

HIGH QUALITY FOOD CERTIFICATION MARK SCHEME



HIGH QUALITY FOOD (KMÉ)

CERTIFICATION MARK SCHEME

SPECIFIC CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

**Cucumbers (gherkin and pickling
cucumber)**

Budapest, October 2025

Cucumbers (gherkin and pickling cucumber)

Applications for the award of the High Quality Food (KMÉ) or High Quality Food Gold Grade certification marks may be submitted for cucumber varieties which are listed in the EU Common Catalogue of Varieties/National Catalogue of Varieties and the production conditions of which comply with all applicable legal requirements as well as the general marketing standards specified in Part A of Annex 1 to Regulation (EU) No 2023/2429. Furthermore, they must be grown, intended for direct consumption and for industrial use, from species *Cucumis sativus* L., which is accepted in Hungary or on the world market and is known to provide good quality.

Specific requirements for cucumbers:

- the fruit shall not exceed 14 cm in length,
- width-length ratio: 1.1:3
- should be firm, not deformed, with seeds being underdeveloped
- should show no signs of bitterness
- should have an evenly cylindrical shape, a small pericarp, should be suitable for mechanical harvesting, and resistant to disease (e.g. Promissa, Trilogy, Rapper, etc.)

Mandatory parameters for crop production:

- Cultivation should take place with the use of integrated cultivation technology and integrated plant protection. (use of technological tools to prevent pests, early warning systems in plant protection, monitoring).
- The choice of technological elements should serve the production of high-quality products throughout cultivation (e.g. use of drip irrigation systems, mulching, use of horticultural fleece in early open-field farming).
- The cultivation technique must be documented (e.g. application of pesticides, nutrient supply, time of picking, storage parameters, etc.).
- The storage conditions should ensure that the good quality of the product is maintained (e.g. refrigerated storage, for processing the temperature should be below 8 °C, for transport below 1–3 °C).

Optional elements

Applications for the High Quality Food (KMÉ) and High Quality Food Gold Grade certification marks may be submitted for products that, in addition to the above-mentioned mandatory

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requirements, also comply with at least one point in each of the optional element categories of I and II.

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I. Technology

1. Non-organic crop production:

- In the production process, the applicant must have a certified quality assurance system (e.g. GlobalGAP) in place, or
- documentation for tracking, from crop cultivation to harvesting and processing. Tests under the self-monitoring scheme shall be carried out by authorised own or external laboratories with regard to the following criteria:
 - pesticide residues
 - sensory testing

2. Certified organic farming:

In the case of organic (bio) products from certified organic farming, a valid organic certificate issued for the producer and the applicant is sufficient instead of those listed in point 1. (not optional together with point 17)

3. Small farmers:

Applicants engaged in small-scale food production and supply must comply with the requirements of AM Decree No 60/2023 of 15 November of the Ministry of Agriculture on the hygiene conditions of the local and marginal production and supply of small quantities of food, instead of the requirements in point 1.

4. Self-testing of the product:

As part of the self-testing scheme, regular organoleptic tests or laboratory tests should be carried out for the following criteria:

- pesticide residues, based on risk assessment, but at least once a year
- organoleptic (firmness, taste, smell, maturity of seeds, colour)
- curvature value
- size

II. Sustainability

Environmental protection (reduction of environmental footprint, green logistics)

• Use of environment friendly, renewable energy resources

5. The holding/applicant derives part of its energy from renewable energy sources (e.g. thermal water, geothermal heat, solar panels, biogas) in the production and preparation process.

(The undertaking has a certified green product, green service, or sells green energy (solar energy, wind energy, hydropower, biogas, geothermal energy)).

Document to demonstrate the distribution of total and renewable electricity consumption in the last financial year).

- **Use of sustainable management inputs/technological methods**

6. More efficient resource management, material, energy and water management, and modernisation of processing technologies that reduce environmental impact (for example regenerative heat recovery, waste heat recovery, the improvement of the efficiency of the refrigeration systems and the reduction of energy consumption).

(It shall be demonstrated:

- *whether it has environmental compliance/certification*
- *whether it uses a qualified green product or service for its operation.*

It has a process in place to identify, assess and respond to environmental and social risks and opportunities.

It is necessary to examine what proportion of the materials used by the undertaking or by the undertakings in its value chains are recycled, reclaimed, renewable and non-renewable raw materials /circular economy/.)

7. Energy recovery system on production machines.

(For example, the use of any equipment that captures and transmits the waste heat of the compressor. Recycling of thermal energy for other industrial processes that require heat or steam).

8. Application of an Environmental Management System (EMS) or EMAS (Eco-Management and Audit Scheme) in accordance with standard MSZ EN ISO 14001:2015, certifying environmental compliance.

(Preparation of annual reports which provide information about the energy use, waste management, water use and other environmental impacts.)

9. Certified and regularly used environmentally friendly and/or water-saving cleaning products and detergents.

(Certifications, safety data sheets, specifications, trademarks on the packaging. Certificates from certification bodies, e.g. Ecocert, Green Certification, Breeam, Leed.)

10. Utilization of by-products, minimisation of product and material losses.

(The undertaking has a process in place to identify, assess and respond to environmental and social risks and opportunities. The undertaking uses raw materials, secondary raw materials produced from waste in accordance with circular economy principles, and the circular economy requirements are taken into account in the design of the product, including the packaging of the product.)

11. Operation of an environmentally sound waste management system. Separate waste collection and recycling, in a documented form.

(The undertaking is authorised to handle, collect, transport, store and dispose of persistent organic pollutants in a non-polluting way once they become waste.)

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12. Efficient and environmentally friendly waste water treatment technology (e.g. biological waste water treatment).
13. Verified decrease in specific water use.

E.g. use of run-off hot water from installations for secondary cleaning tasks, drip irrigation, rainwater collection and recycling, grey water recycling.)

- **Green rating**

14. Official proof of a recognised, certified sustainability rating in accordance with the EU legislation in force (e.g., but not limited to: EcoVadis, B Corp, BREEAM, LEED, ISCC).
15. Green sourcing policy, documented: prioritising suppliers that have made sustainability investments.

(The undertaking makes its suppliers carry out an environmental assessment of the products and/or services. Demonstration of the proportion in which suppliers use, for example, renewable energy sources, whether they take into account the building energy aspects, whether they operate an environmentally sound waste system, minimise the environmental impact of the logistics network and that of transport.)

16. The undertaking has a Science Based Target Initiative (SPTI) commitment.
17. The raw material used in the production of the product comes from certified organic or extensive farming or has a reduced environmental footprint for which there is other scientific evidence. (not optional together with point 2)

(E.g. products labelled as organic, environmentally friendly product or service.)

- **Use of eco-friendly packaging solutions**

18. Application of an eco-friendly packaging solution for packaged products (reduced packaging size or alternative packaging materials e.g. compostable (FSC or PEFC logo)).
19. Suppliers of primary packaging material that comes into contact with the product shall have BRC or IFS PACsecure certification.

- **Transport**

20. The main component comes to the processing plant from own holding or from within a distance of 100 km.

(Place of production, the production and/or processing site may be located within a distance of 100 km.)

21. Plant protection products, materials that improve or maintain the fertility of the soil shall be manufactured and transferred to the production site from within 100 km.
22. Transport optimisation, route planning to reduce emissions.

(Lean & Green program)

23. The product shall be delivered to the consumer within a short supply chain.

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Social aspects

- 24. Existence of SMETA (Supplier Ethical Data Exchange) audit.
- 25. Prevention of food waste through donation.
- 26. Prevention of food waste by preventing waste generation in production and logistics.