

Origin Green Sustainability Charter

Food & Drink Manufacturers

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An initiative by

BORD BIA
IRISH FOOD BOARD



Origin Green is Ireland's food and drink sustainability programme, operating on a national scale, uniting government, the private sector and the full supply chain from farmers to food producers and right through to the foodservice and retail sectors.

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Introduction





Scope

At the manufacturing level of the programme, Origin Green enables Irish food and drink companies to develop a comprehensive multi-annual sustainability plan which helps members to reduce environmental impact, achieve efficiencies in the daily running of their businesses while also making a positive contribution to communities.

Through this infrastructure, participating companies set independently verified sustainability targets and regularly report progress in achieving short, medium and long-term goals. In turn, this empowers members of Origin Green to communicate their key sustainability achievements to existing and potential customers.



Context

Exacerbated by the impacts of climate change, customers and consumers alike increasingly expect suppliers to provide details of the sustainability impacts associated with their produce. This highlights the importance of credibly benchmarking performance and demonstrating continuous improvement.

Food manufacturers that proactively demonstrate a strong commitment to sustainable practices stand well placed to secure long-term business relationships with customers both at home and in highly competitive international markets.

According to research undertaken by Bord Bia in 2019, 75% of customers say sustainability is important to their business and nearly three quarters (72%) of customers say that it is important to have suppliers with strong sustainability credentials.¹ Customers say that the ideal supplier partner shares their sustainability mindset.

Member Benefits

Why Origin Green?

Origin Green exists to power and prove the sustainability of Ireland's food, drink and horticulture sector.



Save Resources

At an individual manufacturer level, the implementation of sustainable production practices is proven to result in greater production efficiency. In turn, this reduces costs and minimises the impact of the manufacturing process on the environment.



Build Reputation

Companies recognised for having strong sustainability credentials are likely to enjoy increased customer loyalty and retention, enhanced brand reputation, improved risk management, as well as retaining and attracting the best talent.



Win Business

Origin Green membership offers third-party verification of a company's commitment to sustainability and responsible production. Through effective communication of these credentials, companies are in a stronger position to fulfil key customers' sustainability requirements, thus building better relationships and boosting sales growth.

¹ Source: www.bordbia.ie/industry/insights/global-sustainability-insights/

A close-up photograph of several salmon fillets resting on a bed of crushed ice. The salmon are dark on top and lighter on the bottom. In the background, a wooden dock and some industrial buildings are visible under a cloudy sky. A large green rectangular overlay covers the right side of the image, containing the text.

Origin Green Charter Requirements

Eligibility Requirements

This section outlines the key eligibility criteria which food and drink manufacturers must meet to participate in the Origin Green programme.



Applicants must produce or handle food for human consumption.



Applicants must have a minimum turnover of >€100,000 per annum.



Applicants must have a production facility(ies) which is based in the Republic of Ireland.



All manufacturing as it relates to inclusion in the Origin Green plan must be based in the Republic of Ireland.



Applicants must be in production for a minimum of one full calendar year prior to applying for the Origin Green programme. This will ensure baseline data to develop sustainability targets is available from the outset.



Applicants must ensure they are formally registered as a Bord Bia client.



Applicants must have a recognised Food Safety Management System in place to ensure minimum food safety standards are maintained and basic customer requirements are met (e.g. BRC). For companies with an annual turnover <€500k, HACCP will be accepted. If required, companies will be given a 12-month grace period from the date of registration approval to fulfil this requirement.



Plan Development Process

Demonstrating good sustainability performance and achieving best practice is possible for all companies participating in Origin Green. The main requirement is the demonstration of a strong commitment at senior management level and throughout the organisation to deliver continuous improvement.

Companies are asked to sign up to developing and implementing an Origin Green sustainability plan covering a period of up to five years. This plan can be renewed / updated as appropriate at the end of the period. The sustainability action plan developed by companies must clearly set out SMART targets in predefined key action areas.

For participating companies to retain ongoing membership of Origin Green, they must undergo a third-party independent audit and a review annually to ensure an acceptable standard of performance is being met. If companies fail to meet minimum performance standards on a consistent basis, their membership of the programme is downgraded.





Origin Green Plan Structure

The Origin Green plan structure is designed to facilitate companies in self-determining the exact measures they need to implement to advance their sustainability performance.

However, companies are required to set clear, measurable and time-bound sustainability goals under three predefined target areas - Raw Material Sourcing, the Manufacturing Process, and Social Sustainability. This ensures members are in the best position possible to broadly meet customer requirements.

Bord Bia believes that individual companies are best placed to define which actions will have the greatest impact within their businesses to maximise general efficiencies and cost reductions. This is also achieved by the completion of a Materiality Assessment to ensure robust targets are being set. In order to demonstrate continuous improvement, companies must identify a baseline year from which progress is assessed over the period of the plan.

To add a further layer of robustness, plans are verified to an independent standard annually to maintain the integrity and credibility of the Origin Green programme. This task is undertaken by Mabbett, a leading global inspection, verification, testing and certification company. Through the verification process, Mabbett score Origin Green target progress to ensure minimum performance thresholds are reached. They also audit companies against key legislative criteria to ensure ongoing compliance.

Target Areas

Origin Green members establish sustainability targets in the three key target areas as outlined in the table below. The number of targets that companies are required to set under each area is dictated by the company's annual turnover (see page 21 - [Tiered Membership](#))

Overview of Origin Green Sustainability Plan Target Areas:



Raw Material Sourcing

- **Raw Materials & Suppliers** - Source raw materials from suppliers with recognised certifications and develop sustainability initiatives with suppliers / primary producers.
- **Packaging** - Develop packaging initiatives focused on improving the sustainability of packaging materials.



Manufacturing Processes

- **Energy** - Establish energy reduction initiatives and renewable energy investments.
- **Emissions** - Commit to reduction of overall greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Waste** - Initiatives to prevent and reduce waste.
- **Water** - Reduce water consumption and improve wastewater systems.



Social Sustainability

- **Product Health & Nutrition** - Improve nutrition credentials of products and/or promote healthy eating habits.
- **Community Engagement** - Sponsor national and local community charities and/ or organisations.
- **Employee Wellbeing** - Initiatives to improve the health and wellness of employees.
- **Diversity & Inclusion** - Form organisational strategies and initiatives to ensure there is equality for all employees within the workforce.



Additional Targets

- **Biodiversity** - Conservation of ecosystems on site and sponsor biodiversity initiatives.

A photograph of a man in a dark jacket and beanie standing among numerous wooden barrels stacked in rows. The barrels are made of dark wood with metal bands. The scene is outdoors with a cloudy sky and some bare trees in the background.

Tiered Membership

Origin Green membership is grouped across five different tiers which are based upon a company's annual revenue/turnover. This ensures that companies have the ability to implement size appropriate target requirements, hence maximising the potential for successful implementation.

Origin Green Membership Tiers

The table below outlines the five membership tiers within the Origin Green programme and the corresponding sustainability targets required for each respective tier.

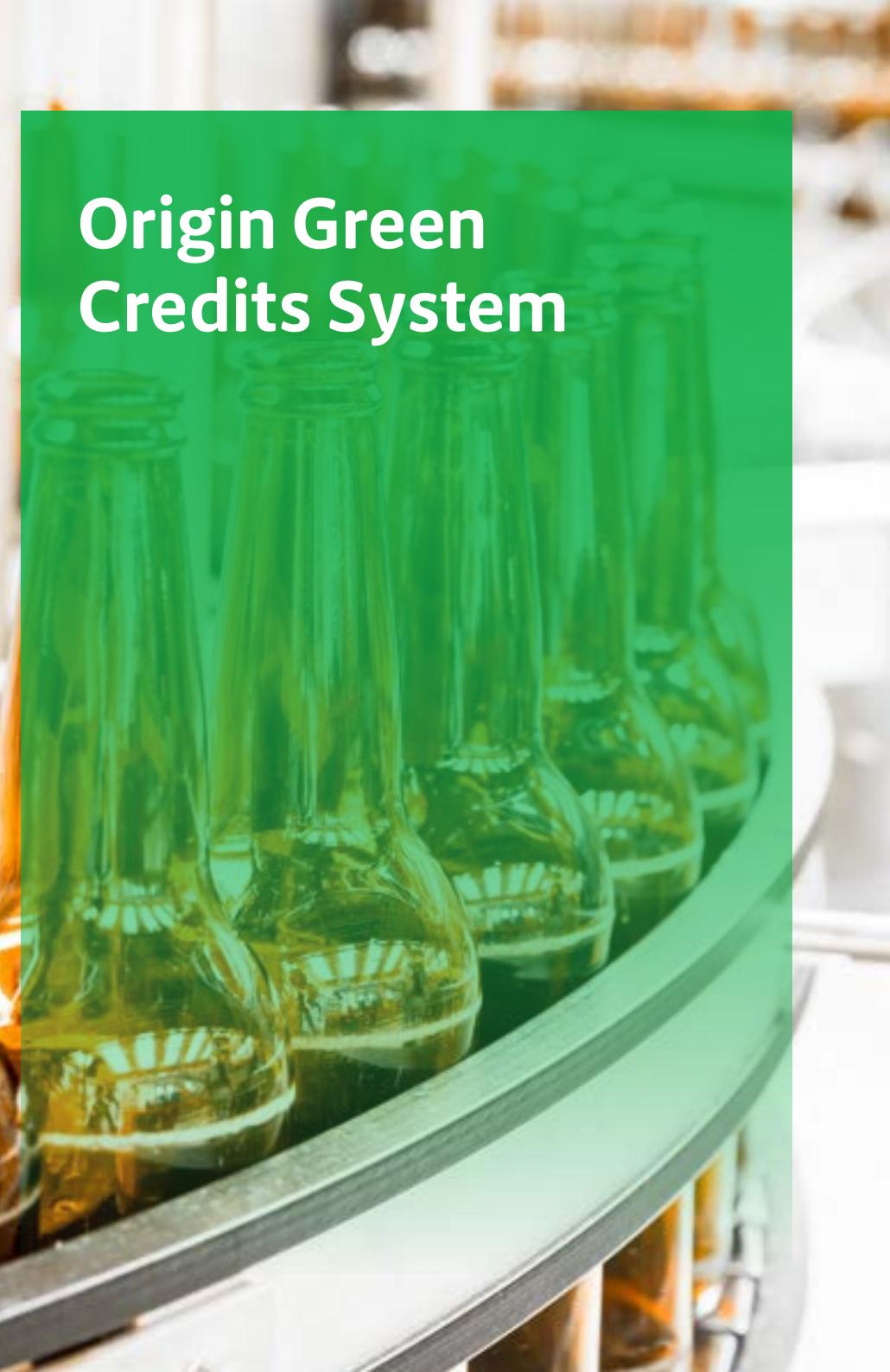
Origin Green Membership Tiers		
Membership Tiers	Revenue / Turnover	Minimum Targets Required
Tier 1	>€250m	8
Tier 2	>€50m - €250m	7
Tier 3	>€10m - €50m	6
Tier 4	>€1m - €10m	5
Tier 5	>€100,000 - €1m	4

Origin Green membership is grouped across five different tiers which are based upon a company's annual revenue/turnover.





Origin Green Credits System



Third-party Verification

Origin Green's third-party verification partner is Mabbett, a leading global inspection, verification, testing and certification company. Approval by Mabbett indicates that a company's Origin Green sustainability plan meets the minimum standards required to attain Origin Green membership. The independent verification of Origin Green plans is a vital and central element to the programme.

Following ongoing plan refinement, Origin Green members must submit a comprehensive review of their sustainability plans annually to highlight progress against the targets set. Mabbett verify the data provided by requesting documentation and evidence to ensure the information stated in the plan is accurate and that the company is performing satisfactorily. This may also include an on-site audit.

Mabbett also provide an individual summary assessment report for each respective member of Origin Green annually. This report outlines the rationale for the verification decision and where appropriate, recommendations for ongoing improvement.

If members have demonstrated an insufficient level of ongoing progress against the sustainability targets set or fail to comply with national legislative requirements, Mabbett will make a decision as to whether the member should have their verified membership of Origin Green downgraded or recommend a conditional approval, where a corrective action(s) is outlined with a clear timeline for implementation. This progress is then subsequently assessed via a dedicated follow-up procedure to determine whether the member in question has implemented the requested action. Progress is also assessed in the subsequent annual review or via a spot audit on-site where necessary.

Credits System

The Origin Green Credits System is a points based scoring system which was introduced to simplify the verification process for participating Origin Green companies. It was also introduced to display a greater level of transparency for how membership of the programme is achieved and retained. It is imperative that the programme can display a clear methodology for how sustainability target progress is assessed on an ongoing basis.

The table below outlines how Origin Green sustainability targets are assessed and scored by the programme verifiers, Mabbett. In order to determine whether a company attains a sufficient number of sustainability credits to retain Origin Green membership annually, performance for each target is accumulated. The number of credits awarded must meet the predefined minimum verification threshold for the company's membership tier as outlined below.

Origin Green Target Performance Scorecard		
Sustainability Target Performance	Credits Awarded	Target Grading
Target not attempted (no legitimate effort made to achieve target with no viable evidence of progress).	0	Fail
Target not achieved with a poor attempt made and little evidence of progress.	1	Unsatisfactory
Target may or may not have been achieved but a reasonable and clear effort has been made with clear supporting evidence.	2	Satisfactory / Pass
Target achieved with evidence the company has surpassed expectations.	3	Exemplary

Target Scoring Methodology

Once an Origin Green participating company has been placed within its respective membership tier, it must accumulate a minimum number of credits annually to retain ongoing membership of the programme. At its simplest, a company must achieve a satisfactory or pass grading across all the minimum targets within its membership tier.

This is outlined in the table below:

Origin Green Membership Tiers				
Membership Tiers	Revenue / Turnover	Minimum Targets Required	Credits Required	
Tier 1	>€250m	8	16	
Tier 2	>€50m - €250m	7	14	
Tier 3	>€10m - €50m	6	12	
Tier 4	>€1m - €10m	5	10	
Tier 5	>€100,000 - €1m	4	8	

Companies are only scored on the minimum number of targets required for their membership tier annually.

The conditions outlined below also apply:

Each tier's mandatory targets + highest scoring remaining optional targets are accrued to reach the minimum number of targets required for verification. This contributes to the overall credits awarded to a company in a given year.

- Certain targets are designated as mandatory across the five Origin Green membership tiers. Companies must achieve a satisfactory/pass grading for these targets.
- Companies are allowed to fail one optional target annually if the remaining targets give them a score which reaches the minimum credits requirement set for their membership tier. This is not permitted for the same target area for two consecutive years.
- If an Origin Green member scores below the minimum credits required for its tier, remedial measures must be put in place and approved by the programme verifiers before a company can regain its membership status.²

² Please note that the criteria outlined in this document is reviewed periodically and may be subject to changes or amendments. All Origin Green members are notified of any such changes prior to implementation.

Gold Membership

With the Origin Green credits system, it is now easier to identify members that are performing at a high level or overachieving in their sustainability targets annually. Companies are eligible for Gold Membership of Origin Green where they have demonstrated exemplary performance in the minimum number of targets set within their membership tier.

This is outlined in the table below:

Credits Required for Origin Green Gold Membership				
Membership Tiers	Revenue / Turnover	Minimum Targets Required	Credits Required	Gold Membership
Tier 1	>€250m	8	16	21
Tier 2	>€50m - €250m	7	14	18
Tier 3	>€10m - €50m	6	12	15
Tier 4	>€1m - €10m	5	10	12
Tier 5	>€100,000 - €1m	4	8	10

From 2022, Origin Green members cannot score unsatisfactory in a target area and still achieve Gold Membership. This will only apply if the target area in question is counted in the overall credits score, hence members will not be penalised for setting additional optional targets.

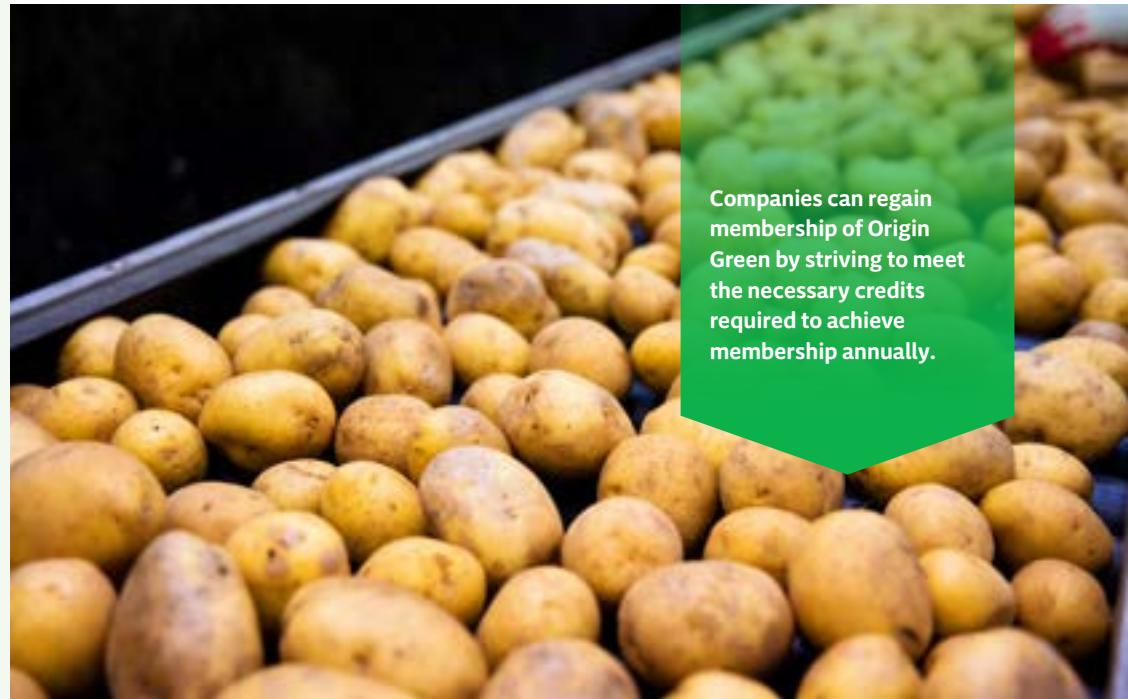
Gold Members will receive an exclusive suite of new materials to differentiate themselves from the wider membership base and will get access to exclusive networking and collaborative opportunities.

Downgrading Membership

Each year, companies that fail to meet the minimum standards required for Origin Green verification have their membership of the programme downgraded. Where a member fails to submit an Origin Green annual review in a given year by the agreed final deadline date, membership of the programme is also revoked as progress cannot be verified.

In such instances, companies must immediately cease all usage of the Origin Green logo and any promotional material being used. Companies can regain membership of Origin Green by striving to meet the necessary credits required to achieve membership annually.

Ongoing support and mentorship is provided in this regard to participating companies by programme partners to ensure minimum requirements are met on an ongoing basis.



A photograph of a man standing in a field of tall, green grass. He is wearing a dark t-shirt and light-colored trousers. The camera is positioned low, looking up at him. The background shows a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds and some trees in the distance.

Origin Green Programme Updates 2022

Deduction of Credits

While a member may fail a target area outright due to severe incidents as outlined in Section 2.4 previously, where it is identified that a member has been responsible for persistent damage to the environment over a period of time and/or failed to act upon a course of action as recommended by the independent verifiers, the member in question may be deducted one credit from their overall credits score. While in severe cases companies may have their overall membership of Origin Green downgraded, persistent and ongoing incidences where a member has made little effort to remedy the situation may result in a credits deduction. Members may be deducted up to one credit per incident up to a max of two credits annually from their overall credits score.

In addition, where members set optional targets to meet the overall target requirements for their membership tier, should they fail the optional target area for two consecutive years, it may also be given a minus one credit score for failing to act upon the recommendations of the independent verifier.

This will only be relevant for optional target areas as a member will be unable to achieve verification for failing a mandatory target. Furthermore, this will only apply to optional targets which are counted towards a member's overall score, hence companies will not be penalised for setting additional targets. Overall, this will be at the discretion of the independent verifiers and will only be utilised if absolutely necessary. Should members be deducted a credit from their overall score, they will have the right to appeal this decision as appropriate and each appeal will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Materiality Assessment

As part of the ongoing continual improvement of the Origin Green programme, a new excel based materiality assessment template has now been launched by Bord Bia. For new Origin Green applicants, the completion of the materiality assessment is now a programme requirement. Existing members must also complete the materiality assessment at the beginning of each new plan period. By completing the materiality assessment in conjunction with engaging key stakeholders on their main priorities, this should offer a significant insight into the most appropriate areas where targets should be set. From February 2022, eligible companies must complete the assessment as outlined above, with support, training and guidance readily available from the Origin Green team. Where a company has already completed this exercise independently of Bord Bia, it will not be required to undertake this task again but may be asked to provide proof of completion by the independent verifier.

The Origin Green independent verifiers will also review the materiality assessment during the verification audit alongside a company's overall sustainability plan. Completing the materiality assessment for Origin Green annual reviews is not a requirement, however where members are not performing well throughout a plan period or significantly overachieving in their targets, they may be asked to re-complete the materiality assessment in order to recalibrate their overall sustainability plan.



Raw Materials & Suppliers: New Target Hierarchy

For 2022 reporting, Bord Bia has readjusted the existing Origin Green Targets Grid across all five membership tiers and simplified the previous Raw Materials Sourcing target area. This area has now been renamed 'Raw Materials and Suppliers' and will now adopt a risk based approach to this complex area. The hierarchy in the diagram below should now be used by members when developing targets.

Members will now be required, as is best practice, to first focus on their raw materials to ensure appropriate sustainability certifications are in place around procured produce and ingredients. As a member matures in this area, it will then move down the hierarchy to focus on the certifications of the suppliers themselves and will ultimately be encouraged, where feasible, to work directly with suppliers on sustainability initiatives. This new approach will ensure members are tackling the most at risk area of their supply chains from the outset while overall driving continuous improvement. Where a member has an already established supplier certification target, Bord Bia highly recommend that this target remains in the plan, and a second Raw Material Certification target is developed. This will significantly improve the likelihood of achieving a maximum credit score in this target area.

Raw Materials & Suppliers Target Hierarchy



Mandatory Emissions Reporting

As was notified at the beginning of 2021, Origin Green members at the Tier 1 and 2 levels (turnover >€50 million) annually, are now required to set a mandatory emissions target. Training will commence for these members in February 2022 and will be delivered by leading experts in this area. The Origin Green support team will also be on hand to guide members through these new requirements as outlined below.

- Origin Green Emissions Target Area Requirements 2022 - Tier 1 & 2 Members
- As previously outlined by Bord Bia, an emissions target must be submitted in 2022 in tandem with the 2021 annual review.
- Members can use the Origin Green carbon calculator tool (or equivalent) to convert Scope 1, 2 and 3 based emissions to CO2 equivalent (CO2e). Origin Green mentors are on hand to offer support and guidance with this task.
- Where Tier 2 members are having technical difficulties formulating a comprehensive baseline for Scope 3 emissions reporting, and provide suitable justification, they may be given an opportunity to define their scope 3 boundary throughout 2022 to be submitted in 2023. This will be assessed on a case-by-case basis. In such instances, members struggling in this area may be redirected for additional training and support.
- Due to the complexities involved in calculating Scope 3 emissions, members will be required to refresh and update these figures on a bi-annual basis.



Leveraging Origin Green Membership

When membership of Origin Green is attained, all companies receive a dedicated one-to-one briefing on how they can promote their membership accordingly and are given access to a suite of assets and promotional materials to leverage these new verified sustainability credentials.

This includes access to an Origin Green Brand Activation Guide which demonstrates how membership can be brought to life for staff, trade customers and the general public alike. Companies also get access to an Origin Green Membership Guide which outlines all the supports Bord Bia offers to aid a company in gaining the most from its membership of the programme, along with an Origin Green plaque and flag to display at participating manufacturing sites.

It is important to note that Origin Green is a business-to-business (B2B) programme and that it is a company, rather than a consumer facing message. For this reason, the Origin Green logo is not permitted on pack as a consumer message. While the Origin Green logo is not used, membership of the programme can be a critical differentiator in commercial conversations, offering the potential of a distinct and direct advantage over competitors in the marketplace.





Powered By
Partnership



From the outset, the Origin Green programme has placed considerable emphasis on partnership and collaboration. The ongoing assistance and involvement of a range of organisations and stakeholders ensures the successful implementation and development of the programme.

As Origin Green grows, so too does the importance of the specialised knowledge that these agencies and organisations offer in the ongoing developing and evolution of the programme.

For more information on partners see:

www.origingreen/who-is-involved/partners





Contact Us

For further information about the Origin Green programme, please see the useful links and contact details below:

Origin Green Sustainability Report

Find out about our progress to date in our latest sustainability report, available [here](#)

Origin Green Website

www.origingreen.ie

Bord Bia Website

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