

News story: Newcastle fresh produce retailer fined after failing to meet marketing standards

A Newcastle based fresh produce retailer has been ordered to pay over £3,000 for displaying, offering for sale and selling rotten fruit and vegetables that failed to meet minimum quality standards.

Raja Mohammed Farooq Khan, owner of Medina Food Store, was charged by Newcastle Magistrates Court on 27 February 2017, following a six month long investigation by the Rural Payments Agency's (RPA) Horticultural Marketing Inspectors (HMI).

A final HMI inspection conducted on 7 September 2016, found five offences in breach of the EU marketing rules for fresh produce quality and labelling, including rotten peppers and apples.

Khan pleaded guilty to all charges. He was ordered to pay a fine of £295, £2,798 costs and a £30 victim surcharge.

Alison Johnson, RPA Operations Director said:

Concerted efforts were made by HMI to work closely with the business through face-to-face meetings, verbal warnings and formal written notices, all aimed at achieving improved compliance from the business.

Unfortunately such advice is not always heeded and when all other options have been exhausted we will resort to the use of criminal sanction to bring about a required change in behaviour.

- Medina Food Store is based at 35 Nuns Moor Road, Fenham, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE4 9AU.
- Horticultural Marketing Inspectors are part of the Rural Payments Agency (RPA). The inspectors are responsible for the enforcement of the EU marketing standards for fresh fruit, vegetables, salad crops, nuts and cultivated mushroom, throughout England and Wales, wherever fresh produce is grown, imported, exported, bought or sold.