

Som Ebre PGS

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Quality Commission

Participatory Guarantee System (PGS)

Unlike generic quality seals, granted by a third party and based on imposed global regulations, PGSs offer a complementary, low-cost, locally-based system of quality assurance, with a heavy emphasis on social control and knowledge building. They are essentially pedagogical and organizational processes that give the power of action and decision to farmers and consumers, placing a high emphasis on the fact that they aren't hierarchical and run in a more decentralized fashion. They certify producers and give them the power to decide the way in which they grow, sell and distribute their food. This system is built on a foundation of trust that guarantees the ecological and social quality of the food.

General Principles of PGS:

- a- A shared vision
- b- Participation
- c- Trust
- d- Transparency
- e- An external peer review
- f- A learning process

Minimum quality control requirements for vegetable production:

General criteria:

- 1- Agronomic criteria
- 2- Ecological criteria
- 3- Environmental criteria
- 4- Social aspects
- 5- Economic aspects

In this document, based on minimum quality control requirements for farms, not every general criteria is specified. This document is the general starting point for the future specifications of the *Som Ebre* brand - quality seal.

1- Agronomic criteria

- a. It is not allowed to use synthetic chemical pesticides.
- b. Herbicides are not allowed to control weeds.
- c. Synthetic chemical fertilizers are not allowed.
- d. Bottom turning of the soil structure with agricultural machinery is not allowed.
- e. The implantation of monocultures of great extensions is not allowed.
- f. Horticulture will be marked by the natural seasonality of each variety.
- g. In the reproduction of plants, feet and / or wild patterns will be used.
- h. Composting use: it is recommended to compost organic matter and animal feces before use, to eliminate weed seeds and pathogens.

2- Ecological management standards:

- a. Keeping the soil covered always.
- b. Investigation for higher degrees of sustainability of the farm activity.
- c. The use of genetically modified seeds (GMO) is not allowed.
- d. The use of seeds of adapted local varieties will be preferred. Or from certified seed banks.
- e. Control of pests and diseases according to techniques and methods allowed in specific agriculture systems (biodynamic, ecological, permaculture, regenerative, etc).
- f. In horticulture, for the improvement of plant health, the use of good rotations and associations between crops will be prioritized.
- g. The farmer will always ensure the increase in the content of organic matter assimilable to his crops.
- h. Good practices for the elaboration of compost for the improvement of the soil fertility.

3- Environmental Criteria

- a. Improvement of the collection and storage of rainwater and runoff.
- b. Increase in the biodiversity of the farm (plant, animal, geological, microorganisms).
- c. Control of erosion and soil loss.
- d. Devise energy cycles within the farm itself, self-regulation and feedback.

e. No waste has to be generated, any matter is part of a cycle.

4- Social aspects

- a. Philosophy of support and accompaniment with neighbors, other producers and / or farm workers.
- b. Implement environmental education from the farm at all ages.

5- Economic aspects

- a. Favor the local and circular economy.

The farmer states that:

- That his or her activity meets the minimum standards for the evaluation of the exploitation to access its exercise, and that compliance will be maintained during the exercise of the activity.
- That the data included in the declaration are true.
- That is committed not to hinder the verification function in pairs in the case of being chosen randomly.