

### Reassurance for consumers about cucumbers in the UK

Recent events in northern Germany are demonstrating just how serious an issue hygiene in food production and processing can be. Health officials are investigating an outbreak of E.coli, with cucumbers and other salad products listed as a potential source.

Consumers in the UK should be reassured that the only cases reported so far outside Germany seem to be in people who have been to Germany recently. Given that no specific product or source can be identified, it is highly unlikely that a specific grower or producer region is at fault. The localised nature of the illness source seems to suggest that contamination has occurred in a processing facility of some kind.

The UK's supermarkets have very rigorous food safety requirements from their growers and suppliers, and UK production sites are proud of their excellent record in growing safe food in a low risk, clean, regulated environment. Consumers can enjoy products such as our cucumbers in confidence that every care has been taken in the production process to minimise any potential risk.



Thanet Earth Marketing also imports cucumbers to the UK. Every grower we work with has their facility visited, audited, and risk assessed against the likelihood of any potential food safety risk including microbial contamination. All our growers have to comply with stringent food safety standards as part of farm assurance schemes which are required by UK retail customers and they are audited against these annually. We also take random tests from our cucumbers – imported and grown at Thanet Earth – and have never found a single pathogen present in those tests.

We do, however, reiterate the general advice to consumers with all fresh produce – wash the product before you prepare it.

Thanet Earth will remain vigilant and will continue to ensure that standards are maintained in the greenhouses, in our packing area and with our overseas suppliers.

Anyone with further concerns is urged to contact the Health Protection Agency ([www.hpa.org.uk](http://www.hpa.org.uk)) or the Cucumber Growers Association ([www.cucumbergrowers.co.uk](http://www.cucumbergrowers.co.uk))

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Commercial salad production in the UK has been given a great boost in profile by Thanet Earth. This landmark site has planning permission to construct 7 greenhouses covering 55 hectares of land with state-of-the-art glasshouses. So far, three of the greenhouses are built and in full commercial production. Further information for media can be found at [www.thanetearth.com/press-centre.asp](http://www.thanetearth.com/press-centre.asp). Request your user name and password from [press@thanetearth.com](mailto:press@thanetearth.com)

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