



## NATIONAL AUTHORITY FOR TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

### PRESS RELEASE

**Checking beaches and ice cream shops – over 900 kg of food was taken off the market, and 11 restaurants were temporarily closed**

**During its special inspections for the summer season, the National Authority for Trade and Consumer Protection (NATCP) is paying particular attention to the operation of ice cream shops and beachside snack bars. The aim of the inspections is to assess the level of compliance with food safety and hygiene regulations at the most popular summer catering establishments. During the first month of the inspections, 953 kg of food was withdrawn from the market.**

As part of a nationwide campaign, staff from the NATCP and government agencies inspected a total of 292 ice cream shops and 197 beach bars during the first month of summer. The most common problems were related to non-compliance with hygiene regulations. 15.7% of the establishments lacked adequate hand washing facilities, hand sanitizer, or paper towels. In several cases, the technical conditions for washing dishes did not comply with legal requirements.

Eleven catering establishments were temporarily suspended due to serious irregularities. These included excessive crowding, storage of foreign objects with food, highly contaminated cooling counters, and the presence of insect remains in ice cream containers and on the surfaces of goods.

Consumer information also failed to meet requirements in several places: 9.1% of the establishments inspected did not adequately label allergens or artificial colors. In addition, 9.7% of the establishments employed workers who did not have valid health certificates.

In several cases, inspectors also found documentation deficiencies and encountered unlabeled, untraceable food products. As a result, a total of 285 products—weighing 953 kilograms—had to be withdrawn from the market.

The results of the targeted inspections showed that although many catering establishments complied with the regulations, special attention must continue to be paid to hygiene rules, the certification of employees' health, and the provision of accurate and comprehensive information to consumers. The shortcomings identified once again highlight the importance of consistent compliance with legislation in order to ensure food safety.

The NATCP and the government offices under its professional supervision will continue their inspections during the rest of the summer season in order to protect consumers and maintain food chain safety.

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National Authority for Trade and Consumer Protection