P11	Male	51 age	High school	30 yrs.	Business Manager	4 yrs.
P12	Male	30 age	Bachelor's degree	7 yrs.	Business Manager	3 yrs.
P13	Male	44 age	Bachelor's degree	15 yrs.	Owner/Business Manager	15 yrs.
P14	Male	50 age	Bachelor's degree	30 yrs.	Owner/Business Manager	30 yrs.
P15	Male	52 age	Bachelor's degree	32 yrs.	Owner/Business Manager	32 yrs.

The characteristics of the enterprises participating in the study are given in Table 2. When the operating periods of the businesses are considered, it is seen that the business with the longest duration has a history of 40 years. This period is followed by 34 years and 30 years, and it has been determined that the shortest operating periods belong to B2, B6, B10 and B12 with a history of 4 years. 9 of the 15 businesses only offer a la carte menu in the menu type, while one business each prefers fixed menu and open buffet. The business with the highest capacity is B4, while the one with the lowest capacity is B13.

**Table 2:** Characteristics of Businesses

Code	Business Activity Period	Capacity (pax/person)	Menu type
B1	34 yrs.	500 pax.	A la carte menu
B2	4 yrs.	200 pax.	A la carte menu and Open Buffet
B3	12 yrs.	200 pax.	Open Buffet
B4	13 yrs.	2000 pax.	Open Buffet-Set Menu
B5	40 yrs.	750 pax.	Set Menu
B6	4 yrs.	250 pax.	A la carte menu
B7	5 yrs.	175 pax.	A la carte menu
B8	20 yrs.	460 pax.	Fix menu
B9	12 yrs.	70 pax.	A la carte menu
B10	4 yrs.	150 pax.	A la carte-Grill menu
B11	20 yrs.	350 pax.	A la carte menu
B12	4 yrs.	250 pax.	A la carte menu
B13	15 yrs.	50 pax.	A la carte menu
B14	8 yrs.	70 pax.	A la carte menu
B15	30 yrs.	90 pax.	A la carte menu

The first open-ended question asked to the participants in the study was “What does the concept of geographical indication mean to you?” The participants’ thoughts on the concept of geographical indication are given in visual 3.

**Table 3:** Participants' Views on the Concept of Geographical Indication

What does the concept of geographical indication mean?	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Specific to the region or area	4	26,6
Limited Product	1	6,6
On-site production	3	20
Locality	1	6,6
Limited by geography	1	6,6
Specific to the region	1	6,6
Being of quality	2	13,3
Being natural	3	6,6
Regional development	1	6,6
Cultural structure	1	6,6
Agricultural power	1	6,6
City brand	1	6,6

In Table 3, 26.6% of the participants stated that the concept of geographical indication is specific to the region or area and 20% stated that on-site production is necessary. Based on the information obtained, it can be said that restaurant employees think of the concept of geographical indication as an element specific to the region.

The second open-ended question asked to the participants in the study was "What do you think about the potential of Cappadocia (Nevşehir province borders) for food products with geographical indication?" The participants' opinions about the potential of Cappadocia (Nevşehir province borders) for food products with geographical indication are given in Table 4.

**Table 4:** Participants' Views on Nevşehir's Potential for Food Products With Geographical Indication

Nevşehir's potential for food products with geographical indication	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Very High	2	13.3
Moderate	3	20
Very Low	10	66,7

According to Table 4, 13.3% of the participants stated that Nevşehir has a very high potential for food products with geographical indications, in other words, it is quite a lot. Of the participants who stated that the potential is very good, K1 stated, "I think many food products are candidates for geographical indications, but more research should be done.", K5 stated, "I think the potential is not sufficiently evaluated," and K7 stated, "The food potential is quite high, but many products are being forgotten. For this reason, more promotion should be done." In addition, 66.7% stated that there are very few products with geographical indications.

The third open-ended question directed to the participants in the study was "Which geographically indicated food products of Cappadocia (Nevşehir province borders) do you include in your business menu? Why? / or do you not include them? Why?" The status of including geographically indicated food products of Cappadocia (Nevşehir province borders) in the menus of 1st class restaurants and gastronomy facilities with tourism business certificates is given in Table 5.

**Table 5:** Including Nevşehir's Geographically Indicated Food Products in Restaurant Menus

Status of being included in the menu	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Included	6	40
Not included	9	60

According to Table 5, it was concluded that 40% of the businesses included in the study included Nevşehir's geographically indicated food products in their menus, while 60% did not include Nevşehir's geographically indicated food products in their menus. With this result, it can be revealed that the concept of geographically indicated products has not become widespread in businesses. The geographically indicated food products included in the restaurant menus in Nevşehir within the scope of the study are given in Table 6.

**Table 6:** Food Products with Geographical Indications on Restaurant Menus in Nevşehir

Geographically Indicated Food Products	Frequency(n)	Percentage (%)
Nevşehir Testi Kebab	6	40
Nevşehir Pumpkin Seeds	3	20
Kaymaklı Kaymağı (Dry Clotted Cream)	6	40
Derinkuyu White Kidney Beans (Cooked in Tandoor)	6	40
Nevşehir Simiti (Bagel)	2	13,3

According to Table 6, It is seen that the most geographically indicated food products on restaurant menus in Nevşehir are "Nevşehir Testi Kebab, Kaymaklı Kaymaklı Dry Clotted Cream and Derinkuyu White Kidney Beans" with a rate of 40%. K8, one of the participants who stated that they included Nevşehir Testi Kebab in their business menus, expressed his views with the additional expression "We can provide the consumer with both a pleasant and delicious experience with the testi kebab we offer accompanied by colorful shows." In addition, it was determined that Nevşehir Pumpkin Seeds were the second most included product in business menus with a rate of 20%. It was concluded that the product that was least included in the menus was Nevşehir Simit (Bagel) with a rate of 13.3%. Table 7 provides the reasons why Nevşehir's geographically indicated food products are included in restaurant menus.

**Table 7:** Reasons for Including Nevşehir's Geographically Indicated Food Products in Restaurant Menus

Reasons for inclusion	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Using regional products	2	13,3
Feature local flavors	4	26,6
Demands from customers	2	13,3
Being important in terms of visually	1	6.6
Introducing geographically indicated products to customers	3	20
Such products being unique to Nevşehir	4	26,6
Ensuring support for regional producers	2	13,3

According to Table 7, the first reason why participants included Nevşehir's food products with geographical indications in their businesses' menus was stated as "To highlight local flavors and to make such products unique to Nevşehir" with a rate of 26.6%. Being unique to Nevşehir, which is one of the two statements with the highest percentage with a rate of 26.6%, was supported by participant K6's comment as "We use potatoes or other products grown in the region in most of our by-products.", and K7's comment as "We prefer Avanos pot in every meal in our business." The statement as "Demands from customers" with a rate of 13.3% was stated by participant K11 as "We try to create supply in response to our customers' demand." The reasons for not including Nevşehir's food products with geographical indications in restaurant menus are given in Table 8.



**Table 8:** Reasons Why Nevşehir's Geographically Indicated Food Products Are Not Included in Restaurant Menus

Reasons for not being included	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Not being preferred much	2	13,3
Shortage of raw materials and transportation difficulties	4	26,6
Working with foreign customers and generally not demanding	3	20
Open buffet style menus	4	26,6
Different country cuisines becoming popular	4	26,6

According to Table 8, the reasons why participants do not include Nevşehir's food products with geographical indications in their businesses' menus are stated as "Shortage of raw materials and transportation difficulties", "Business menus are in the form of an open buffet" and "Different country cuisines are becoming popular" with the same rates of 26.6%. The statement "Shortage of raw materials and transportation difficulties" with a rate of 26.6% was supported by participant K12 with the additional statement "Since there has not been much development in regional food products, we cannot include them in our menus"; and the statement "Different country cuisines are becoming popular" was supported by K1 with the additional statement "Although we include some geographically indicated products, we are not a business that is completely specific to Nevşehir".

Another open-ended question asked to the participants in the study was "What can be done to make more space available on menus for food products with geographical indications in Nevşehir?" Table 9 lists what needs to be done to make more room for geographically indicated food products on menus in Nevşehir.

**Table 9:** What Needs To Be Done To Make More Room for Geographically Indicated Food Products on Menus in Nevşehir

What needs to be done	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Teaching geographically indicated foods to students studying in the region in schools that provide education on this subject,	1	6,66
Including geographically indicated products especially in food fairs and festivals,	1	6,66
Training should be provided to touristic businesses to include geographically indicated products in their menus and awareness should be raised,	2	13,3
Supporting local production and ensuring the sustainability of geographically indicated products,	3	20
Combining modern and well-known dishes with geographically indicated products,	1	6,66
Inviting influencers and gourmets to the region and ensuring that geographically indicated products become popular,	1	6,66
Working should be done to increase the number of products with geographical indication,	3	20
Doing more work in terms of advertising and promotion,	2	13,3
Ensuring compliance in terms of price and quality, making product prices affordable	1	6,66

According to Table 9, it is seen that the participants support the statements “Domestic production should be supported, sustainability of products with geographical indication should be ensured and the number of products with geographical indication should be increased” with the same rate of 20%. This statement is supported by the statements of participants K2 “Diversity can be increased.”, K6 “Organic agriculture and sustainable tourism should be taken into consideration by supporting domestic production.”, K11 “If more products can receive geographical indication registration, their number on the menus will increase.”, K13 “More production of products produced in the region should be provided and the number of products with geographical indication should be increased.”. Other statements that can be made to include more geographically specified food products on menus are: K1 “By teaching geographically indicated dishes or desserts in vocational schools, individuals who are beneficial to the society can be raised and progress can be made in transferring them to future generations.”, K3 “Various fairs and seminars can be included in the promotion of products.”, K4 “Fairs can be organized and products can be introduced.”, K5 “The number of touristic enterprises can be increased.”, K7 “Geographically indicated products can be integrated and modernized and presented.”, K8 “Regional tourism can be developed by supporting businesses in the tourism sector financially and morally.”, K9 “Conscious and talented people who can use geographically indicated products can be employed.”, K10 “Agricultural diversity should be increased and factories should be established.”, K12 “More advertising should be done to reach the consumer.”, K14 “Product prices should be kept affordable.”

## **5. Conclusion and suggestions for future studies**

When we say geographical indication, we understand production based on traditions, different flavors originating from culture, authentic, agricultural, local food and beverages and their protection processes. These motivational elements constitute an inseparable part of the gastronomy and tourism sectors. In this way, the tourist potential of the region can be increased and local development can be supported in the region (Durlu Özkaya et al., 2013). The main reason for granting geographical indication registration is to ensure the continuity of the production of the product in question (Doğan, 2015). Thus, it is thought that products that are entitled to receive geographical indication will make a significant contribution to the destination image (Jay and Taylor 2012).

Products with geographical indications have a very important place for the regional economy. In addition to the product being able to hold on to market conditions and ensuring brand formation, they can also be a source of income for producers living in rural areas. Thanks to these products registered by the European Union, international brand recognition is created in foreign markets (Meloni and Swinnen, 2018). In their study, Suh and MacPherson (2007) state that registration with geographical indication offers advantages such as local producers gaining a place in the market, being a source of advertising for the country and making significant contributions to the national economy. The way to register and protect local foods is through applications made to the Turkish Patent Institute. On the other hand, when the menus of food establishments in the Nevşehir province are examined, it is seen that geographically indicated products are not given enough place in their menus. Products with geographical indications that cannot find a place in restaurant menus should be included in the menus in order to sustain the culinary culture (Serçeoğlu, 2014). In addition, the disruptions experienced in the supply process of local foods and the high prices of local food costs are decisive in the formation of business menus (Yavuz and Özkanlı, 2019). Apart from this, the lack of experienced personnel who can create and present geographically indicated products and the problems experienced in some

products not being able to be kept for a long time are among the reasons affecting the determination of menus (Büyükşalvarcı et al., 2016).

As a result of the research, it was determined that only 40% of the businesses within the scope of the study included Nevşehir's geographically indicated food products in their menus. This result shows that the importance of using geographically indicated food products in the businesses' menus has not yet been realized. It was determined that the most geographically indicated food products in the business menus were Nevşehir Testi (pottery) Kebab, Kaymaklı Kaymağı (dry clotted cream) and Nevşehir Pumpkin Seeds. According to the results of a research conducted in Gaziantep, it was seen that 82.3% of the businesses within the scope of the study included Gaziantep's geographically indicated food products in their menus (Can and Keskin, 2025). These and similar studies show that various practices and organizations should be organized throughout the country regarding the value and awareness of the geographical indication concept. The universe of a similar study that can be conducted in the future can be determined in the tourism business licensed and municipality licensed accommodation businesses in Nevşehir province. In addition, the geographical indication potentials of different cities can be evaluated and a contribution can be made to the literature. The study concluded that geographical indication registered products are highly known by the participants, but the rate of using them in their businesses is low. Therefore, in addition to public institutions and academics conducting studies on the relevant subject, restaurants and businesses that want to promote geographically indicated food products also have a responsibility. Making the necessary promotions will provide a competitive advantage for sector managers and employees. In addition, it will have a guiding effect for local and foreign tourists who want to experience geographically indicated products.

In particular, incentives can be provided for restaurants and other tourism businesses in the region to include dishes specific to Nevşehir in their menus. In this context, new opportunities can be created for both food and beverage businesses and tourists who are fond of their taste by meeting with tour agencies and preparing special tours. In this direction, the power of social media can be used. Indeed, Dinç (2024) stated in his study that content producers interested in social media attract more attention. Facilities where only food products with geographical indication are produced can be established and in this context, the products produced can be sold to businesses at more affordable prices. On the other hand, events such as fairs and competitions can be organized for the promotion and sale of local products. In this way, the economy of the region can be revived and tourism and gastronomy can be contributed to. Practical and theoretical training can be given to business managers and employees at certain intervals about food products with geographical indication. In his research, Yılmaz (2017) emphasized that restaurants in the region should create an authentic restaurant ambiance by using elements identified with the region. In this direction, the opening of restaurants with local characteristics for the city's cuisine can be encouraged. As a result, the gastronomic richness of Nevşehir can be more easily promoted and turned into a source of attraction for tourists. The study conducted by Hui et al. (2007) shows that the satisfaction experienced in tourists' perceptions and expectations increases the intention to revisit and recommend. Museums can be built where Nevşehir's geographically indicated food products are introduced through wax statues and their visuals are displayed. As a result of a study conducted by Chen et al. (2014), it was determined that the tourists' experience of the activities in the regions they visit has an effect on their satisfaction levels and their desire to revisit the region.

This study mainly examines the level of use of geographically indicated products in menus. Although there are many topics in the literature on geographical indications, very few studies have addressed their presence in menus. Another limitation is that

only the opinions of first-class restaurants and gastronomy facilities and businesses with high scores are included in the study. Future studies can be expanded to include tourists' opinions on the use of geographically indicated products in menus as well as examining the level of use of geographically indicated products. New strategies that take into account customer expectations can be created by evaluating the perspective of food and beverage businesses on the use of geographically indicated products.

### 5.1. Implications for gastronomy

This study fills an important gap regarding the use of geographically indicated food products in the tourism sector. It argues that in regions such as Nevşehir where local production is strong, the inclusion of geographically indicated products in menus contributes to local development. These findings emphasize the importance of policies for the protection of local production and geographically indicated products.

The research raises awareness among local businesses and tourism sector stakeholders by revealing the reasons and solution suggestions for the lack of widespread use of geographically indicated food products in tourism businesses. This shows that training and promotion activities for the promotion of local products should be strengthened.

One of the important findings of the research is that local production and promotion of geographically indicated products should be supported so that they can find more space in menus. This situation reveals that geographical indications can create economic value in tourism and provide a competitive advantage for tourism businesses.

In conclusion, this research provides an important scientific contribution to the local economy by revealing the potential of geographically indicated products for the tourism sector and the steps required for these products to find more space in menus. This study can form the basis for further research and practice aimed at encouraging the promotion of geographically indicated products in the context of regional development and cultural heritage.

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#### Katkı Oranı Tablosu

<b>Hakem Değerlendirmesi:</b> Dış bağımsız.	<b>Bilgilendirilmiş Onam Formu:</b> Tüm taraflar kendi rızaları ile çalışmaya dâhil olmuşlardır.
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### Contribution Rate Table

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