

## Requirements of the EN 13432 standard

The **European Directive 94/62/EC** for packaging and packaging waste has a dual purpose: a) encouraging all the Member states to engage in waste prevention and promote the reuse of packaging waste and b) to coordinate and harmonise all the initiatives in this context so as to ensure the flow of trade is unimpeded in the European Union and prevent anti-competitive practices.

The key component of the EN **13432 standard** is the need to recover packaging waste on the basis of industrial composting. The standard defines both the test programme and the assessment criteria compostable packaging has to meet.

As the EN 13432 standard is harmonised, all packaging that is consistent with this standard is automatically in keeping with the requirements of the packaging Directive in terms of post-use recovery.

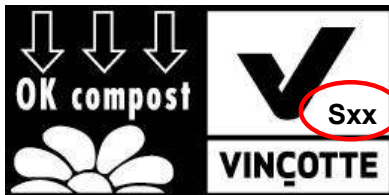
The requirements of the EN 13432 standard are included in the **OK compost** verification mark certification programme without any additions or omissions. The requirements are assessed as part of the original certification but continue to be monitored on the market by a competent third party. The key requirements are:

- **Chemical composition:** the standard sets limits for volatile matter, heavy metals (Cu, Zn, Ni, Cd, Pb, Hg, Cr, Mo, Se, As) and fluorine
- **Biodegradation :** chemical breakdown of materials into CO<sub>2</sub>, water and minerals. Pursuant to the standard at least 90% of the materials have to be broken down by biological action within 6 months.
- **Disintegration :** the physical decomposition of a product into tiny pieces. After 12 weeks at least 90% of the product should be able to pass through a 2 x 2 mm mesh.
- **Quality of the final compost and ecotoxicity:** the quality of the compost should not decline as a result of the added packaging material. The standard specifies checking this via ecotoxicity tests: this involves making an examination to see if the germination and biomass production of plants are not adversely affected by the influence of composted packaging.

The EN 13432 standard specifies that packaging may be deemed to be compostable only if all the constituents and components of the packaging are compostable. During the certification procedure an assessment is made not only of the basic materials but also of the various additives and other product properties.

Consequently, an **OK compost** logo on packaging means:

- The packaging meets all the requirements of the EN 13432 standard
- The packaging meets all the requirements of the packaging Directive
- A neutral competent third party has validated the conformity and guaranteed the monitoring of the product on the market.



The code in the logo is used to identify the owner of the OK compost certificate.

For full details about OK compost certification, please get in touch with our department in Brussels:

|                | Tel               | Fax               | e-mail                |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>BELGIUM</b> | +32(0)2 674 57 50 | +32(0)2 674 57 85 | okcompost@vincotte.be |