

**Question for written answer E-004538/2014
to the Commission**
Rule 117
Sirpa Pietikäinen (PPE)

Subject: Quantities of acetaldehyde in food products

The International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) announced in 2009 that acetaldehyde in alcoholic beverages was carcinogenic in human beings. On this basis, the Scientific Committee on Consumer Safety (SCCS) set up by the Commission again updated its guidelines on cosmetic products. On the basis of a new unanimous recommendation, a cosmetic end-product is not permitted to contain more than 5 mg of acetaldehyde per litre. No limit has been laid down for foods, although commercial food products such as yoghurts have been shown to contain more than 5 mg of acetaldehyde per litre. Many alcoholic beverages contain levels of acetaldehyde that exceed by a factor of more than 100 the limit which applies to cosmetics.

The EU regulates the use of carcinogenic substances as part, inter alia, of legislation on product safety and food products.

The Regulation on food products states that food legislation is based on scientific evidence [Regulation (EC) No 178/2002 of the European Parliament and of the Council].

In the light of research which stresses the carcinogenic nature of acetaldehyde, does the Commission intend to set a limit for acetaldehyde in food or alcoholic beverages?

If not, how will the Commission ensure that alcoholic beverages and food products offered for sale in the EU do not contain levels of acetaldehyde which are harmful to consumers?