



PRESS RELEASE

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Don't just knock on the rind—the NKFH is launching a nationwide watermelon inspection

The National Authority for Trade and Consumer Protection (NATCP) and the government agencies under its professional supervision are once again conducting nationwide inspections of watermelon distributors this year, paying particular attention to the origin, labeling, and quality of the products. During last year's inspections, officials imposed fines totaling more than 19 million forints, which clearly demonstrates that regulatory oversight remains necessary.

In 2025, inspectors visited 485 retail outlets, where they examined 426 batches of domestically produced watermelons and 132 batches of imported watermelons. As a result of the deficiencies identified, fines totaling more than 19 million forints were imposed in 26 cases. A total of 308 kilograms of watermelons had to be destroyed and removed from the market.

This year's targeted inspection covers both domestic and imported watermelons. During the inspections, staff from the food chain supervisory authorities check the quality of the products, the compliance of mandatory labeling, and adherence to traceability requirements. During these inspections, special attention will be paid to cases where there is suspicion of misleading or falsified country-of-origin labeling. To verify the origin of the products, distributors must have the necessary documentation available on-site.

The agency's staff inspect the condition of the watermelons, including their cleanliness, ripeness, and any cracks, dents, or deformities, as well as whether the products have been classified into the appropriate quality grade. During these inspections, key criteria include the presence of the lot identification number and the indication that the flesh is not red; for domestically grown watermelons, Hungarian origin must also be clearly indicated by a Hungarian flag, which must be displayed in accordance with legal requirements.

The inspections cover the entire supply chain, from wholesale markets through retail stores to temporary sales stands and roadside vendors. Inspectors also check for proper hygiene conditions, with particular attention to handwashing facilities and restroom access, personal hygiene standards, and the conditions under which cut products are handled. It is important to note that cut melons may only be sold wrapped in plastic film and must be protected from direct sunlight.

Experience from last year's inspection campaign shows that shoppers should look beyond just the melon's appearance. Although many people try to choose based on the sound when tapped or the fruit's color, it is just as important to check the information displayed next to the product. It should be a red flag for shoppers if the product's origin is unclear, the displayed information is incomplete, or the vendor cannot provide information about the watermelon's origin. Experience shows that most irregularities are not related to the quality of the fruit, but rather to labeling and traceability.

The summer melon season can only be truly successful if shoppers can be confident that the quality and origin of the fruit they put in their baskets are accurate. Inspections by the NATCP and government agencies serve this purpose, while also protecting the interests of honest market participants, thereby strengthening consumer confidence and the reputation of domestic products.

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National Authority for Trade and Consumer Protection