



PRESS RELEASE

13 May 2026, Budapest

NATCP crackdown: Action against illegal fruit sellers continues

Inspectors from the National Authority for Trade and Consumer Protection (NATCP), in cooperation with other authorities and as part of a coordinated inspection operation supported by the police, have once again caught illegal fruit vendors in the act, this time in the parking lot of a shopping center in Soroksár. The purpose of the inspections was to curb the illegal sale of fruits and vegetables in public spaces, as well as to protect consumer health and the interests of honest market participants.

Authorities inspected a total of nine traders selling approximately three tons of produce, the vast majority of which consisted primarily of strawberries and blueberries. As a result of the inspections, more than 2.6 tons of produce were removed from the market and destroyed. The action was taken partly due to serious quality defects—such as mold, spoilage, and inadequate storage conditions—and partly due to significant traceability deficiencies.

In several cases, experts found that vendors did not have documents certifying the origin of the goods, could not credibly verify the products' origin, and that mandatory labeling and lot identifiers were also missing. In the case of such products, it becomes practically impossible to trace the product's path in the event of a food safety issue or illness, which poses a particularly serious risk to consumers.

Illegal street vending creates a significant competitive disadvantage for legitimate primary producers, merchants, and market traders who comply with legal requirements and fulfill their tax and food safety obligations. Ignoring permits, registrations, hygiene requirements, and traceability rules distorts the market and undermines the ability of honest businesses to operate.

Roadside vendors often try to make their products attractive with strikingly low prices, but in many cases, these low prices hide serious risks. Fruits stored at improper temperatures—often in direct

sunlight or in dusty, contaminated environments—can spoil quickly and may even pose health risks. Therefore, we ask consumers to purchase fruits and vegetables, whenever possible, from regulated, properly operating retail outlets, markets, or stores where food traceability is ensured and basic hygiene requirements are met.

The inspections, carried out in cooperation with multiple authorities, will continue in the future. Illegal vendors can expect to face fines, as well as the seizure and destruction of their goods. The goal of the NATCP and the government agencies under its professional supervision is not only to safeguard consumer health but also to protect businesses that operate fairly and in compliance with the law.

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National Authority for Trade and Consumer Protection