

PRESS RELEASE

6 May 2026, Budapest

The National Authority for Trade and Consumer Protection (NATCP) inspected restaurants serving reform meals in cooperation with government agencies

The National Authority for Trade and Consumer Protection (NATCP), in cooperation with government agencies, carried out a nationwide targeted inspection of food service establishments that prepare and sell diet foods. The inspections examined whether the businesses in question comply with food safety, hygiene, and consumer information requirements related to special dietary needs.

During the nationwide inspection, a total of 192 food service establishments were inspected. Of these, 71 were exclusively engaged in the production and sale of special-diet foods, while 121 establishments offered special products in addition to their traditional menu. As a result of the inspections, administrative proceedings were initiated in 18 percent of cases, typically due to hygiene deficiencies.

Based on experience, food service establishments catering exclusively to special dietary needs generally operate with a high level of professional competence and awareness. These establishments typically have a thorough understanding of the relevant legal requirements and pay special attention to ensuring appropriate technological and hygiene conditions.

It is a positive sign that most of them ensure the separate storage of ingredients used for halal meals and strive to use separate utensils and to keep work processes spatially or temporally separate.

However, in food service establishments that do not specialize specifically in health foods, the necessary technological infrastructure and expertise are often lacking, particularly with regard to the proper use of technical terminology, compliance with regulations, and the identification of risks arising during production processes. As a result, segregated food preparation is not always fully ensured, which increases the risk of cross-contamination.

The Authority considers it of paramount importance that food service establishments provide accurate, understandable, and clear information to consumers, particularly when meals are prepared in a non-segregated kitchen environment. It is also a fundamental requirement to provide detailed and reliable information on allergens and substances causing intolerances.

Based on the findings, it remains necessary to provide ongoing professional support to food service businesses and to conduct regular inspections of regulatory compliance to ensure that consumers following special diets receive safe and reliable service.

The NATCP will continue to prioritize similar targeted inspections, collaborate with industry stakeholders, and support their professional education. To this end, it provides restaurants with various resources and informational materials on its website (www.nkfh.gov.hu), thereby strengthening the operations of law-abiding businesses and fair market competition.

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National Authority for Trade and Consumer Protection