

HIGH QUALITY FOOD CERTIFICATION MARK



HIGH QUALITY FOOD
(KMÉ)

CERTIFICATION MARK

SPECIFIC CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS

Gherkins

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HIGH QUALITY FOOD

kme.hu

Gherkins

For the award of the KMÉ or KMÉ gold grade trademarks, applications may be submitted for products called 'gherkin' whose conditions of production comply with the applicable legal requirements and the relevant directives of the Codex Alimentarius Hungaricus, and also meet the following requirements.

Requirements for the raw material (raw gherkin):

- has a maximum length of 14 cm, is not deformed, its seeds are underdeveloped,
- shows no signs of bitterness,
- is evenly cylindrical in shape, with small seed pods, and is suitable for mechanical harvesting,
- represents a variety which is disease resistant and does not go bitter.
- The gherkin must be grown with the use of integrated cultivation technology; technological tools for the prevention of pests, the application of plant protection, early warning systems, monitoring, preferably the application of biological plant protection. The application of reasonable chemical plant protection is permitted on the basis of the written permission of a plant protection engineer or plant doctor.

Requirements for the finished product:

Physical properties

The product shall not contain more than 15 % of distorted, spotted, hollow gherkins with a curvature greater than 30°.

Size specification for graded gherkins: Size of raw gherkins (cm)	Deviation from size in % of the net weight (w/w%) shall not exceed:
3-6	10
5-8	10
6-9	10
8-10	10
9-12	10
12-14	10

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Other requirements:

- It does not contain a stem part more than 1 cm in length,
- it does not contain cut or broken parts,
- the pickle juice is clear, completely covers the gherkins, the gherkins have a veil-like coating, no sediment is visible at the bottom of the jar,
- only transparent glass packaging material can be used.

Optional elements

Applications for the High Quality Food (KMÉ) and High Quality Food Gold Grade trademarks may be submitted for products that, in addition to the above-mentioned mandatory requirements, also comply with at least one point in each of the optional element categories of I and II.

I. Product production process

Self-testing of the product

1. Comprehensive (organoleptic, physical, chemical, microbiological) self-testing of the product by production batch.
2. Use of methods in the plant with which production processes and product safety, quality and hygiene are regularly checked in a documented manner. Based on the findings, corrective measures are put in place, good practices are identified and staff are trained accordingly.
3. Trend analysis within the framework of self-inspection: creation of a quality control chart for the graphical representation of analytical and microbiological values, with the setting of guidance values, a warning threshold and/or limit values. These values shall be compared to the actual data collected from self-testing, and, if necessary, appropriate measures shall be taken.
4. Tests authorised under the self-testing system by own or external laboratories with regard to the following criteria:
 - acidity % w/w (expressed as acetic acid)
 - NaCl (salt) content % w/w
 - sand content % w/w
 - microbiology (yeast count, mould count, total plate count, sulphite-reducing Clostridia, mesophilic aerobic and facultative anaerobic spore counts)
 - pesticide residues from the raw material supplied.
 - heavy metal content from the input material
 - Perchlorate content from the input material.

At least 9 samples per year shall be tested at random from the various batches produced in the given year.

5. Self-testing of the product production process (from the receipt of raw materials to the delivery of the finished product) on a batch-by-lot basis (particularly the control of heat treatment time and temperature, as well as sealing check).
6. Running a raw material evaluation/supplier programme, whereby trend analysis is carried out based on the laboratory findings.
7. Use of raw material with a KME trademark.
8. Certified organic farming (not optional together with point 14).
9. Cucumber growers should have a Global G.A.P. certificate.
10. Raw gherkins are transported to the processing plant from the producer within 24 hours from their harvesting.
11. Control of the foreign material treatment process in the PRP programme and its strict enforcement.
12. The existence of an ISO 22000, BRC, FSSC 22000 or IFS Food safety certificate.

II. Sustainability

Use of environment friendly, renewable energy resources

13. The plant obtains part of its energy from renewable sources (e.g. geothermal heat, solar panels, biogas, solar collectors).

Use of sustainable management inputs/technological methods

14. The raw material used to produce the product is derived from certified organic farming (not optional in conjunction with point 8).
15. A more efficient management of resources: use of material-, energy- and water-efficient technologies and other processing technologies which reduce pressure on the environment, and the upgrading of the already existing technologies (for example regenerative heat recovery, waste heat recovery, the improvement of the efficiency of the refrigeration systems and the reduction of energy consumption).
16. Application of an MSZ EN ISO 14001:2015 system which certifies environmental compliance.
17. Use of environmentally friendly cleaning products and detergents.
18. Utilisation of by-products, minimisation of product and material loss, use of an environmentally sound waste management system.

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19. Saving water consumption (e.g. reducing specific water use, using effluent hot water from individual installations for secondary treatment), efficient and environmentally friendly waste water treatment technology.
20. Giving preference to suppliers that have made investments into environmental protection.

Transport distance

21. The raw materials used in the production of the product are sent to the processing plant from own farms or from within a radius of 100 kilometres.