

A termék fogyasztása megbetegedést okozhat. A NÉBIH felhívja a lakosság és a vendéglátók figyelmét, hogy ha birtokukban van a jelzett kőményből, azt ne használják fel. Emellett a hatóság kéri, hogy az érintett tétellel rendelkező élelmiszer-előállítók és –forgalmazók különítsék el a terméket, majd – a NÉBIH egyidejű értesítése mellett – vigyék vissza a beszerzés helyére. A hivatal általánosságban is javasolja, hogy a vizsgálatok befejezéséig a főzéshez mindenki – az őrölt kőmény helyett – a szemes kőménymagot részesítse előnyben, amit felhasználás előtt alaposan nézzen át, hogy nem tartalmaz-e szennyeződést.

Online tudástárat készített a NÉBIH az élelmiszeres tanúsító védjegyekről

<http://portal.nebih.gov.hu/hu/-/online-tudastarat-keszített-a-nebih-az-elelmiszeres-tanusito-vedjegyekrol>

A vásárlók tájékozódásának segítése érdekében a NÉBIH honlapján ezentúl egy helyen és kereshető formában érhető el az élelmiszereken szereplő tanúsító védjegyek listája. Az online tudástár létrehozása – az Élelmiszerlánc-biztonsági Stratégiában szereplő tudásmegosztásra való törekvés mellett – összhangban áll a 1519/2017 (VIII.4.) Korm. határozat céljaival.

A Kormány tavaly augusztusi határozatában az élelmiszerek minőségének emelését, a vásárlói tudatosság fejlesztését, valamint a hatósági tevékenység hatékonyságának növelését tűzte ki célul. Az akcióterv egyik sarkalatos pontja volt egy átfogó, a védjegyeket bemutató tudástár létrehozása. A védjegyek egyik funkciója ugyanis, hogy segítsék az embereket a tájékozódásban, így hozzájárulnak ahhoz, hogy a vásárlásaik során tudatosabban dönhessenek.

Védjegyeket azokat a jelöléseket nevezzük, amelyek grafikailag ábrázolhatók és a Szellemi Tulajdon Nemzeti Hivatala lajstromba vett, valamint az egyes áruk és szolgáltatások azonosítására, mások áruitól, illetve szolgáltatásaitól való megkülönböztetésére szolgálnak. E csoporton belül is kiemelkednek a tanúsító védjegyek. Esetükben ugyanis a védjegy használójának meg kell felelnie a védjegyhez kapcsolódó egyedi követelményrendszernek.

A NÉBIH új tudástára a tanúsító védjegyek közti eligazodást segíti. A tematikus aloldalon (<http://portal.nebih.gov.hu/vedjegyek>) az érdeklődők szűrhető táblázat, valamint képes védjegykereső segítségével is tájékozódhatnak az élelmiszereken szereplő tanúsító védjegyekről, az azokhoz kapcsolódó legfontosabb információkról, de anonim szavazás formájában akár azt is megszathatják a hatósággal, hogy befolyásolják-e mindennapi döntéseiket a védjegyek.

A NÉBIH jövőbeni tervei között szerepel a védjegy tudástárban szereplő információk bővítése is.

Revolutionary changes in microplastic analysis

Following the first microplastic analyses in Hungary, samples taken in the catchment area of the river Tisza were analyzed again by the researchers. Microplastics could be detected in the samples taken from the Eger stream, a tributary of Lake Tisza, from the Great Morotva within the reservoir, and from the river Tisza at Tiszafüred.

It is an alarming phenomenon that, due to the use of large amounts of plastics, particles smaller than 5 mm, i.e., microplastics are also present now in fresh waters, posing environmental and food safety hazards, as they are concentrated in the bodies of aquatic organisms, and thus the organic contaminants (pesticides, drug residues) adsorbed on their surface can enter the bodies of fish.

The goal of the HappyFish project is to determine substances that influence the quality of fish meat, including microplastic analysis. Lake Tisza was selected by the experts of WESSLING Hungary Kft., leader of the project, as the sample area, because several types of water can be sampled here, and the water of the Tisza is used through channels by several East Hungarian fish farms.

In the watercourses, there were 10 particles in 1 m³ of sample, typically made of polypropylene (PP) or polyethylene (PE). In the sample from the Great Morotva, these two materials were present in similar concentrations, however, polyester particles were also detected by the researchers, therefore, the microplastic concentration was higher here.

In the sediment samples taken at the sampling points of Lake Tisza, typically 1 particle was found in 1 kilogram. Polypropylene (PP) could be detected on the Great Morotva, while polystyrene (PS) and polyamide (PAM) in the Eger stream. These values are close to the ones measured in the samples taken in the summer in the upper part of the Tisza (Dombrád): there, 1.7 particles (polystyrene and polytetrafluoroethylene) were found in 1 kg of sediment.

The present results play an important role in the HappyFish project (in the future evaluation of the microplastic content of fish ponds), but unfortunately they also point out that microplastics are also common in domestic natural waters.

A different sampling of microplastics

By developing uniform sampling procedures, staff members of WESSLING Hungary Kft. can bring revolutionary changes to the microplastic analysis

of fresh waters during an R&D project filling a gap.

The main objective of the project titled „Development of the fresh water sampling methodology and sample preparation of microplastics” is to develop a uniform sampling method for the assessment of the contamination of fresh water systems, which has not been done before, and so it can serve as a basis for future standardization efforts. The total net amount of the grant is 269,538,633 HUF, of which 138,586,808 HUF is non-refundable subsidy. The tender titled Support of the R&D&I activities of corporations (Corporate RDI_16) was announced by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office, and the non-refundable subsidy is provided by the Hungarian state. This financial budget can make a significant contribution to increasing the competitiveness of the sector and to the achievement of scientifically recognized results at the international level.

Tiny plastic puzzle

To assess the environmental, food safety and human health risks posed by microplastics, we have to determine their exact distribution (material types, shapes, size ranges), and then their harmful (ecotoxicological, health, water and food safety) effects need to be assessed.

Soon, a pioneering project will be launched by WESSLING Nonprofit Kft.: after the Tisza, the microplastic contamination of the Danube and its tributaries will also be assessed. The general public will soon be able to follow the process at the website www.mikromuanyag.hu, where a special knowledge base will also be created by the experts.

How to play it safe by the manufacturers and distributors of dietary supplements

It is estimated that 30% of athletes take performance enhancing drugs, but only 2 percent of this can be detected – this was said at the conference organized at the WESSLING Knowledge Center, which focused on the regulation, testing and health risks of prohibited substances.

It is not easy for athletes to navigate through the world of drugs. For example, 40 to 50 questions are addressed to Dr. Ágnes Tiszeker, head of the Hungarian Anti-Doping Group (HUNADO) each month, regarding the various dietary supplements. The Prohibited List of WADA is updated every year. It is valid from January 1, and adherence to it is regulated by a government decree, which should be known to all athletes!

Erika Horváthné Soós, head of the Department of Testing Prohibited Substances in Dietary Supplements of WESSLING Hungary Kft. also emphasized that the anti-doping fight is a great responsibility for manufacturers/distributors and athletes alike.

In the laboratory of WESSLING, which has been analyzing dietary supplements for more than 10 years, during anti-doping tests, anabolic agents, hormones and metabolic modifiers, THC (one of the cannabinoids), stimulants, narcotics, β -agonists and β -blockers are analyzed.

A number of prohibited substances can be present in the dietary supplements that are on the market. For example, active pharmaceutical ingredients, prohormones, „designer” substances may be in the products, without them being indicated on the label by the manufacturers as either active ingredients or contaminants. Prohibited substances can enter a product as contaminants several ways, for example, with contaminated starting materials. We speak about contaminants if the amount of the prohibited substance is smaller than the effective amount, in certain cases even trace amounts, still, its consumption could result in positive doping test results in the case of competitive athletes.

To those who want to be on the safe side regarding dietary supplements, the website Doppingmentes.hu was recommended by the expert of the laboratory. Here, they can find a list of several hundreds of products that are confirmed by laboratory analyses not to contain the components that produce most of the positive tests results, based on the annual statistics of WADA!

Gábor Kindl, multiple Hungarian triathlon champion said: during sport, it is a great challenge to ensure proper energy supply (carbohydrate intake), but even more important is to deal with the heat generated by muscle work, and to replenish the water and ions lost during sweating.

Protein consumption should not be overdone, and attention should be paid to fatty acids, since they play an important role in regeneration and have anti-inflammatory effects (DHA and EPA - Omega-3). Maintaining and restoring the ion balance of the body is step zero of regeneration! Dietary fibers and water-soluble plant fibers (oat bran) inhibit the enterohepatic circulation, thus effectively reducing blood cholesterol levels.

Also important are the lactobacilli found in kefir, yogurt and sauerkraut. Important parts of the diet are fruits and vegetables, and it is recommended that athletes drink 3 to 5 liters or even more of the adequate liquid, depending on the workload.

Drinking water testing: changing regulation!

There is a change in the Hungarian regulation regarding drinking water quality, more pesticides have to be analyzed – including the infamous glyphosate.

The range of pesticides mandatory to be tested starting from 2018 has been recently modified by the deputy state secretary of EMMI (the Ministry of Human Capacities) responsible for chief medical officer tasks. In addition to the persistent chlorinated pesticides (such as DDT) that have been present in the environment for decades, new compounds used in agriculture also pose a risk to the safety of our water supply, and with their degradation products, i.e., their metabolites, the range of molecules to be analyzed is increased even further – said Zoltán Palotai, head of the Environmental Business Unit of the independent laboratory WESSLING Hungary Kft. to the InGreen environmental magazine.

Just think of the infamous and controversial pesticide glyphosate, which practically covers the entire planet and is present at virtually all farms, and its metabolite, AMPA. Soon, these compounds will have to be investigated as well.

It was emphasized by Zoltán Palotai that, while nearly one thousand compounds are used in agriculture, for legislators it is very hard to determine what the target components should be in a given country. Everyone knows that maximum safety could be achieved by analyzing the full spectrum, but this is not a realistic goal, since it would be well beyond the rationality of the investment needed to eliminate the risk.

Nevertheless, a comprehensive test package, such as the one that the WESSLING laboratory can offer to service providers with its 600 compounds, including, of course, all the components that will be mandatory to be tested starting from 2018 and 2019, can provide reassuring answers to the risks that arise.

This is important, because it makes the drinking water supply and consumption even safer and, in addition, it also makes sure that Hungary conforms to the regulations of the EU Water Framework Directive and the spirit of Council Directive 98/83/EC on the quality of water intended for human consumption.

NFCSO news

The cream of the crop

<http://portal.nebih.gov.hu/-/nem-fenekig-tejfel>

In the latest Supermint product test of the National Food Chain Safety Office (Nébih), 20% fat content sour creams were analyzed. Of the 31 sour creams, proceedings because of some kind of problem were initiated against 15, and in 3 cases food control fines were imposed by the inspectors of Nébih.

In the series of Supermint product tests, the next subject was the great favorite of Hungarian households, sour cream. A total of 31 products, 29 domestic and 2 foreign ones, were tested by the experts of Nébih. In addition to food safety parameters, the analyses focused on compliance with the Hungarian Food Codex.

In the laboratory of Nébih, the most important microbiological tests were carried out, including the determination of the number of lactic acid bacteria from the culture. The fat and dry matter contents of the sour creams were also determined, as well as their non-fat dry matter contents and acidities. Counterfeiting and the use of unauthorized substances were also checked by the experts.

It is a reassuring conclusion that all the sour creams tested were made from cream and live lactic acid bacteria necessary for the production of sour cream. Products were not counterfeited using vegetable fats, and other additives or flour was not added either in order to improve the texture or to make them thicker.

Mold was a problem in the case of one product, as it was found by the authority experts during organoleptic tests. Moldy sour cream is considered spoiled, which is objectionable from a food safety point of view, therefore, a food control fine is imposed by Nébih on the producer of the product.

Another problem was that, in the case of one product, the number of lactic acid bacteria was below the amount specified by the Food Codex (10⁶/g). The same product also had a problem that nutritional values were not indicated in a tabular form.

A more serious labeling mistake was that a product was labeled „gluten-free” by the manufacturer. This is objectionable, because all sour creams are naturally gluten-free, and so the gluten-free label is misleading, it implies the presence of a non-existent additional value for the customer. The manufacturer was ordered by Nébih to correct the label.

Most of the problems were due to the fat content. For 13 sour creams, the fat content found by the laboratory was lower than what was indicated on the packaging. For a foreign product, the difference was more than 10%, so a food control fine was

imposed on the responsible company. For the other 12 sour creams, the difference was small, therefore, a warning was issued by Nébih to the companies concerned.

Proceedings were initiated by Nébih against 15 products. Manufacturers of 12 products will be warned, while the manufacturers of 3 products will be fined for food control offenses, for a total fine of ca. 700,000 HUF.

In the test of sour creams, products were evaluated by lay and expert judges in terms of appearance, texture, smell and flavor. Because of the inadequate results of authority tests, 3 products could not receive a ranking, but the list of winners was not affected by this. In the end, the Coop sour cream finished first in the competition of 20% fat content sour creams. Hungarian sour cream finished second, while Lipóti sour cream came in third.

Further information and detailed test results are available at the Supermint product test page of Nébih: <http://szupermenta.hu/a-tejfol-es-a-zsirtartalom/>

Balance of 2018 spring seasonal inspection complete

<http://portal.nebih.gov.hu/-/elkeszult-a-2018-as-tavaszi-szezonalis-ellenorzes-merlege>

Experts have experienced improving results in almost all areas during the 2018 spring seasonal inspection. During the one-month campaign, 4,715 analyses were performed, 88 of which ended with warnings and 154 with fines, for a total of approximately 13.5 million HUF. Of the more than 20 thousand food lots examined, 349 had to be recalled, meaning roughly 9.5 tons of product.

The spring seasonal inspection from March 1 to April 2, 2018, was ordered by Róbert Zsigó, state secretary responsible for food chain supervision. The operation was coordinated by the National Food Chain Safety Office (Nébih), while the inspections themselves were carried out by the district offices and the experts of Nébih. The analyses covered the areas of both production and distribution, as well as the hospitality sector.

During the spring campaign, traditionally popular products such as hams, eggs, various sweets and alcoholic beverages were checked by the experts. Testing of seasonal fruits and vegetables could not be left out, and as a novelty, egg dyes came under scrutiny.

Approximately the same number of analyses were performed by the experts as in the 2017 inspection. However, much more important is the fact that, compared to the previous year, considering the sanctions, 18% fewer warnings were issued and 5% fewer fines were imposed. Among the deficiencies discovered, the most significant improvement was observed in the area of traceability: while in 2017, problems were found by the inspectors in 2.5% of the cases, this year the ratio fell to 1.3%. Restrictions in the activities of food businesses were required in 11 cases.

Also, during product inspections, fewer food items had to be recalled than last year. Measures had to be taken in the case of 1.7% of the more than 20 thousand food items, affecting roughly 9.5 tons of product. Among the problems, in first place was still the use-by date and the shelf life, affecting 1.2% of the lots this year. During the inspection of fruits and vegetables it was an unusual case that proceedings had to be initiated against a distributor because of the unauthorized use of the name „Hajdúság horseradish”.

In the laboratory of Nébih, the possible fipronil contamination of 38 egg samples and the dye content of 44 egg coloring packets (126 egg dyes) were tested. No fipronil or fipronil sulfone residues could be detected in any of the egg samples. In the case of the dyes, there was a red dye that contained New Coccine (E124), instead of the azorubine (E122) indicated on the label, therefore, the manufacturer was ordered by the authority to correct the label.

When inspecting lamb and rabbit transports, 508 shipments (57,902 animals transported) were inspected in the country by authority veterinarians. There was a documentation deficiency of the vehicle in the case of a rabbit transport, and in another case, the experts had to proceed because of inadequate space.

Further caraway seed lots contaminated with jimson weed identified by Nébih

<http://portal.nebih.gov.hu/-/ujabb-csattano-maszlaggal-szenyezett-fuszerkomeny-teteleket-azonositott-a-nebih-laboratoriuma>

Jimson weed contamination was detected by the laboratory of the National Food Chain safety Office (Nébih) in several ground caraway seed lots packaged by Ázsia Vegyeskereskedelmi Bt. Recall of the products concerned was ordered immediately by the competent food chain supervision authority, but it is important that the population and businesses check their stocks as well.

In connection with the April 25 atropine poisoning, caraway seed analyses are currently being carried out on a large scale, and samples are arriving continuously to the laboratory of Nébih. In the course of this, jimson weed contamination was detected by the experts in the ground caraway seeds packaged by Ázsia Vegyeskereskedelmi Bt. (1093 Budapest, Vámház krt. 5.). The lots concerned are as follows:

| Name | Lot ID | Shelf life |
|-------------------------------|----------|----------------------|
| Ground caraway seeds 50 g | L 180605 | December 31, 2018 |
| Ground caraway seeds 50 g | L 181328 | December 31, 2018 |
| Ground caraway seeds 50 g | L 181620 | December 31, 2018 |
| Ground caraway seeds 50 g | L 181509 | December 31, 2018 |
| Ground caraway seeds 500 g | L 181329 | December 31, 2018 |
| Ground caraway seeds 500 g | L 181006 | December 31, 2018 |
| Ground caraway seeds 50 g | L 180426 | December 31, 2018 |
| Ground caraway seeds 50 g | L 181009 | December 31, 2018 |
| Ground caraway seeds 50 g | L 180315 | December 31, 2018 |

Recall of the lots was ordered immediately by the competent regional government office.

Consumption of the product may result in illness. Nébih warns the public and catering businesses that if they are in the possession of the above-listed caraway seeds, do not use it.

In addition, the authority requests that food producers and distributors in possession of the lots in question, isolate the product and return it to the place of purchase, while at the same time notifying Nébih.

In general, the office recommends that, until the tests are completed, everyone uses whole caraway seeds instead of ground ones, and examine them thoroughly before use to make sure that they are not contaminated.

Online knowledge base created by Nébih on food certification trademarks

<http://portal.nebih.gov.hu/hu/-/online-tudastarat-keszített-a-nebih-az-elelmiszeres-tanusito-vedjegyekrol>

In order to help consumers find the information they need, from now on the list of food certification trademarks will be available at the Nébih website in a searchable form. In addition to the endeavor to share knowledge as required by the Food Chain Safety Strategy, the creation of the online knowledge base is in line with the goals of government resolution 1519/2017 (VIII. 4.).

In its resolution of last August, the government set the objectives of improving food quality, increasing consumer awareness and enhancing the efficiency of authority activities. One of the cornerstones of the action plan was the creation of a comprehensive knowledge base presenting the trademarks. This is so, because one of the functions of the trademarks is to help people keep informed, thus contributing to conscious decisions during their purchases.

Trademarks are markings that can be represented graphically, are registered by the Hungarian Intellectual Property Office, and can serve to identify certain goods and services, as well as to distinguish between them and the goods or services of others. A special place is reserved within this group for certification marks. In their case, the user of the mark has to comply with the specific requirements of the certification mark.

The new knowledge base of Nébih helps you to navigate in the world of certification marks. At the thematic subpage (<http://portal.nebih.gov.hu/vedjegyek>), interested people can find information about the certification marks found on foods and the most important information about them with the help of a filterable table and an illustrated trademark search engine, and even share with the authority, in the form of anonymous voting, whether trademarks influence their everyday decisions.

Future plans of Nébih include the expansion of the information contained in the trademark knowledge base.